



## William E. Wright, Jr.

Partner

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### Practices

Commercial Litigation  
Directors & Officers Liability  
Professional Liability of  
Attorneys, Accountants,  
Agents & Brokers

### Industries

Healthcare  
Insurance

### Bar Admissions

Louisiana, All State and  
Federal Courts  
The U.S. District Court for the  
Eastern District of Louisiana  
The U.S. District Court for the  
Middle District of Louisiana  
The U.S. District Court for the  
Western District of Louisiana  
The U.S. Court of Appeals for  
the Fifth Circuit

### Education

J.D., Tulane University, 1974  
B.A., Tulane University,  
Economics, 1971

Mr. Wright has handled a variety of cases arising out of business disputes, including claims involving breach of contractual obligations, breach of fiduciary duty, securities fraud and RICO violations.

Often Mr. Wright's represents professionals who become the target of claims for damages. A significant part of Mr. Wright's practice involves claims against directors and officers, attorneys, and certified public accountants. Mr. Wright focuses his attention on solving issues involving ethical questions and conflicts of interest. He provides personal attention to each case and has in-depth knowledge and experience in the client's industry.

In his spare time, Mr. Wright enjoys sailing and volunteering in the local community.

### Professional Associations

- American Bar Association
  - Professionals, Officers and Directors Liability Committee of TIPS, Chair, 1998-1999
  - Fidelity and Surety Committee of TIPS
  - Forum on the Construction Industry
- New Orleans Bar Association
  - Officer, 1984-1986
  - Executive Committee, 1980-1984
- Louisiana State Bar Association
  - House of Delegates, 1985-1990
- Lawyer's Professional Liability Consortium

### Accolades

- *Martindale-Hubbell AV®* Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated Lawyer
- *The Best Lawyers in America®* List, 2007-2019
- *Best Lawyers®* 2017 Legal Malpractice Law – Defendants “Lawyer of the Year,” New Orleans, LA
- Louisiana *Super Lawyers* List, 2007-present
- Louisiana *Super Lawyers* “Top 50” List, 2011
- New Orleans *CityBusiness* “Leadership in Law” List: Top 50 Lawyers in New Orleans, 2011
- *New Orleans Magazine's* “Top Lawyers” List, 2012, 2016-2018

## Representative Successes

- **Energy Contract Dispute - Arbitration**

Mr. Wright successfully defended a top oil and gas company in connection with a contractual dispute arising out of an Operating Agreement with a utility company. Under the Agreement, the utility operates a power plant which provides energy to the client's refinery. The utility was seeking an increase in the annual fee for operating the power plant. After a two and one-half day hearing, an arbitration panel accepted Mr. Wright's position, saving his client more than \$800,000 per year.

- **Attorney Liability**

Mr. Wright and Ms. Meade were successful in obtaining a summary judgment in favor of their client, a Florida law firm, who was sued by its former client in an adversary proceeding in Federal Bankruptcy Court in New Orleans. The plaintiff had hired the law firm to represent her interests in connection with a Business Services Agreement with two companies after those companies had filed for bankruptcy protection in the Eastern District of Louisiana in March 2006. In May 2007, the firm's client, on behalf of the plaintiff, filed an adversary proceeding against one of the companies alleging, inter alia, breach of contract. In January 2008, the plaintiff filed a Third Party Demand against its former counsel asserting that its advice caused her to incur substantial damages with regard to her violation of certain Bankruptcy Court orders. Mr. Wright and Ms. Meade filed a Motion for Summary Judgment contending that at all times the firm properly advised the plaintiff of her duties and obligations under the Bankruptcy Court Order. The Judge agreed, granting summary judgment in favor of the firm, and dismissing the Third Party Complaint. *In re OCA, Inc.*

- **Actuary Liability**

Mr. Wright and Ms. Meade handled this actuary liability case where all claims, totaling \$51 million in alleged damages, were dismissed after a four-day trial. Their client, an actuarial firm, was accused of breach of duty in regard to the management of a pension plan with \$400 million in assets. The plaintiff maintained that the actuary should have advised more conservative investments because the investors were maturing and should have advised not to implement additional benefits to the plan because they were too expensive. Mr. Wright and Ms. Meade successfully countered that the actuary did not have a duty to advise more conservative investments and had adequately advised as to the issue of benefits.

