Paul Marshall Harris

PARTNER

Paul provides legal counsel for clients in the Automotive industry.



Industries

Automotive & Transportation
— Automotive

Education

Vermont Law School, JD, 1979
University of Bridgeport, BA, 1973

Offices

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Paul has more than 30 years of experience representing and providing strategic advice to closely-held businesses, publicly traded businesses, distribution businesses and franchises. In particular, he concentrates his practice representing motor vehicle dealers and is legal counsel and a strategic advisor to numerous automobile dealers throughout New England advising them on buy-sell agreements, trade regulatory practices, compliance issues, matters involving dealer terminations and protests, labor and employment matters, wage and hours compliance, defense of consumer protection claims, breach of contract actions and other commercial litigation disputes. Several large marine dealers and a buying cooperative for marine dealers have also come to him for counsel.

Paul has also been general counsel to the Massachusetts State Automobile Dealers Association and has advised several state motor vehicle dealer associations. He has served as an expert witness on motor vehicle dealer matters before several courts in New England. Paul is also a frequent speaker and writer on matters related to motor vehicle dealers and the automobile industry. He is a founding member of the National Automobile Dealer Counsel.

Client Work

Paul’s significant cases and representative matters include:

- Prevented, via a state court action, the location of a new dealer location within the relevant market area of an existing dealer. Received the highest award of attorney’s fees in the Commonwealth at the time of the award.
- Represented a large publicly traded automobile dealership entity in defending the placement of an additional motor vehicle dealership location.
- Defended and prevented the termination of numerous motor vehicle dealers by various motor vehicle manufacturers and distributors.
- Prosecuted an accounting malpractice matter on behalf of a motor vehicle dealer and obtaining a judgment in negligence as well as unfair and deceptive practices against the accountant. The matter was appealed to the Federal District Court of Appeals and was able to successfully argue

before the Federal District Court of Appeals that the lower court findings should be affirmed.

- Prevented the termination of numerous dealers' floor plan sources.
- Arbitrated successfully on behalf of numerous wind-down motor vehicle dealers under federal law.
- Represented a closely-held business in a counterclaim for unfair and deceptive practices. Successfully defeated the claims brought against the closely-held business and prevailed on the counterclaims for unfair and deceptive practices.
- Settled a shareholder dispute between the majority shareholder and the minority shareholders without the need for litigation.
- Represented closely-held businesses and motor vehicle dealers against unfair and defective practice claims.
- Represented motor vehicle dealers and closely-held businesses in several employee fraud cases.
- Advised on compliance to a non-compete agreement in launching a startup company.
- Represented over one hundred privately held motor vehicle dealers in buy-sell transactions of motor vehicle dealerships as well as the acquisition of the related real estate.
- Represented seller in the sale of the motor vehicle dealership to a publicly traded company.
- Represented numerous closely-held businesses in buy-sell transactions.
- Represented numerous motor vehicle dealers as well as closely-held business in their financing transactions.

Previous Work

Prior to joining ArentFox Schiff, Paul was a partner and co-chair of the Automotive group for a mid-sized boutique firm.

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

Publications

Paul is featured in the following publications:

- "How Are Your Doc Fee Disclosures?" Massachusetts Auto Dealer Magazine, April 2025.
- "Massachusetts Cases to Watch in 2021," *Law360* (Jan. 2021)
- "Herb Chambers Settlement Over Disputed Compensation Practice to Total $21 Million," *The Boston Globe* (Feb. 2020)
- "Driving Towards A Change In Compensation," *Talking Points PM, The Boston Globe* (Nov. 2019)
- "Governor Proposes 'Fix' for Commission-Only Employees," *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly* (Oct. 2019)
- "Expert Unnecessary to Support Lemon Law Claim," *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly* (Aug. 2019)

Presentations

- "Top 10 Legal Issues Impacting Dealers in 2021," Webinar Presenter, National Alliance of Auto Dealer Advisors Conference (June 2021)
- "Top 10 Legal Issues Impacting Dealers," Presenter, National Alliance of Auto Dealer Advisors Conference (May 2019)

Recognitions

- *The Legal 500 United States* - Rail and Road (2025)
- *Massachusetts Super Lawyers* (2017, 2021-2023)

Boards & Memberships

Boards

- Vermont Law School, Dean’s Leadership Committee
- Jimmy Fund Council of Greater Boston

Memberships

- American Bar Association. Member
- Boston Bar Association, Member

Bar Admissions

Massachusetts

Court Admissions

Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court
US Court of Appeals, 1st Circuit
US Bankruptcy Court, District of Massachusetts