

Local litigation firms

Highly recommended

Adler Pollock & Sheehan

Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge

Partridge Snow & Hahn

Recommended

Blish & Cavanagh

Carroll Kelly & Murphy

Duffy Sweeney & Scott

Higgins Cavanagh & Cooney

Hinckley Allen & Snyder

Little Medeiros Kinder Bulman & Whitney

MacFadyen Gescheidt & O'Brien

Wistow & Barylck

Rhode Island

Despite its physical size, Rhode Island houses a large number of litigators that are among the smartest in the nation. With creative arguments for local clients, most of the litigators in the state know and respect each other. A reflection of the local marketplace, most litigators have experience in courtrooms around New England, but choose to set-up shop in Rhode Island because of the collegial atmosphere among lawyers.

Highly recommended firms

With one of the most diverse litigation practices in the state and a client list to prove their might, **Adler Pollock & Sheehan** is the “formidable foe” in Rhode Island courtrooms. The firm’s practice includes antitrust, intellectual property, securities and banking related matters. Founded in 1960, Adler Pollock & Sheehan has become a versatile, full-service litigation group. Partners say their “pragmatic approach to matters” keeps its clients coming back.

The firm’s toxic tort and products liability group drew incredible praise. Competitors call the group “impressive” and “extremely creative.” The firm handles the most high-profile and complex cases in Rhode Island federal and state courts. Group co-chair, **John Tarantino** drew in particular compliments as “a very impressive part of the firm.” Tarantino’s experience extends beyond toxic tort into white-collar and government work. His former clients include the ex-governor of Rhode Island and speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives. Tarantino defended the Senate in a Voting Rights Act case concerning redistricting litigation and constitutional matters.

Peers also recommended **Todd White** as a “future presence in the community.” White’s clients include Rhode Island municipalities, real estate developers and insurance carriers. With multi-million dollar victories under his belt already, White is certainly a name to watch in this tight-knit legal community.

The talented New England group of **Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge** sports four litigation offices in the northeast to go along with a national presence including 11 total offices. The Massachusetts group comes recommended, but the Rhode Island team of 12 partners reaches among the highly recommended by in-state peers.

Antitrust Department co-chair **Patricia Sullivan** is praised as “unbelievably knowledgeable.” She currently counsels

Rhode Island’s largest health care provider in merger matters with a large New England hospital that will create a seven-hospital system, the most comprehensive in the state. In past years, Sullivan won a trial verdict in a fraud case brought by the SEC and defended clients in Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act class-action.

The former chairman of the litigation department and managing partner of the firm, **Deming Sherman** drew recommendations from his peers. Sherman has more than 30 years experience in environmental matters at the trial and appeals level. He also handles litigation surrounding the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

Partridge Snow & Hahn’s 13-lawyer litigation office in Providence is one of the most sophisticated in the state. That prowess, combined with Warwick and New Bedford, Mass. expansions, boosts the firm onto the Highly Recommended list this year.

Steven Snow continues to impress competitors who say “he is a lawyer to be seen” in Rhode Island courtrooms. In the past year, Snow, alongside partner Robert Taylor, represented Commonwealth Land Title Insurance in a debate over a \$12 million title insurance policy issued by the client on Goat Island in Newport. The Rhode Island Supreme Court ruled in favor of Commonwealth and completely dismissed a counter claim on behalf of the defendants. Other clients of Snow include Washington Mutual and Bank of America. He also serves as Federal Bar Examiner in Rhode Island.

Peers also touted Providence partner **Howard Merten** for his products liability, insurance and intellectual property expertise. Clients say Merten is a “consummate professional.” One client boasted “the process was a good experience for us, considering it was an experience we didn’t want to have”. Merten continues to work

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-Adler Pollock & Sheehan



Local litigation stars

Robert Duffy
Duffy Sweeney & Scott

Joseph Cavanagh
Blish & Cavanagh

Matthew Medeiros
Little Medeiros Kinder Bulman & Whitney

Gerald Petros
Hinckley Allen

Steven Snow
Partridge Snow & Hahn

Patricia Sullivan
Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge

John Tarantino
Adler Pollock & Sheehan

Future stars

Kristin Rodgers
Blish & Cavanagh

Todd White
Adler Pollock & Sheehan

with McLaughlin & Moran in numerous cases brought by more than 350 plaintiffs against 99 defendants concerning a 2003 fire resulting in more than 100 deaths. The court is currently considering summary judgment motions in the case, with plaintiff's discovery coordination ongoing.

