



Rodney H. Lawson
Partner

Phone: 214-855-3054
Direct Fax: 214-758-3754
Email: rlawson@ccsb.com

“The Art of Law is seeing what you see in a piece of work. It is a passion.”

“I enjoy what I do. Practicing law is a very big part of who I am. I like the challenge of solving problems. It is flattering when people seek my help.”

Rodney is a partner at Carrington Coleman whose practice focuses primarily on healthcare litigation, but also includes products liability, toxic tort and a wide range of commercial litigation.

Rodney's healthcare practice involves advising healthcare facilities, physician networks and individual physicians on nonlitigation matters, such as physician credentialing, physician and nursing peer review, hospital and medical staff bylaws, EMTALA, HIPAA and medical ethics, as well as handling litigation arising out of a variety of circumstances. Some of these are medical malpractice defense; general personal injury defense; and occasional commercial litigation, typically involving hospital contractual disputes. His medical malpractice defense practice has included not only the more traditional medical-surgical areas, but also mental health/psychiatric malpractice.

Rodney also has extensive personal injury litigation experience in representing defendants in products liability and toxic tort litigation of various types.

Rodney's general commercial litigation practice has included matters involving oil and gas; franchisors and manufacturers in a variety of industries including farm machinery, automobiles, and alcoholic beverages; publishers; and landowners in condemnation proceedings.

“I am very grateful for the long-term relationships I have enjoyed with many clients. However, the firm is fully invested in and committed to every client, whether the relationship continues for decades or for only one discrete legal matter.”

Representative Matters

Health Law/Medical Malpractice

Rodney is the head of the firm's Health Law/Products Liability Practice Group. For more than 25 years, much of his law practice has focused on health law, primarily involving the representation of hospitals. He has successfully defended hospitals in numerous medical malpractice cases involving catastrophic injuries, including but not limited to matters concerning emergency room care, obstetrics, anesthesiology, radiology, neurology, and surgeries of all types. By way of recent example, see *Lone Star HMA, L.P. v. Wheeler*, 292 S.W.3d 812 (Tex. App. -- Dallas 2009, no pet.). Rodney's experience in this area also includes prolific representation of free standing psychiatric hospitals in medical negligence cases of all sorts, including patient suicides. He also has extensive experience representing hospitals in credentialing and peer review matters, both in the context of litigation and more often in the administrative hearing setting. Rodney has written and lectured extensively on the related subjects of physician credentialing, physician peer review, and the complex world of peer review/hospital committee privileges. Rodney also regularly advises hospitals and their committees on non-litigation health care issues. By way of example, he is very experienced in counseling hospitals on end of life legal issues.

Products Liability/Toxic Torts/Personal Injury Defense

For virtually his entire legal career spanning almost 30 years, Rodney has defended products liability cases, including but not limited to toxic tort matters. His practice has included the trial of automotive, farm machinery, and asbestos lawsuits, and the successful defense of medical devices manufacturers. As discussed in greater detail below, Rodney has extensive oil and gas litigation experience. In the personal injury context, he successfully obtained a summary dismissal of a lawsuit against a major oil company after extensive litigation arising from serious personal injuries sustained as the result of an explosion at an oil storage facility.

Oil and Gas

Rodney grew up in Longview, Texas, in the middle of the East Texas Oilfield. That experience has provided him with extensive practical knowledge of the industry. Rodney has successfully tried and argued on appeal numerous energy related matters involving such varied subject matters as title disputes over highly successful producing properties, breach of contract claims concerning a salt water disposal storage facility, and the aforementioned explosion at an oil storage facility. One case originating in Upshur County, Texas, was ultimately won in the Supreme Court of Texas, which case is cited not only for the land title law made by the Supreme Court but also because of the successful use of creative arguments relying upon federal and state constitutional law barring gender based discrimination. *Wessely Energy Corp. v. Jennings*, 736 S.W.2d 624 (Tex. 1987). Other successful results include *McKinney v. Waggoner-Baldrige* (in an unpublished opinion, the Fort Worth Court of Appeals affirmed a trial court judgment entered following a successful jury trial in Wise County involving a mineral title dispute); *Young v. Amoco Production Company*, 610 F. Supp. 1479 (E.D. Tex. 1985), *aff'd* 786 F.2d 1161 (5th Cir. 1986) (successful defense of mineral title in federal court in Tyler concerning producing property in East Texas); *The Herd Corporation, et al v. Triple J Investments, Inc.* (in an unpublished opinion, the Houston Fourteenth Court of Appeals affirmed a judgment in favor of Triple J Investments entered after a jury trial in Bureson County concerning the operation of a salt water disposal well).

Franchise/Distributor Litigation

Rodney has successfully defended numerous lawsuits throughout Texas brought against franchisors and distributors in various industries. Representative clients include John Deere Company, Ford Motor Company, and Coors Brewing Company (now Molson Coors Brewing Company). By way of example, see *Dennis Nauslar, et al. v. Coors Brewing Co., et al.*, 170 S.W.3d 242 (Tex. App. -- Dallas 2005, no pet.) (affirmance by Dallas Court of Appeals of trial court's summary dismissal of case brought under the Texas Beer Industry Fair Dealing Law).

Publisher Representation

Rodney has successfully defended publisher defendants in litigation ranging from an antitrust lawsuit brought under the Robinson-Patman Act to more routine breach of contract claims.

Personal

Rodney and his wife of over 30 years, Cindy, have three children. The two eldest are gainfully employed after having graduated from Austin College and the University of Texas at Austin, respectively. The youngest is studying (Rodney hopes) at the University of Texas in Austin. Rodney is an avid sports fan (and he claims former athlete) and political junkie. These experiences have taught him -- on numerous occasions -- how to deal with defeat. He has coached (not well) a number of youth sports teams, as well as a few high school mock trial teams. Rodney is a very proud and active member of Royal Lane Baptist Church, where he currently serves as Chairman of the Finance Committee. In addition to his native English, Rodney speaks below average Spanish, poor Russian, and laughable French. Rodney has been actively involved in mental health care issues, addressing the needs of the homeless, and in the provision of pro bono legal services to the poor for many years, although not as active as he would like to be. Though a long time Dallas resident, Rodney still does -- and always will -- consider Longview, Texas, to be his home and his alma mater, Pine Tree High School, to be hallowed ground. He credits his numerous summer jobs growing up in East Texas (working in the blast furnace at Lone Star Steel, baling hay, laying asphalt, life guarding, and loading beverage trucks) with motivating him to get an education so he can work in a tall building in an air-conditioned office and do what he loves to do -- practice law.

Education

University of Texas
J.D., with honors, December 1980
Order of the Coif

Baylor University
B.A., *summa cum laude*, 1977
Phi Beta Kappa

Admittances

Texas 1981
Texas Supreme Court
U.S. District Courts for the Northern, Eastern, Southern, and Western Districts of Texas
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

Associations/Affiliations

Member: Board of Directors, Mental Health Association of Greater Dallas.
Fellow: Texas Bar Foundation; Dallas Bar Foundation

Speeches/Publications

Co-Author, *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: A Perspective for the Health Care Industry* (2009).

Co-Author, *The Peer Review and Self-Evaluation Privileges and Immunities - Has The Pendulum Swung Too Far?*, The Sedona Conference Journal, Vol. 3 (2002).

Physician Credentialing Presents Unique Challenge, Texas Healthcare Metroplex, Vol. 2, Issue 7 (2000).

Co-Author, *Medical Malpractice and Physician Credentialing For General Practitioners* (1998).