



Natalie S. Watson

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Products Liability, Mass Torts & Consumer Class Actions | Business Litigation | Construction & Real Estate Litigation | Class Action & Multidistrict Litigation | Environment & Energy | Environment & Energy Litigation | Life Sciences | Manufacturing | Healthcare

A veteran litigator with first chair trial experience, Natalie Watson helps her clients reach practical and efficient solutions to their complex legal needs, freeing them to focus their talents on innovation and profitability.

Natalie Watson guides her clients, product manufacturers, pharmaceutical corporations, health care facilities, builders, renewable energy companies, and innovators, through their regulatory, compliance, and liability challenges. She has successfully represented numerous businesses in “bet the company” litigation, defending against environmental liability and toxic torts, contractual disputes between renewable energy providers, catastrophic personal injury, product liability, breach of contract, and sales practices claims in state and federal courts nationwide. Natalie’s practice centers on complex litigation, with a particular focus on multidistrict litigation, class actions, and suits against governmental agencies. Natalie has tried numerous cases to verdict. Her clients value her ability to captain a matter from inception to trial, all while routinely coming in under budget.

In the area of environmental law, Natalie is part of a multi-state team defending claims and challenges involving newly emerging contaminants, such as PFAS. She brings her considerable trial experience to defending these claims as well as to other environmental matters under CERCLA (Superfund) and similar state statutes.

Among the wide range of clients she assists, Natalie represents builders in cases arising out of breach of contract cases, including those related to negligent construction and delay damages. She has had extensive experience handling claims between general contractors and subcontractors, as well as claims arising out of fire and mold loss on build sites. Several national builders have trusted Natalie to handle their most complex commercial litigation as well as claims arising out of injury on the worksite. Natalie also represents global turnkey renewable energy solutions companies, working primarily in the areas of wind and solar. As part of the firm’s team with a deep bench of corporate and litigation attorneys in this space, Natalie works closely with her clients to address their specific contractual and regulatory needs, while guarding against the types of litigation pitfalls that can threaten renewable energy projects.

Natalie represents public entities in complex civil rights, Constitutional law, and negligence suits, including those suits arising out of wrongful death and sexual abuse claims. She balances the need to aggressively defend high-exposure claims with the finesse required for high-profile matters potentially affecting the public image of her clients. To help prevent lawsuits, Natalie regularly conducts trainings for public entity clients on the nuances of applicable statutory law, particularly concerning relevant statutory immunities and notice of claim requirements. She has counseled larger institutions of higher education on compliance with state and federal laws and regulations governing anti-harassment, anti-bullying, anti-discrimination, and LGBTQA-inclusion.

In addition to her robust trial practice, Natalie has extensive experience advising manufacturers on the best approaches to bring products to market in compliance with necessary state and federal regulations. Applying her savvy with and knowledge of the ever-changing regulations of the FTC, FDA, FCC, and other state and federal regulatory and compliance bodies, Natalie applies a values-based approach to ethical considerations and compliance matters. This approach helps her recommend necessary internal policies to clients and to interact with regulators in a way that minimizes noncompliance risks. Her practice also includes defending her clients in claims brought under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, the False Claims Act, CAN-SPAM, the Federal Food, Drug & Cosmetic Act, and the Anti-Kickback Statute, among others.

A member of the Steering Committee of the firm's Women's Initiative and a member of its Diversity Committee, Natalie actively works to strengthen McCarter's use of diversity in serving its clients. Her efforts led McCarter to become one of the first law firms in the country to offer a "gross-up" policy for its LGBTQA employees, to remedy the disparate treatment that existed in the tax code in the years before *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. ____ (2015).

Natalie is involved with numerous professional, legal, charitable, and educational communities. Appointed by the New Jersey Supreme Court to serve as its Secretary for the District VA Ethics Committee, Natalie is responsible for reviewing all grievances submitted against attorneys practicing in the District VA and, when appropriate, docketing those investigations. She also serves on the state-wide Diversity Committee of the President of the New Jersey Bar Association, identifying and addressing issues impacting diverse attorneys throughout the state. She also co-chairs the Public Entity section of the New Jersey Defense Association, which represents New Jersey's defense bar. Natalie also regularly lectures on topics relevant to litigators and in-house counsel, including FDA and regulatory compliance matters, best practices for trial attorneys, and the Rules of Professional Conduct.

Natalie is the immediate past president of the Board of Trustees for the New Jersey Theatre Alliance, an organization recognized by the arts community and service industry as a nationwide leader in developing model programs for audience development. As president, Natalie guided the organization in representing 33 professional theatres located throughout 17 out of New Jersey's 21 counties during one of the most difficult financial periods on record for non-profit organizations. In November 2015, she was presented with the New Jersey Theatre Alliance's Star Award for "outstanding dedication and leadership as the Alliance's Board President for the past six years." Natalie was also commended for her work on diversity and cultural access initiatives.

Representative Matters

Global renewable energy solutions corporation—Litigation

Represent a global solar and wind energy solutions corporation in a multi-million dollar litigation arising out of a former joint venture partners' misappropriation of our client's plans and designs for a large turnkey solar energy project in South Jersey.

National Luxury Residential Property Builder— Personal Injury Defense

Successfully defended claims against the builder by subcontractor who suffered catastrophic personal injury while installing roofing. Early success on deposition of Plaintiff and subcontractor resulted in limiting exposure and securing indemnification from subcontractor.

