

# OKLAHOMA

## Local litigation firms

### Highly recommended

Crowe & Dunlevy

McAfee & Taft

### Recommended

Conner & Winters

Corbyn Hampton

Fellers Snider Blankenship Bailey & Tippens

GableGotwals

Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson

Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville

Kirk & Chaney

Ryan Whaley Coldiron Shandy

## Local litigation stars

### Murray Abowitz

Abowitz Timberlake Dahnke & Gisinger  
Asbestos, Medical Devices

### Mark Blongewicz

Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson  
Construction, Insurance, Employment, Product Liability

### Joseph Bocock

McAfee & Taft  
Arbitration, Construction, Eminent Domain, Energy, Commercial, Insurance, Real estate

### John Burkhardt

McAfee & Taft  
ERISA, Insurance

### Michael Burrage

Burrage Law Firm  
Commercial Litigation

### George Corbyn, Jr

Corbyn Hampton  
Business, Commercial Litigation, Oil and Gas

### J Patrick Cremin

Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson  
Employment

### Gary Davis

Crowe & Dunlevy  
Energy, Oil and Gas

### Mark Dreyer

Conner & Winters  
Commercial, Insurance

### Eric Eissenstat

Fellers Snider Blankenship Bailey & Tippens  
Business, Commercial

### Bradley Gungoll

Gungoll Jackson Collins Box & Devoll  
Environmental, Oil and Gas, Personal Injury

### Joe Hampton

Corbyn Hampton  
Civil, Employment, Product Liability, Securities

### J Kevin Hayes

Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson  
Energy

### John Hermes

McAfee & Taft  
Antitrust, Banking, Commercial, Energy, Qui Tam

### Douglas Jackson

Gungoll Jackson Collins Box & Devoll  
Banking, Civil, Commercial

### John Kenney

McAfee & Taft  
Agriculture, Energy, Commercial, Intellectual Property, Product Liability

### James Kirk

Kirk & Chaney  
Commercial, Employment, Family, Oil & Gas

### Graydon Dean Luthey, Jr

Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson  
Commercial, Indian

### Laura McConnell-Corbyn

Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville  
Employment, Family

### D Kent Meyers

Crowe & Dunlevy  
Antitrust, Commercial

### Mack Morgan III

Crowe & Dunlevy  
Business, Commercial

### Clyde Muchmore

Crowe & Dunlevy  
Appellate, Civil, Communications, Media, Constitutional

### Drew Neville

Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville  
Civil, Criminal, Securities

### Charles Plumb

McAfee & Taft  
Labor & Employment

### Timothy Posey

Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson  
Commercial, Indian

### Reid Robison

McAfee & Taft  
Antitrust, Commercial, Product Liability, Securities, White Collar

### Anton Rupert

Crowe & Dunlevy  
Construction, Commercial, Product Liability, Toxic Tort

### Patrick Ryan

Ryan Whaley Coldiron Shandy  
Civil

### Michael Smith

Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson  
Class Action, Energy, Environmental, Oil

### Spencer Smith

McAfee & Taft  
Commercial, Intellectual Property, Insurance, Securities

### Steve Soulé

Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson  
Bankruptcy

### James Sturdivant

GableGotwals  
Antitrust, Contracts, Financing, Securities, Trade Regulation

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**Terry Thomas**

Crowe & Dunlevy  
Bankruptcy, Business, Creditors' Rights

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**Terry Tippens**

Fellers Snider Blankenship Bailey & Tippens  
Business, Commercial

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**Jeff Todd**

McAfee & Taft  
Agriculture, Eminent Domain

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**James Webb**

McAfee & Taft  
Mass Torts

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## Future stars

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John Heil III  
Hall Estill Hardwick Gable Golden & Nelson

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Gerald Jackson  
Crowe & Dunlevy

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Michael McClintock  
McAfee & Taft

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# Oklahoma

**Oklahoma law firms are seeing delayed effects from the recession and maintain strong practices in employment, natural resources, and Indian law. As the nation ages, the state expects to handle more health care-related claims, particularly from Oklahoma City, where several large hospital complexes are based.**

## Highly recommended firms

### Crowe & Dunlevy

Founded in 1902, Crowe & Dunlevy is one of the state's most prestigious law firms, noted for its expertise in energy and natural resources, labor and employment, and real-estate matters. The firm has more than 100 lawyers in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Norman, with half of them dedicated to virtually all types of litigation. "I have nothing but good things to say about them," says a peer. "Outstanding law firm – has been for my entire career." Terry Thomas is director of the Tulsa office and has considerable expertise in business matters. With over 28 years of experience, Thomas has handled contracts, insurance policy, trade secrets, construction disputes, and creditors' rights. "Terry did an excellent job [with] the other ramifications of what we were doing on our mutual client," says a former co-counsel. "With Terry's assistance we were able to take issues and put it in broader context, give advice to clients."