Recommended firms

The seven-partner litigation boutique of **Blish & Cavanagh** finds its home in Providence and is known for traveling throughout the state to fight cases for its clients. "They are very good," one competitor says of the firm's attorneys, who pride themselves on their client relationships. In its more than 20-year history, the group has handled a variety of corporate, commercial, personal injury, malpractice and libel cases. In recent years, the firm has expanded its group and expertise to include environmental, municipal, labor and employment litigation.

Co-founder **Joseph Cavanagh** is recommended by peers as "a strong lawyer in this small community." His accomplishments as a trial lawyer range from antitrust to products liability work. Known for his membership in the US Hockey Hall of Fame, peers praise Cavanagh for his "ability to outsmart" opposing counsel.

Duffy Sweeney & Scott's business litigation department is based on its ability to understand clients' needs by building partnerships with corporations in order to see their matters to completion. The firm's intellectual property practice drew large amounts of peer praise. The group offers brand, software technology and trade secret protection while the litigation group carries out patent, copyright and trademark matters.

Among the firm's 16 litigators is **Robert Duffy**, the firm's co-founder and an expert complex business litigator. With appearances in more than 15 different state courthouses, including California and Texas, Duffy exudes the knowledge and experience clients want from a litigator.

Higgins Cavanagh & Cooney boasts a three-person business litigation team for clients' matters. Charles Hambly, Lawrence McCarthy and John Walsh bring a wealth of litigation and trial experience to a variety of business issues, including environmental, health, insurance, labor, products liability, and personal injury cases. Hambly focuses on real estate and estate planning litigation. With more than 30 years experience in the Rhode Island court system, he has come to appear in numerous superior and supreme courts. McCarthy concentrates on litigation

matters arising from sale and acquisition of business assets. He is regularly called in as a tax expert as well. Walsh's practice takes a more medical slant as he focuses on the defense of professional liability claims against physicians.

The depth and breadth of **Hinckley Allen & Snyder** across New England lands it on a second recommended list along with its appearance in New Hampshire. The group earns a reputation from competitors as an aggressive firm that represents clients in a variety of matters. The firm's clients include General Electric, American Home Industries, Wyeth Laboratories, Black & Decker, Proctor & Gamble and Exxon Mobile. **Gerald Petros** "stands out" among competitors with his experience litigating environmental and compliance issues. Petros recently handled enforcement actions, including cutting-edge legislation involving the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act. Petros is capable of handling banking and corporate clients in US District Courts and US Circuit Courts of Appeals courts as well.

Little Medeiros Kinder Bulman & Whitney brings a unique brand of business dispute resolution to the Rhode Island litigation marketplace. The firm helps clients through reorganization, restructuring and resolution of complex issues. With that knowledge, the firm is better able to proceed when issues come full circle into a courtroom.

The firm hires attorneys from top-flight law schools and trains them to fight alongside the most impressive litigators in the state. New York University alum, **Matthew Medeiros** has more than 37 years of experience litigating complex antitrust, securities and fraud issues involving billions of dollars. With a client list similar to that of a New York City lawyer, his representation includes work for Sony, Lockheed Martin, Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs, the National Football League and Citadel Communications.

The six-person litigation group of **Wistow & Barylck** earns a reputation as "a very tough competitor" in Rhode Island courtrooms. The group is well-known for its personal injury expertise, which garnered much praise from competitors. Its case victories number in the millions of dollars for clients across the state. The firm takes cases for clients in employment, intellectual property and adoption. The intellectual property group achieved several large verdicts in trade secret, patent and copyright cases, including a multi-million dollar verdict against a major toy manufacturer for trade secret theft.

