SpencerFane®

Melodie Freeman-Burney

Of Counsel

Contact

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Overview

Melodie Freeman-Burney represents businesses, policyholders, insurers, and other organizations in multifaceted litigation and insurance coverage matters, providing strategic counsel on disputes, claims, and risk management issues that can significantly impact their operations and financial interests.

For more than 38 years, Melodie has represented clients in a broad range of high-stakes civil litigation matters. Her experience includes insurance and commercial disputes, construction disputes, complex tort and product liability claims, wrongful death actions, class actions, shareholder derivative litigation, energy-related matters, and appellate proceedings in state and federal courts. Clients rely on her strategic approach to resolving complex legal issues and managing significant litigation risk.

A substantial portion of Melodie's practice focuses on insurance coverage, claims disputes, indemnity issues, and risk management advice. She advises both policyholders and insurance carriers on coverage issues involving a wide range of personal, professional, and commercial insurance products and represents clients in coverage litigation, alternative dispute resolution proceedings, bad faith claims, and major property damage and personal injury matters. She also provides insurance and risk management counsel to businesses across a variety of industries and has experience assisting with the formation of captive insurance companies.

Melodie has developed nationally recognized experience in several niche areas. She has worked extensively in the energy industry, including representing oil and gas drilling companies, operators, and equipment and service vendors, and representing propane retailers, manufacturers, and industry organizations. She has advised rental car companies on litigation, risk management, insurance, and contractual matters and has represented clients in significant personal injury, wrongful death, and product liability cases involving rental vehicles throughout the country.

Education

- University of Tulsa College of Law, 1988 (J.D.), *with highest honors*
- Oklahoma Baptist University, 1976 (B.A.), *magna cum laude, with honors*

Bar Admissions

- Oklahoma, 1988

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, 1988
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma, 1988
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma, 1988
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, 1988
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas, 2010
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas, 2010

Community Involvement

- University of Tulsa College of Law, Alumni Association, Library & Information Services Committee, Co-Chair, 2003-2004; Editorial Advisory Board, Co-Chair, 2006-2007; Board of Directors
- Oklahoma Baptist University, Board of Trustees, Former Member

Distinctions

- *Best Lawyers in America*, 2013-2027
- Martindale-Hubble, Bar Register of Preeminent Women Lawyers, Inaugural Member, 2011-present
- American Inns of Court, Former Member
- Order of the Curule Chair
- Scribes Honorable Member
- Oklahoma Bar Association, Outstanding Law Student, 1988
- *Tulsa Law Journal*, Articles Editor, 1987-1988

Memberships

- American Bar Association, Litigation Section; Insurance Section; Technology Section
- Oklahoma Bar Association, Legal Ethics Committee; Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee
- Tulsa County Bar Association, Technology Committee

Presentations and Publications

- "Jurisdiction Under the Bankruptcy Amendments of 1984: Summing Up the Factors," *22 Tulsa Law Journal 167*, 1986

Related Experience

- Achieved an eight-figure settlement for an energy client in a bad faith insurance lawsuit.
- Assisted multiple clients in creating captive insurance companies.
- Successfully defended client in arbitration involving contractual indemnity.
- Negotiated and drafted specialty oil and gas operating agreements.
- Obtained numerous summary judgments in insurance coverage disputes.

- Successfully secured insurer's retraction of denial of coverage in construction dispute without resort to litigation.
- Successfully resolved all coverage disputes and secured client's full nine-figure insurance limits for a settlement in a directors and officers liability lawsuit.