After obtaining a favorable verdict, Mr. Wright and Ms. Meade successfully defeated an appeal to the Fifth Circuit. On appeal, the plaintiffs-appellants argued that the lower court erred procedurally when it dismissed the defendants' Rule 52(c) motion, and granted in favor of the plaintiffs, before the defendants' argued their case in chief. The plaintiffs further argued that the lower court failed to conduct a proper comparative fault analysis under Louisiana law, and thus, the defendants should have been assigned some degree of fault. The Fifth Circuit affirmed, finding that both of the plaintiff-appellants' arguments on appeal failed.

- **Professional Liability**

Mr. Wright handled this case where coverage was denied under a professional liability policy.

*Meredith v. Federation of Teachers*, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, 2000 U.S. Appeal Lexis, 6635, April 11, 2000.

- **Insurance Coverage**

Mr. Wright handled this case denying coverage for a claim made and reported subsequent to the expiration of a claims-made policy.

*Lloyd v. Ichinose*, Supreme Court of Louisiana, 1999 La. Lexis 2232, September 8, 1999.

- **Account Liability**  
Mr. Wright obtained a decision upholding the dismissal of a malpractice claim against attorneys.  
*Harrison v. Guenther*, Court of Appeal of Louisiana, Fifth Circuit, 726 So.2d 508, La. App. Lexis 152, January 26, 1999
- **Attorney Liability**  
Mr. Wright obtained dismissal of an attorney claim.  
*Academy Mortgage v. Juarez*, 740 So.2d 708 (La. App. 5th Cir. 1999).
- **Attorney Liability**  
Mr. Wright appeared as amicus counsel in a decision strictly construing the statutes of limitations for claims against attorneys.  
*Reeder v. North*, Supreme Court of Louisiana, 701 So.2d 1291, 1997 La. Lexis 2873, October 21, 1997.
- **Attorney Liability**  
Mr. Wright handled this appeal upholding the dismissal of a third-party claim against an attorney.  
*Ulmer v. Frisard*, Court of Appeal of Louisiana, Fifth Circuit, 694 So.2d 1046, 1997, La. App. Lexis 1194, April 29, 1997.
- **D&O Liability**  
Mr. Wright obtained dismissal of this claim against a director/officer and his D&O carrier.  
*Grimaldi Construction, Inc. v. Robinson*, USDC ED La., 1997 U.S. Dist. Lexis, 5674, April 18, 1997.

### Publications

- “Public Accountant Review Panels in Louisiana: Lessons Learned from the First Ten Years,” Article co-authored by Bill Wright, *Lagniappe Magazine*, August/September 2007.
- “Ethical Considerations in Representing Multiple Parties in Litigation,” Article by Mr. Wright, *Tulane Law Review*, Vol. 79.
- “Attorneys as Defendants,” Article by Mr. Wright, *The Practical Lawyer*, American Law Institute, September 2002.
- “Professional Liability,” Article by Mr. Wright, *Law and Practice of Insurance Coverage Litigation*, West Group, 2000.

### Presentations

- “The Ethical Quagmire of Representing Multiple Parties in Litigation,” Ethics CLE Presentation, New Orleans Bar Association Inn of Court, November 2009.
- “Mediation Illustrated,” National Legal Malpractice Conference, Fall 2009.
- “Accountant Liability in the Context of Claims by Sureties,” ABA-TIPS Surety and Fidelity Meeting, 2006. American Bar Association Annual Meeting, 2004.
- “Ethical Considerations in Representing Multiple Parties in Litigation,” Tulane University Admiralty Law Institute, 2004.
- “Business Valuation and General Expert Use,” CNA Defense Network Meeting, 2002.