

C. Rob Wilson

Partner

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Practices

Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Litigation
Commercial Litigation
Mass Tort Litigation
Civil Litigation
Products Liability Litigation
Professional Liability Litigation
Construction Law
Trucking and Transportation Law
Retail, Restaurant, and Hospitality

Bar Admissions

North Carolina State Bar
U.S. District Court, Eastern, Middle, and Western District of North Carolina

Education

J.D., Wake Forest University, 2010
B.A., Davidson College, 2007

Overview

Rob is the managing partner of Hedrick Gardner's Raleigh office. Rob is a civil litigator and practices in both state and federal courts. His practice focuses on defending businesses and individuals facing complex, high-exposure claims and lawsuits.

Rob has significant experience litigating cases involving products liability, premises liability, construction defects, professional liability, institutional defense, and commercial litigation. Rob's work in the products liability field has included defending designers, manufacturers, and sellers of products including medical devices, motor vehicles and their component parts, helmets, electrical devices, and other consumer goods. His professional liability work has included the defense of real estate agents, appraisers, engineers, and architects. Rob's premises liability cases commonly involve personal injuries on retail and commercial premises but have also involved wrongful death and catastrophic injury claims arising from fires and explosions. Rob has defended institutions such as universities, school systems, churches, and municipalities. Rob has been included in Business North Carolina Magazine's Legal Elite list. He previously served a three-year term on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys and in 2023 was selected for membership in the Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel (FDCC).

"One of the best aspects of my practice is the fact that each case and every client is different and I value being able to learn the details of my client's businesses so that we can reach the most favorable and practical result."

A lifelong North Carolinian, Rob graduated from Davidson College with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science while also playing for the Wildcats' Division 1 baseball team. After college, Rob went on to earn his Juris Doctor degree from Wake Forest University School of Law. Rob has been married to his wife, Heather, since 2010 and they have two young children, Everett and Caroline.

Experience

Cases or matters referenced are for illustrative purposes only, and do not represent the lawyer's or law firm's entire record. Each case is unique and must be evaluated on its own merits. The outcome of a particular case cannot be predicted based upon a lawyer's or law firm's past results. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome.

- Represented fiber optic utility owner in 20+ lawsuits arising from 2019 natural gas explosion in downtown Durham, NC, acting as lead negotiator for all defendants to achieve global settlement in the face of more than \$75M in claimed damages.
- Represented electric utility in defense of significant injury claim by contracted lineman who was injured when wooden pole collapsed while he was performing repair work following hurricane damage, including litigation of complex issues involving industry standards of care, contributory negligence, employer negligence, and contractual indemnity.
- Represented a university in regards to a wrongful death claim pursued by a deceased student's family, defending against allegations that the death was caused by fraternity hazing activities which the university could have prevented. The case was resolved via motion to dismiss on grounds that the university did not owe a duty to the student under the circumstances presented, and that dismissal was affirmed by the NC Court of Appeals.
- Represented a large propane supply company in defense of three catastrophic burn cases including \$50M+ of claimed damages, achieving a global settlement following extensive litigation over complex issues involving industry standards, causation, and contributory negligence.
- Represented a large poultry processing company in defense of four wrongful death claims and two catastrophic injury claims arising from a tractor trailer accident. The case involved complex issues regarding the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Act, issues of agency, and issues of contributory negligence. Our work in the case resulted in a very favorable global settlement in a case where total exposure was \$30M+.
- Represented a large home warranty company in defense of a wrongful death claim arising from a natural gas explosion at the plaintiff's home. The litigation involved complex issues related to origin and cause, industry standards, causation, contractual indemnity, and contributory negligence.
- Represented large corrugated board manufacturer in defense of both a wrongful death claim and a catastrophic injury claim arising from separate load shifting incidents where cargo shifted and fell out of trailers onto the plaintiffs. The litigation involved complex issues related to industry standards, causation, contributory negligence, and employer negligence.
- Represented race track in defense of catastrophic claim involving a plaintiff who lost a leg due to a crash. Obtained summary judgment on grounds that plaintiff's claim was barred by a waiver and on grounds that plaintiff could not prove the defendant breached any standard of care.
- Represented multiple owners of swimming pools, including hotels, apartment complexes, and private owners in defense of wrongful death claims arising from drowning and electrocution incidents.
- Represented asphalt manufacturer in defense of wrongful death claim arising from incident on client's premises. Achieved favorable settlement due to strength of defenses of no negligence on client's part, contributory negligence on the plaintiff's part, and employer negligence on the

plaintiff's employer's part.

- Represented municipalities in defense of excessive force claims regarding law enforcement personnel and regarding wrongful termination claims of such personnel.
- Represented many general contractors and subcontractors in defense of high exposure construction defect claims, many of which arise from work on commercial and multi-family residential projects with claimed damages in excess of \$10M.
- Represented manufacturer of pulse oximeter in defense of wrongful death claim pursued by family of a deceased child. Litigation and discovery disclosed that our client's product was an unlikely culprit and a favorable settlement was achieved.
- Represented designer and manufacturer of a bomb suit in defense of a catastrophic injury claim arising from an alleged malfunction of the batteries within the suit's helmet. A favorable settlement was achieved due to plaintiff's inability to establish medical causation.
- Represented other defendants in product liability claims involving the following products: motorcycle helmets, button batteries, PTAC air conditioning units, rechargeable lights, rechargeable yard/lawn tools, and dog leashes.
- Represented large church in defense of discrimination claims filed by families of preschool attendees which received significant media coverage, but resulted in favorable settlements once discovery disclosed weaknesses in the plaintiffs' claims.
- Represented commercial property owner and manager in defense of multi-million dollar property damage claim arising from fire event, resulting in favorable settlement after discovery disclosed problems with the plaintiff's ability to prove causation.
- Represented gym in defense of wrongful death claim arising from alleged/unwitnessed slip-and-fall incident in locker room and achieved favorable settlement due to plaintiff's issues proving causation.

Awards & Honors

- Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel (FDCC), Member
- Included in the 2015 & 2021 **Business North Carolina's Legal Elite** list
- Selected by peers for inclusion in **The Best Lawyers in America**© 2024 – 2026 in the field of Personal Injury Litigation – Defendants
- Selected by peers for inclusion in **The Best Lawyers in America**© 2020 – 2026 in the field of Litigation – Insurance
- Selected by peers for inclusion in **The Best Lawyers in America**© 2022 – 2026 in the field of Commercial Litigation



Involvement

- North Carolina Bar Association
- Mecklenburg County Bar Association

- North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys
 - Member, Board of Directors (2019-2022)
 - Defense Research Institute