



Lawrence H. Heftman

PARTNER

Larry is a trial lawyer and litigator who heads the Complex Litigation practice in Chicago.



Industries

[Nonprofits & Associations](#)
[Private Companies](#)

Practices

[Communications & Technology](#)
[Complex Litigation](#)
[Private Clients, Trusts & Estates](#)
[Real Estate](#)

Education

Harvard Law School, JD, Harvard Civil Rights - Civil Liberties Law Review, Solicited Content Editor; Ames Moot Court Competition, Semifinalist; magna cum laude, 2004

Emory University, BA, Phi Beta Kappa; summa cum laude, 2000

Offices

[Chicago](#)

Phone

[312.258.5725](#)

Email

lawrence.heftman@afslaw.com

Larry has litigated high-stakes complex commercial disputes throughout the country with a strong record of success in jury and bench trials. He has a diverse practice involving commercial disputes, including fiduciary litigation, shareholder disputes, antitrust litigation, director and officer liability, audit malpractice, trust and estate litigation, class actions, and real estate and consumer claims, with a particular focus on financial institutions and telecommunications companies.

Among other significant accomplishments, Larry was recently co-counsel in a federal bench trial over audit malpractice claims leading to a \$625 million damages award.

Client Work

- Prosecuted claims against auditor resulting in \$625 million damages award, the largest ever auditing malpractice damages award, after five-week bench trial.
- Represented a Fortune 500 financial institution in four-week jury trial resulting in a complete trial victory, successfully defeating claims for more than \$65 million in damages and obtaining a judgment for more than \$1.2 million for his client.
- Representing a chicken processor in a multidistrict antitrust litigation and related state Attorney General actions in Washington, Alaska, and New Mexico.
- Prosecuted director & officer claims leading to multimillion dollar verdict after several week jury trial in California.
- Represented a real estate seller in multi-week bench trial, defeating claims of breach of contract and for specific performance, achieving a complete victory resulting in full recovery to client on counterclaim.
- Won summary judgment defending trustee of \$150+ million trust against breach of fiduciary duty claims brought by a state attorney general and contingent beneficiaries.
- Defeated multimillion dollar fraud and breach of fiduciary duty claim on behalf of Fortune 100 financial institution. Won motion to dismiss with prejudice, avoiding any discovery cost to his

client.

- Defended corporate directors against shareholder class action resulting in summary judgment ruling upheld by Delaware Supreme Court.
- Represented plaintiff in fidelity bond lawsuit involving fraud and conflict of interest in loan approval resulting in favorable settlement.
- Prosecuted trust construction claim and achieved summary judgment for beneficiary compelling trust distribution. Affirmed on appeal.
- Prosecuted claims for breach of fiduciary duty and legal malpractice claim against individual trustee and law firm involving hundreds of millions of dollars in damages, leading to favorable settlement.
- Bench trial in commercial landlord-tenant dispute resulting in complete verdict in client's favor for possession and damages.
- Tried multi-day arbitration regarding contingent attorney fee and legal ethics dispute leading to favorable settlement during arbitration.
- Conduct investigation of claims for improper lending and underwriting violations.

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

Presentations

- "Witness Preparation," Pincus Professional Education's Mastering the Deposition (Apr. 13, 2017)
- "Cain v. Abel, Dealing with Sibling Rivalries in Family Owned Businesses," American Bar Association Webinar (Apr. 19, 2016)

Recognitions

- The Best Lawyers in America, *Best Lawyers* (2021-2024)
- Illinois Leading Lawyer, Law Bulletin's *Illinois Leading Lawyers Network* (2020-2021)
- Emerging Lawyer, Law Bulletin Publishing Company's *Leading Lawyers* (2016-2019)

Professional Activities

Larry regularly represents indigent clients at the Chicago Volunteer Legal Services clinic addressing their critical needs in bankruptcy, divorce, and child custody.

Larry has also taken on significant and complex pro bono litigation. Larry has litigated two related federal lawsuits, including a federal jury trial, on behalf of an individual falsely accused and detained after the 9/11 attacks. He also represented an inmate on Georgia's death row in state habeas evidentiary proceedings.

Bar Admissions

[Illinois](#)

Court Admissions

[US Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit](#)
[US Court of Appeals, 6th Circuit](#)
[US Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit](#)
[US Court of Appeals, 11th Circuit](#)
[US District Court, Northern District of Florida](#)
[US District Court, Central District of Illinois](#)
[US District Court, Northern District of Illinois \(Trial Bar\)](#)
[US District Court, Southern District of Indiana](#)
[US District Court, Eastern District of Michigan](#)
[US District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin](#)