National Commercial Builder—Breach of Contract Case

Successfully represented National commercial builder in case arising out of allegation that use of certain materials causes hundreds of millions of dollars in damages to public school district's new facilities due to negligent construction. Plaintiff sought repair and remediation damages and damages arising out of the alleged resulting time delays and impact on other trades. Initially the target Defendant, Natalie was able to use testimony that she elicited from subcontractors and experts during discovery to force Plaintiff into a de minimus settlement.

National product manufacturing company—Environmental contamination

Represents a national product manufacturing company in multidistrict litigation nationwide arising out of plaintiffs' allegations that the company's manufacturing process led to extensive contamination of certain aquifers.

Multinational pharmaceutical corporation—Personal injury and wrongful death claims

Represents a multinational pharmaceutical corporation at trial level against plaintiffs' allegation that a contaminated product caused catastrophic injury and death.

Public entity school district—Alleged child abuse

Secured a directed verdict on behalf of a public entity school district in a case arising out of alleged abuse and attempted murder of a minor-child.

Multinational pharmaceutical corporation—Sales practice and insurance fraud claims

Defended successfully a multinational pharmaceutical corporation at trial and on appeal against a plaintiff's allegations of sales practices and insurance fraud, securing the dismissal of all claims against the pharmaceutical corporation with prejudice.

International products manufacturer—Class action litigation and FCC/FTC claims

Represented an international products manufacturer in a class action arising out of allegations that the manufacturer violated provisions of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act. The client faced multi-million dollar exposure due to federally mandated penalties. We prevented class certification through efficient, targeted discovery and were able to resolve the matter successfully for the client at a significant savings. Natalie now is advising that company and others in FTC and FCC compliance to avoid litigation in the first instance.

Education

Seton Hall University School of Law, Healthcare Compliance Certificate, 2016

Rutgers Law School, JD, with high honors, 2004

- Eagleton Institute of Politics, Henry J. Raimondo - Fellow, New Brunswick, 2004
- National Association of Women Lawyers Achievement Award
- ALI-ABA Scholarship and Leadership Award
- Order of the Coif

Bryn Mawr College, AB English, Departmental Honors, 1999

Bar Admissions

New Jersey

New York

Pennsylvania

District of Columbia

Court Admissions

U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit

U.S. District Court, District of New Jersey

U.S. District Court, Eastern and Southern Districts of New York

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Memberships & Certifications

McCarter & English's Women's Initiative

Steering Committee

McCarter & English's Diversity Committee

Supreme Court of New Jersey's District Ethics Committee, District VA

Secretary

New Jersey Defense Association

Director, Board of Trustees

New Jersey Defense Association

Chair, Public Entity Committee

New Jersey State Bar Association

Appointed Member, Diversity Committee

Brennan-Vanderbilt Inn of Court

Barrister

National Association of Women Lawyers

Member

New Jersey Theatre Alliance

Immediate Past President of the Board of Trustees

Brookdale Community College

Member, Board of Trustees

Recognitions

New Jersey Rising Star, *Super Lawyers*, 2013–2017

New Leader of the Bar, *New Jersey Law Journal*, 2015

Ranking Disclaimers: No aspect of this advertisement has been approved by the Supreme Court of New Jersey. For *SuperLawyers* methodology, see https://www.superlawyers.com/about/selection_process.html.

Alerts

Expansiveness of TCPA Limited by ACA's Win in FCC Lawsuit, FCC Alert, 3.22.2018

Articles

TCPA Claims: FCC Guidance on Key Provisions Remains Elusive, *New Jersey Law Journal*, 12.12.2016

Using Video Surveillance of Plaintiff's: Pitfalls and Practice Points, *New Jersey Defense Magazine*, 12.6.2016

Speaking Engagements

Using the Rules of Professional Conduct to Become a Bias Interrupter in the Law, McCarter & English CLE Program, 12.12.2018

Using the Rules of Professional Conduct to Become a Bias Interrupter in the Law, McCarter & English CLE Program, 12.6.2018

Using the Rules of Professional Conduct to Become a Bias Interrupter in the Law, McCarter & English CLE Program, 12.5.2018

9th Annual Women and the Law Seminar, New Jersey Defense Association, 11.12.2018

Women and Men: We're All In This Together: Diversity and Inclusion Strategies For Everyone, 11.10.2017

FDA Regulatory and Compliance Pitfalls: Ethical Considerations When Advertising Your Drug or Medical Device on Social Media, New Jersey Defense Association - 50th Annual Convention, 5.25.2016

Product Liability: 2016 Back to Basics – Fundamentals of a Strong Product Liability Practice, New Jersey Institute for Continuing Legal Education, 3.30.2016

Women and the Law, New Jersey Defense Association, 11.11.2015

Ethical Pitfalls to Avoid for In-House Counsel, Race to the Finish Line: McCarter & English December CLE Series, 12.3.2014

Webinars

Become An Ally: Entrepreneurs & Racial Equality, Women's Center for Entrepreneurship Corporation, 12.17.2020

Legal Developments in Diversity, Inclusion and Implicit Bias, McCarter & English CLE Virtual Series, 12.3.2020

Planting Golden Seeds in the Garden State, Propelify Innovation Festival 2020, 10.9.2020

Propelify Innovation Festival, TechUnited:NJ, 10.5.2020

Quoted

Firms Must Face #Metoo Situations from Start, ROI-NJ, 3.7.2018