Gary Davis is a 40-year veteran and, says a competitor, "has been listed deservedly" in several publications. He lends his knowledge in energy matters in an advisory capacity. Mack Morgan III is recognized for his expertise in antitrust, intellectual property, and securities matters. In 2008, he obtained a \$21 million jury verdict in the unfair use of monopoly power under the Packers & Stockyards Act. Anton Rupert has tried more than 40 civil cases and in three instances won a verdict of more than \$1 million. He focuses on construction law, commercial disputes, product liability, and toxic tort litigation. With more than 30 years of experience, Clyde Muchmore is noted for his civil litigation, appellate law, communications and media law practice. D Kent Meyers has significant experience in antitrust, commercial litigation, and intellectual property disputes.

### McAfee & Taft

McAfee & Taft is a top business litigation firm, having amassed a talented roster of attorneys who often find themselves on either side of disputes involving national firms. Founded in 1952 in Oklahoma City, the firm has more than 65 litigators focusing on a diverse range of industries, including construction law, energy law, and antitrust claims. Fifty of the firm's litigators have first-chair trial experience. Its growing Tulsa office

regularly partners with the Oklahoma City office and is in the midst of strengthening its full-service capabilities.

Highly ranked by peers, John Hermes covers a wide range of business-related litigation, with emphasis in banking, insurance coverage, product liability, and *qui tam* disputes. A peer commends his professionalism: "He was responsive to me and allowed me to be responsive to my client. ... He did all that without compromising his representation of his own client." Hermes and a team of McAfee & Taft lawyers successfully obtained the dismissal of a multibillion-dollar claim in which a plaintiff alleged Chromalloy Oklahoma, Sequa Corporation, and the Carlyle Group violated the False Claims Act. The firm persuaded the court to dismiss the case based on the plaintiff's failure to state a claim and failure to plead fraud with particularity. The plaintiff amended his complaint, and the firm again has filed a motion to dismiss.

John Burkhardt, John Kenney and Gerald Hilsher successfully represented Brian Rogers in joint-property claims against SolarWinds, a computer network management software company, and its founder for breach of contract, fraud, and deceit. Rogers claimed to have co-authored and co-owned several of the company's software products, as well as to orally agreeing to future potential compensation for helping grow the company. After a hard-fought case, Rogers and SolarWinds reached a confidential settlement in December 2009.

## Recommended firms

### Conner & Winters

Founded in Tulsa in 1933, Conner & Winters has more than 100 attorneys in offices across south central US and Washington, DC. "Good firm," notes a competitor. "It originated in Tulsa and now has a significant presence in Oklahoma City." The firm is noted for its expertise in appellate, commercial, ERISA, product liability, and propane litigation. Its appellate practice has had former judicial law clerks and attorneys who clerked for the US Supreme Court, federal courts of Appeals, district courts, and state judges. Well-regarded in ERISA litigation, the firm handles fiduciary claims and matters concerning stock options, COBRA, and executive compensation. In propane litigation, the firm has defended an

underground storage and terminal operator in a case concerning a propane leak that resulted in multiple deaths and injuries in a KOA campground. With more than 20 years of experience, Mark Dreyer is recognized for his work in propane litigation. He represents propane retailers and tank manufacturers in claims of property damage, wrongful death, and personal injury.

### Corbyn Hampton

Created in 2007 by litigators George Corbyn, Jr. and Joe Hampton, this boutique has developed an excellent reputation based on its small team of skilled lawyers. The five-attorney team handles claims in breach of contract, trademarks, fraud, and unfair trade practices. "Their principals are outstanding lawyers," says a competitor. With more than 30 years of experience, Corbyn is noted for handling oil and gas, securities, professional malpractice, and commercial disputes. He represents individuals, public and private companies, and governmental agencies. Hampton has spent 20 years taking on civil litigation and arbitration matters, in areas including employment, construction, personal injury and product liability. "We refer a lot of clients to them and hold them to a very high regard," says a peer. "If I need to refer a case, that's the first place I'd think of."

### Fellers Snider Blankenship Bailey & Tippens

Fellers Snider Blankenship Bailey & Tippens is recognized for its diverse litigation practice and its expertise in intellectual property. Formed in 1963 in Oklahoma City, the firm's more than 50 attorneys serve local, regional, and national clients. In the 1990s, the firm secured \$30 million in the largest punitive damage verdict the state has ever seen. Highly regarded by peers, Terry Tippens handles business and commercial litigation matters, including in banking, insurance, and intellectual property. He has tried more than 50 jury trials in his career, some involving more than \$100 million. Eric Eissenstat practices in business and commercial litigation, with significant expertise in areas such as antitrust, shareholder suits, class actions, and intellectual property. Among his notable achievements are a \$90 million defense verdict in an insurance bad faith case and a \$75 million judgment in a telecommunications contract dispute.

