



## Aaron French

SHAREHOLDER IN ST. LOUIS, MO

An experienced litigator, Aaron has represented clients facing many varied matters in both state and federal courts. Aaron has tried both bench and jury trials and has obtained successful trial verdicts for his clients. He has prepared and successfully argued a number of dispositive motions that resulted in client victories. He has also successfully represented clients in arbitration and has settled numerous matters to his clients' satisfaction at mediation.

Aaron has prepared appellate briefs and argued issues of first impression in the State of Missouri. Whether arguing before a judge or jury, Aaron is a critical contributor to Sandberg Phoenix's ongoing success and reputation as the go-to law firm for business and business litigation matters.

Having developed a deep knowledge of several industries, Aaron represents insurers in insurance coverage and bad faith cases. Aaron provides clients facing issues in these areas not only top-shelf representation but also in-depth analysis relating to complicated factual scenarios and complex legal issues. His effective, comprehensive analysis is performed cost-consciously in order to provide clients with the most superior legal services at a reasonable rate. Aaron also contributes to the Bad Faith Blog, the premiere insurance blog on the Internet.

Aaron joined the firm in 2003 and practices business litigation and product liability. He currently serves as a member of the Sandberg Phoenix Executive Committee and Compensation Committee, and is team leader of the Insurance Group. He has previously served on the firm's Recruiting Committee, and as the Business Litigation Practice Group Leader.

Outside of the office, Aaron enjoys golfing, attending St. Louis sporting events and concerts and spending time with his wife and young children. He is an avid moviegoer and likes keeping up with several television series.

### SUCCESSSES

Aaron obtained summary judgment for an insurance carrier in Missouri State Court in a coverage dispute involving a worker's compensation policy.

Aaron obtained summary judgment on behalf of an insurer in the U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri. The case involved numerous insureds who were involved in a multi-vehicle accident which left one of the claimants paralyzed. After satisfying the limits on policies, summary judgment was granted due to exhaustion.

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### SERVICES

Appellate & Complex Litigation

Commercial Litigation

Insurance Coverage & Bad Faith

Product & Toxic Tort Liability

Professional Liability

### INDUSTRIES

Automotive

Brokers / Dealers & Financial  
Advisors

Construction & Development

Entrepreneurs, Closely Held &  
Family Owned Business

Insurance

Manufacturing & Distribution

Recreational Products

Restaurants

Transportation

Wholesale & Retail Services

In a case of first impression before the Missouri Supreme Court, Aaron obtained a favorable ruling for a client which exempted them from state sales taxes under a federal law prohibiting the imposition of taxes on air commerce or air transportation. The case received both national and local media attention.

After a four-day jury trial in U.S. District Court-Eastern District of Missouri, Aaron obtained a six-figure jury verdict for his client on multiple breach of contract counts relating to the rentals of heavy drilling equipment.

After a three-day bench trial, Aaron obtained a complete defense verdict for his clients, who were alleged to have breached their fiduciary duties as trustees of a homeowners' association at the Lake of the Ozarks.

Aaron obtained summary judgment in the City of St. Louis for an insurer in a breach of contract and equitable garnishment suit relating to alleged coverage for a third-party claim stemming from a personal injury to a co-employee which resulted in a \$750,000 judgment against the alleged insured. The summary judgment was appealed by the opposing party. Aaron handled all aspects of the appeal, including oral argument. The summary judgment was affirmed by the Missouri Court of Appeals.

Aaron obtained summary judgment for an insurer in a declaratory judgment action filed in U.S. District Court-Western District of Missouri regarding whether the insurer properly denied coverage under a claims made and reported employment practices liability policy when the insured failed to provide timely notice of an EEOC charge, which later resulted in a lawsuit.

Aaron assisted in a week-long arbitration hearing under the International Rules of Arbitration, which resulted in a multi-million dollar arbitration award for our client.

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American Bar Association

Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis

Claims and Litigation Management Alliance (CLM), sits on the CLM – Extra-Contractual Committee

Defense Research Institute

Illinois State Bar Association

Lawyer's Association of St. Louis

Mackrell International, one of the world's premier networks of independent legal firms.

Missouri Bar Association

Missouri Organization of Defense Lawyers

Serves as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, which is made up of lawyers, judges, law faculty and legal scholars who have demonstrated outstanding dedication to the highest principles of the profession and their communities. Only one percent of lawyers licensed to practice in a given jurisdiction are invited to become a member.

## **EDUCATION**

J.D., Saint Louis University School of Law, *cum laude*

Aaron was the editor of the *Saint Louis University Law Journal*.

B.A., Illinois State University, *magna cum laude*

## **LICENSURE(S)**

Illinois

Missouri

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri

United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri

United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois

United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit

## **CIVIC ACTIVITIES**

Aaron gives back to the community by being involved in the following organizations:

Member of the Knights of Columbus and the Sons of the American Legion

Member of the South St. Louis County Chamber of Commerce

Parishioner of Assumption Catholic Church of Mattese

Mentor for the SLU LAW Pre-law Undergraduate Scholars Program

## **PODCAST**

"The Handling of Third Party Claims in Missouri," A.M. Best Insurance Law Podcast

## **PRESENTATIONS**

"Ethical Decision Making in the Insurance Industry," CPCU Central Missouri i-Day Meeting

"Negotiation Strategies for Claims Professionals," Claims & Litigation Management

"Insurer, Adjuster, Agent and Broker Liability: A-Z," National Business Institute

"Practical Professionalism," Claims & Litigation Management Alliance Seminar

"Civil Court Procedure and Strategy Boot Camp," National Business Institute

"Bad Faith: How to Recognize it in Your Case," National Business Institute

Presenter 2019 DRI Insurance Coverage and Practice Symposium - New York City

## PUBLICATIONS

Co-author, "Missouri winds of change? New laws hold promise for insurance companies," *Westlaw Practitioners Insight Insurance | Journal Insurance* (Thomson Reuters) (March 16, 2018)

Co-author, "Bad Faith and Extra-Contractual Liability in Missouri – It's Not Just for Bodily Injury Claims Anymore," *CLM Magazine* (November 2017)

Quoted in "Lakers' Loss Gives Insurers Edge in TCPA Coverage Fights," *Law360* (August 24, 2017)

Quoted in "Insurance Cases to Watch in 2017," *Law360* (January 2, 2017)

Regional Author and Editor of the Defense Research Institute *Bad Faith Compendium*

## WEBINARS

Partnered with The Knowledge Group, "Bad Faith Claims and Its Impact on Insurance Companies"

## RECOGNITION

2014-2019

MISSOURI & KANSAS SUPER LAWYERS

Super Lawyer

Business Litigation and Insurance Coverage

2019

THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

Top Rated Lawyer in the Midwest

2017-2018

THE AMERICAN LAWYER AND CORPORATE COUNSEL

Legal Leader in Insurance Law

Ranked Among the Top 5% of Practice Area

2016

AMERICAN LAWYER MEDIA AND MARTINDALE HUBBELL

Top Rated Lawyer in Insurance Law

2014

LEGAL LEADERS

St. Louis' Top Rated Lawyers

2013

MISSOURI LAWYERS WEEKLY

Up & Coming Lawyer

MARTINDALE-HUBBELL®

AV Preeminent® Peer Review Rating™

Given by attorneys who have interacted with Aaron during his legal career.