

LOUISIANA

Local litigation firms

Highly recommended

Fishman Haygood Phelps Walmsley Willis & Swanson

Herman Herman Katz & Cotlar

Jones Swanson Huddell & Garrison

Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert

Recommended

Gainsburgh Benjamin David Meunier & Warshauer

Jones Walker

Neblett Beard & Arsenault

Local litigation stars

Richard Arsenault

Neblett Beard & Arsenault
Class Actions

Leonard Davis

Herman Herman Katz & Cotlar
Class Actions, Railroad Law

James Garner

Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert
Commercial Litigation, Environmental, Insurance,
Professional Liability, Toxic Tort

Russ Herman

Herman Herman Katz & Cotlar
Commercial Litigation, Maritime Law, Personal Injury

Gladstone Jones III

Jones Swanson Huddell & Garrison
Commercial Litigation, Environmental, Personal
Injury, Toxic Tort

James Klick

Herman Herman Katz & Cotlar
Maritime Law, Medical Negligence, Personal Injury,
Products Liability

Michael Koch

Neblett Beard & Arsenault
Personal Injury, Products Liability

Steven Lane

Herman Herman Katz & Cotlar
Employment, Products Liability, Railroad Law

Shea Lawrence

Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert
Construction, Personal Injury, Property Damage

Gerald Meunier

Gainsburgh Benjamin David Meunier & Warshauer
Class Actions, Medical Malpractice, Personal Injury,
Products Liability

William Neblett

Neblett Beard & Arsenault
Maritime Law, Medical Malpractice, Nursing Home
Negligence, Personal Injury

Kyle Schonekas

Schonekas Evans McGoey & McEachin
Civil Litigation, Commercial Litigation

James Swanson

Fishman Haygood Phelps Walmsley Willis &
Swanson
Commercial Litigation, Media, Securities

Lynn Swanson

Jones Swanson Huddell & Garrison
Commercial Litigation, Environmental, Personal
Injury, Toxic Tort

Patrick Vance

Jones Walker
Bankruptcy, Commercial Litigation, Creditors' Rights

Sharonda Williams

Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert
Civil Litigation, Commercial Litigation, Intellectual
Property



Louisiana

Buttressed by Hurricane Katrina-related litigation, Louisiana never saw much of a downturn in litigation. Lawyers think litigation will remain strong, but anticipate a return to normalcy, as the hurricane-related litigation dies down, and construction and contract disputes rise. A large number of people moved from New Orleans to Baton Rouge following Katrina, creating a lot of real estate litigation. Oil and gas remains busy, especially along the Texas border, where natural gas fields have led to disputes.

Highly recommended firms

Fishman Haygood Phelps Walmsley Willis & Swanson

Fishman Haygood Phelps Walmsley Willis & Swanson carries 23 lawyers, including nine dedicated to litigation, in its New Orleans office, serving clients like Capital One, IBM and Sony. The firm was founded in the mid-1990s by three leading business lawyers who left large firms to form a litigation boutique. Managing partner **James Swanson** heads the litigation group. “James Swanson is experienced, has great competence and depth in the securities litigation area, and is also well known for expertise and competence in many other areas,” says a client. Swanson currently represents Louisiana Citizens Property Insurance Corporation in a FINRA arbitration against JP Morgan Securities and Bear Stearns involving \$300 million in auction-rate securities potentially worth tens of millions of dollars.

Herman Herman Katz & Cotlar

Since 1942, Herman Herman Katz & Cotlar has been working to promote the rights of American citizens, including pushing for school integration and women’s rights. Today, the firm has 19 lawyers in its New Orleans office primarily focused on personal injury matters, but also products liability, commercial, professional and medical negligence, civil rights issues, and class actions. “Herman Herman Katz is one of the top plaintiffs firms,” says a competitor. **Leonard Davis’** practice includes corporate law, commercial and railroad crossing matters. **Russ Herman** is noted nationally for his personal injury, products liability and commercial work. “Russ Herman is a pillar of the plaintiffs community,” says a competitor.

Jones Swanson Huddell & Garrison

Based in New Orleans, Jones Swanson Huddell & Garrison is a boutique litigation shop with nine lawyers who, combined, are admitted to practice in Louisiana, New York, New Jersey, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas. The firm focuses on commercial, environmental, toxic tort and catastrophic personal injury cases. “They take on the challenges and fight the fight,” says a competitor. The firm recently won a \$16.3

million verdict against Dell on behalf of two New Orleans technology companies that created a citywide wireless video surveillance system. The court found that Dell, combined with the other defendants, conspired to violate Louisiana’s fair trade practices act. **Lynn Swanson** serves as managing partner of the firm and focuses the majority of her work on pharmaceutical and medical device litigation. **Gladstone Jones III** focuses his practice on commercial and environmental litigation. “Jones Swanson has done some big plaintiffs work in the last couple years,” says a competitor. “Gladstone Jones is the star.”

Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert

With over 35 lawyers, New Orleans-based Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert handles full-service litigation matters, but draws particular praise for its plaintiffs work. “They are absolutely the best firm in the area,” says a client. “They are highly intelligent and aggressive, but still conservative to keep their clients out of trouble.” **James Garner** specializes in commercial litigation. “Sher Garner, they have a show pony, James Garner,” says a competitor. **Shea Lawrence** handles construction, personal injury and maritime law matters. **Sharonda Williams** handles personal injury, entertainment and intellectual property cases.

Recommended firms

Gainsburgh Benjamin David Meunier & Warshauer

Established in 1949, Gainsburgh Benjamin David Meunier & Warshauer primarily focuses its practice on wrongful death and personal injury matters. The firm’s 11 lawyers draw high praise for their litigation work. “Gainsburgh Benjamin is the cream of the crop of plaintiffs firms,” says a competitor. “They are very competent and professional.” **Gerald Meunier** is doing significant work for businesses and individuals affected by the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig, including commercial fishermen, seafood distributors, property owners and Deepwater Horizon workers injured in the explosion. “Gerry Meunier is a premier plaintiffs lawyer,” says a peer. “Gerry is in a category with only three or four other lawyers in his profession at the very top.”

Jones Walker

Jones Walker carries a reputation specific to litigation throughout the Gulf South. Founded in 1937, Jones Walker carries almost 300 lawyers, with 83 in Louisiana dedicated to litigation. “The Jones Walker team has succeeded to date in looking at things from a different perspective and basing their case strategy on an efficient resolution, either by early settlement or focused litigation,” says a client. “Their size keeps these litigators flexible enough to think outside the box, but they also have horsepower to ramp up when needed.” **Patrick Vance** leads the firm’s business and commercial litigation practice group, and regularly represents secured and unsecured creditors in all types of business bankruptcy cases. He has handled over 300 commercial cases, across a variety of practice areas. “Pat Vance is the top at Jones Walker,” says a peer.

Neblett Beard & Arsenault

Neblett Beard & Arsenault handles personal injury, accident, maritime, products liability and nursing home negligence matters. The firm’s 14 attorneys have over 150 years combined experience. The firm recently filed a class action against DuPont alleging that herbicide Imprelis causes severe damage to non-targeted vegetation, including mature trees. They also recently secured a \$750 million settlement from Bayer CropScience on behalf of rice farmers. The suit alleged that Bayer’s “Liberty Link” genetically modified rice contaminated the general US rice supply, plunging exports to Europe. A 30-year veteran of commercial litigation, **Richard Arsenault** handled both cases, and is also an experienced expert witness.

**FISHMAN HAYGOOD PHELPS
WALMSLEY WILLIS & SWANSON, L.L.P.**

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Managing Partner: James R Swanson

Number of partners: 8

Number of other lawyers: 15

Firm Overview:

Fishman Haygood Phelps Walmsley Willis & Swanson was founded in the mid-1990s by leading business and litigation lawyers from three of the largest law firms in Louisiana. Its lawyers have been repeatedly recognized in national and regional publications as top practitioners in their fields. The firm regularly represents public and private companies in a variety of litigation, as well as corporate and securities matters. The firm's litigation group represents clients in a number of different areas, including securities arbitration, complex commercial litigation, First Amendment, media law, tax, products liability and tort, and contract disputes of various kinds, including options, purchase agreements, leases, and employment agreements. The firm also has an extensive general business law practice that focuses on real estate, commercial transactions, commercial finance, public and other securities offerings, private placements, mergers and acquisitions, periodic reporting and general SEC compliance, banking, bank regulation and general contractual matters.

Litigation Overview:

Some of the current challenging and interesting business litigation projects that the firm is handling include representing: municipal bond issuers, in connection with claims for damages in the tens of millions of dollars against the investment banks and underwriters that misrepresented and omitted material facts about the structure of auction rate securities; Berk-Cohen Associates, the owner of New Orleans' largest apartment complex, against its insurer seeking damages and penalties as a result of the insurer's refusal to pay for lost business income and property damage following Hurricane Katrina; the Louisiana Department of Revenue, in an action to collect over \$50 million in taxes and interest from BP Products North America; Warrior Energy Services, a subsidiary of Superior Energy, in litigation arising from an alleged oil well blowout; several investors, in claims against their investment advisors and/or broker-dealers; and CNN and The Times-Picayune, in a lawsuit concerning the public's right of access to the investigatory file compiled by former Attorney General Charles Foti during his investigation into several deaths at Memorial Medical Center in the days following Hurricane Katrina. Over the years, the firm has successfully recovered tens of millions of dollars on behalf of plaintiffs involved in broker-dealer disputes, including a \$22 million award (one of the largest NASD arbitration awards ever given) with \$3.5 million in punitive damages, in a nationally publicized NASD arbitration against Securities America. The litigation team has also defended public companies, US Unwired and Amedisys, in securities class actions, and it has also obtained a \$26 million jury verdict awarding taxes, interest and penalties on behalf of the State of Louisiana that is believed to be the largest jury award of taxes and penalties in Louisiana history. The firm's litigators regularly represent various media outlets and individuals in defamation cases and public record and access disputes.

Offices:

Fishman Haygood has offices in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.