### GableGotwals

With offices in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, GableGotwals is particularly noted for its achievements in commercial, energy, employment, product liability, communications, and insurance. More than 60 lawyers serve individuals, corporations, and governmental agencies. The firm has obtained a favorable settlement for an oil company involving allegations of salt-water pollution of a fresh water aquifer. GableGotwals also obtained a defense verdict for an insurance company in a federal action

that involved claims of an insured being mentally incompetent to change the beneficiary of his policy before committing suicide. With more than 40 years of experience, **James Sturdivant** has significant experience handling business, anti-trust, securities, and financing disputes. He has appeared before state and federal courts of all levels, and has served as lead counsel in more than 100 cases.

#### Hall Estill

Founded in 1967 in Tulsa, Hall Estill is noted for its work in commercial and energy matters. The firm has additional offices in Oklahoma City, Arkansas, and Washington, DC. Clients say they choose the firm over its competitors for its exceptional service and lower rates. “I prefer Hall Estill’s ability to adopt the same passion that the client has on issues, whether the issues are technical, legal or commercial.” Hall Estill recently hired a handful of seasoned litigators, including Casey Cooper and David Newsome, former principals of a now-defunct firm. Phillip Free, Jr, recognized for his expertise in patents and trademarks, and Rachel Mathis, skilled in insurance defense matters, has also joined the firm. The firm fields teams of litigators who complement each other’s strengths. “Hall Estill’s best skills are leveraging its historical knowledge of the company and commitment to the company’s long-term success,” says a longstanding client. “The lawyers I have worked with are consistently passionate about their work and want all of their contributions to litigation to be concise, strategic, and in the best interest of the client.”

**Graydon Dean Luthey, Jr**, is a seasoned litigator focusing on commercial litigation and Indian law. Luthey and Sarah Jane Gillett successfully represented Williams Companies and its senior officers in a multibillion-dollar federal securities fraud class action. The firm obtained summary judgment after five years of litigation. Luthey and Gillett are also serving as lead defense counsel for Williams Companies in multidistrict litigation in which plaintiffs allege antitrust violations by energy marketing and trading companies.

**Steve Soule** is noted for his bankruptcy litigation practice. A client commends his strong interpersonal and commercial skills:

“Steve Soule, who assists us with financially troubled counterparties and bankruptcies, is the ideal outside counsel. He works equally efficiently and effectively on large and small matters.” Another adds: “I was very impressed not only with his style of working with clients but his abilities in the courtroom.”

A client commends **J Kevin Hayes** for his excellent judgment: “Kevin provides an experienced and realistic view of how cases might evolve either for or against his client. Kevin is truly an outstanding oil and gas litigator and client advocate.”

#### Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville

Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville is a firm highly regarded for its extensive litigation practice. “They are a blue-chip firm with blue-chip people,” says a competitor. More than 30 lawyers handle antitrust, class action,

#### Kirk & Chaney

Founded in 1982 in Oklahoma City, Kirk & Chaney is a seven-partner litigation boutique renowned for its family law practice. The firm also handles securities, product liability, insurance, and environmental matters. Highly regarded by peers, **James Kirk** focuses on commercial, oil and gas, employment, and family law. A competitor describes him as “the go-to family law guy for major divorces. He’s won almost always on one side or the other.” With more than 30 years of experience, **James Chaney** is known for his expertise in commercial and oil and gas disputes.

#### Ryan Whaley Coldiron Shandy

Long recognized as a strong litigation boutique, Ryan Whaley Coldiron Shandy has a national presence in energy and environmental law. A competitor attributes

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securities and environmental disputes. “They have some really good lawyers,” says a peer, noting their strength in handling litigation matters. The firm’s clients include corporate offices and directors, large insurance companies, and public accounting firms. **Drew Neville** is a former assistant US attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma. A competitor says Neville has “a very good reputation” and deserves to be recognized for his accomplishments. He has handled significant civil and criminal cases across the US, with emphasis in federal securities litigation. **Laura McConnell-Corbyn** focuses on family and employment law. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers.

the firm’s successes to its seasoned attorneys, some of them former US attorneys and leaders in environmental law: “They have collected talent in that firm.” In 2010, the firm obtained a \$54 million settlement for the city of Blackwell and the Blackwell Municipal Authority in a groundwater and soil-contamination suit involving Blackwell Zinc Company’s nearly 60-year smelting operation. Noted for his civil litigation expertise, **Patrick Ryan** rose to national prominence as a US attorney in his prosecution and conviction of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh. “Pat Ryan is an outstanding trial lawyer in numerous cases,” says a competitor. “You can try any case you want – he’s got a great resume.”