



Shawn Smith

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Business Litigation | Environment & Energy | Creditors' Rights

Shawn Smith helps clients solve complex civil and commercial disputes in federal and state courts across Connecticut.

Shawn focuses his practice on a broad range of complex civil and commercial litigation, often involving partnership and business disputes, unfair competition, theft of trade secret claims, commercial foreclosure, commercial leasing disputes, real estate, bankruptcy, and insurance related matters. He also regularly represents financial services clients, including insurance and annuity issuers, in a wide range of litigation, including interpleader actions seeking to determine the beneficiary of death benefit proceeds.

Active in both state and federal courts, Shawn has substantial experience in real estate litigation and frequently represents lenders, special servicers, trustees, and investors in loan workouts and in actions to enforce commercial loan agreements, including commercial foreclosures. Shawn also regularly appears in bankruptcy proceedings to pursue proofs of claim, defend against preference actions, and move for stay relief to enforce rights with respect to collateral on behalf of secured creditors. Additionally, he advises property owners and landlords in disputes with commercial tenants, as well as on and other property management issues.

A sizeable part of Shawn's practice is representing property owners and tenants in actions contesting the value of property for purposes of local taxation. Shawn has successfully reduced taxpayer liability on a variety of commercial property types throughout Connecticut, including big box retail, office buildings, movie theatres, research and development facilities, a data center, and other unique properties.

Shawn's diverse practice also includes environmental law. He represents large utilities, lending institutions, electric suppliers, and a municipality regarding due diligence, permitting, regulatory compliance, and enforcement matters.

An active member of the firm's pro bono program, Shawn has provided hundreds of hours to pro bono clients during his career, focusing on veterans and landlord/tenant issues.

Representative Matters

Child advocacy organization—Pro bono

Represented an infant on behalf of a child advocacy organization following reports of negligence against the child's biological parents and an intervention by the Department of Children & Families. Argued on behalf of the child's need for permanent placement which resulted in temporary custody being awarded to DCF following two failed placement attempts. The biological parents' rights were terminated and the child has since been adopted by a non-relative foster family.

Real estate investment company—Property tax settlement

Obtained a favorable settlement for a real estate investment company in an action related to the real property taxes levied on a data center in Connecticut. After litigation and judicial mediation the assessment of the fair market value of the property was reduced by more than \$47 million resulting in a total refund of almost \$7 million for our client.

Textile and apparel business—Unfair trade practice litigation

Prosecuted claims for violations of the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act on behalf of a textile and apparel business and against a former partner in an unrelated venture. After a jury trial at the Connecticut Complex Litigation Docket the Court ruled in favor of our client.

Information technology company—Florida federal court action

Defended an information technology company in federal court from claims of fraud, misrepresentation, unfair and deceptive conduct, and breach of warranty.

Investment manager; break-up of LLC—Jury trial

Prosecuted claims for breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty, and breach of duty of good faith and fair dealing in Connecticut Complex Litigation Docket resulting in five week jury trial and multi-million dollar jury verdict for full amount of claimed damages, attorneys' fees, and offer of judgment interest.

Homeowner—Environmental contamination claims

Prosecuted claims arising from the environmental contamination of a clients' home and surrounding property that resulted in a highly favorable settlement.

Data center property owner—Reduction in Town's valuation of real property

Represented a taxpayer in a challenge to the Town's assessment of its real property for purposes of taxation. The trial court reduced the valuation of the property by more than \$36 million, resulting in significant tax savings for the client.

Life insurance company—Settlement and dismissal of litigation

Favorably settled and obtained the dismissal of litigation on behalf of a global provider of insurance, annuities, and employee benefit programs in an action filed by prior beneficiaries of a substantial life insurance policy claiming that the client's representative had assisted a third party in exercising undue influence over the insured in order to change the beneficiary information.

WIN Waste Innovations—Environmental permitting

Served as counsel for the owner of CT's only ash residue landfill in a challenge to the issuance of draft solid waste and water discharge permits in the administrative appeal process, resulting in the expansion of the landfill and extension of its useful life for an additional 25-30 years.

Purchaser of residential property—Contract dispute

Represented plaintiffs in a dispute against two trusts involving two contracts for the sale of residential property for \$1.4M.

Education

University of Connecticut School of Law, JD, with honors, 2009

College of the Holy Cross, BA, 2006

Bar Admissions

Connecticut

Court Admissions

U.S. Court of Appeals, Veterans Claims

U.S. District Court, District of Connecticut

Memberships and Certifications

Greater Hartford Legal Aid Foundation

Member of the Board

Recognitions*

Connecticut Rising Star, *Super Lawyers*, 2014–2024

* No aspect of this or any advertisement has been approved by the Supreme Court of New Jersey. For ranking methodologies, please see [here](#).

Alerts

Connecticut Updates Guidance on PFAS Drinking Water Action Levels, Environment & Energy Alert, 5.20.2022

Several Northeast, Mid-Atlantic States Address Commercial Evictions During COVID-19 Pandemic, Coronavirus Legal Advisory , 4.28.2020

Connecticut's "Stay Safe, Stay Home" Order Restricts In-Person Workplace Operations of Non-Essential Businesses, Coronavirus Legal Advisory, 3.24.2020

Articles

How Some States Are Slowing Commercial Property Evictions, Law360, 5.11.2020

Quoted

Limits On Conn. Biz Law Stay In Effect In Sandy Hook Case, Law360, 4.16.2025

Shawn Smith Speaks with Law360 About Strict Foreclosure Actions, Law360, 7.6.2023

Shawn Smith Discusses Tricky Connecticut Legal Stumbling Blocks, Law360, 5.14.2023