

Karen O’Kasey

PARTNER

Karen O’Kasey is a 33-year trial attorney who defends employers and medical professionals in state and federal courts in Oregon and Washington. She has successfully defended employers in all types of employment claims in federal and state court. She has also tried to defense verdict numerous medical negligence claims in Oregon and Washington.

Ms. O’Kasey has extensive experience defending municipalities against all types of tort claims, including 42 U.S.C. § 1983 claims, First Amendment claims, and Americans with Disabilities Act claims.

Ms. O’Kasey is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, and a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates. For the past nine years, she has been named one of the “Top 25” Women Lawyers in Oregon by *Oregon Super Lawyers* magazine. In 2015 and 2017, she was singled out as Lawyer of the Year for Legal Malpractice Law in *The Best Lawyers in America*, and has been named a Local Litigation Star by *Benchmark Litigation*.

REPRESENTATIVE CASES

Hicks v. Les Schwab Tire Centers of Portland, Inc., United States District Court — Pendleton Division (2019)

Employment discrimination claim involving Americans with Disabilities Act Workers’ Compensation and retaliation claims. Defense verdict.

Gale v. Rebound Orthopedics, Clark County Superior Court (2019)

Medical malpractice claim against orthopedic surgeon alleging negligence in planning and performing a hip replacement surgery. Defense verdict.

Martin v. OHSU, Multnomah County Circuit Court (2015)



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Practice Areas

Civil Rights Defense

Employment Litigation

Health Law

Human Resources Consulting & Compliance

Legal Malpractice Defense

Medical Malpractice Defense

Product Liability Defense

Medical negligence claim against neurosurgeon for stroke experienced during brain aneurysm surgery. Defense verdict.

Bozanich v. Radiology Specialists of the Northwest, Multnomah County Circuit Court (2015)

Failure to diagnose breast cancer case against radiologist. Defense verdict.

Weaving v. The City of Hillsboro, 763 F.3d 1106 (9th Cir. 2014)

Employment discrimination claim by former police sergeant alleging disability discrimination based on attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity disorder. Appellate court vacated jury verdict, held for employer.

Sanders v. The City of Newport, 657 F.3d 772 (9th Cir. 2011)

Alleged violation of federal and state Family and Medical Leave Acts. Defense verdict for employer, overturned in part by the Ninth Circuit.

Kuhn et al. v. Bill S. Schnall M.D. and Richmond Pediatrics Clinic, Inc., 2008 WL 4725775 (King County Superior Court 2008)

Claims by a number of male patients against a pediatric clinic and individual physician for alleged sexual misconduct and boundary violations. After a seven-week trial, the jury found for the defendant Richmond Pediatrics Clinic. Decision later reversed on appeal due to juror misconduct.

EDUCATION

Santa Clara University School of Law

J.D., 1986

San Francisco State University

B.A., *magna cum laude*, 1983

EXPERIENCE

Hart Wagner LLP

Partner, 2002–present

Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt

Partner, 1993–2002

Associate, 1987–1993

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Oregon State Court

Washington State Court

U.S. District Court: District of Oregon; Eastern and Western Districts of Washington

United States Court of Appeals: Ninth Circuit; Federal Circuit; District of Columbia Circuit; United States Supreme Court

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers

Member, American Board of Trial Advocates

Martindale Hubbell AV Preeminent Rating

Best Lawyers in America

Medical Malpractice Law — Defendants, 2012 — 2020

Professional Malpractice Law — Defendants, 2014 — 2020

Ethics and Professional Responsibility Law, 2014 — 2020

Legal Malpractice Law — Defendants, 2014 — 2020

Lawyer of the Year, Legal Malpractice Law — Defendants, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021

Oregon Super Lawyers

Employment Litigation: Defense, 2006 — 2020

Top 25 Women Lawyers, 2011 — 2020

Top 50 Lawyers, 2017, 2020

Benchmark Litigation

Local Litigation Star — Labor and Employment, 2015–2018

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Oregon State Bar, Labor and Employment Law Section, Federal Practice and Procedure Committee, 2008 — 2010

Oregon Association of Defense Counsel, Past Chair, Employment Law Subcommittee

American Bar Association, Past Chair, Torts and Insurance Practice Section, Employers’ Liability Subcommittee, National Institute Faculty, 1992, 1994

PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

“Ending Probationary Periods,” Quote, Human Resource Executive Online, 2015

“Ten Ways to Avoid an Employment Lawsuit,” Portland Business Journal, 2014

PRESENTATIONS

“Employment Law–Veterans’ Rights — USERRA and the Implications of Staub v. Proctor Hospital on Cat’s Paw Liability,” Oregon State Bar Labor & Employment Section Annual Meeting, 2011

“Trial Skills,” Oregon State Bar CLE Program, 18th Annual Litigation Institute, 2011

“Oregon Pleadings and Parties: Tips and Traps for the Unwary,” Oregon State Bar CLE Program, 2010

“OEC 104 In The Wake of Marcum v. Adventist Health,” Oregon Association of Defense Counsel Annual Convention, 2009

“Trial Advocacy in Action,” Oregon State Bar CLE Program, 16th Annual Litigation Institute, 2009

“Trial Evidence in Employment and Civil Rights Cases,” Oregon State Bar CLE Program, 2007

“Discovery and Punitive Damages Motions,” Oregon State Bar CLE Program, 2007

“Practical Considerations in Using Expert Witnesses,” Oregon State Bar CLE Program, 12th Annual Litigation Institute, 2005

“Powerful Motion Practice–Discovery Motions,” Oregon State Bar CLE Program, 2004

“Risk Management,” Dentist Benefits Insurance Company Training, 1994–2002

“An In-Depth Look at Title I of the ADA,” Oregon State Bar Americans with Disabilities Act CLE Program, 1996–1997

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

St. Andrew Nativity School, Finance Committee, 2014–present

Oregon Ballet Theatre, Board of Directors, 1989–1996
