

# General Liability



Our attorneys handle a wide range of general liability matters, including claims involving construction defects, premises liability, vehicular accidents, property damage, fire loss, liquor liability/dram shop actions, civil actions arising out of the criminal conduct of third persons, defamation/libel and mass tort actions. We represent a variety of self-insured entities as well as insurance carriers in defending such actions.

To provide the most cost-efficient service to our clients, we evaluate cases at the earliest possible stage to identify those matters that can and should be settled. Resources can then be efficiently allocated to those cases which are trial-directed.

Our General Liability Practice Group's lawyers have enjoyed great success litigating and trying every type of personal injury and property damage case in the state and federal courts of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, including a long string of defense verdicts in what are considered some of the country's most challenging venues. Thanks to our experience and efficiency, we are able to litigate matters to conclusion, whether through trial, motion practice or settlement with highly competitive and cost-effective fee structures.

We pride ourselves on the extensive trial skills of the leading attorneys in this practice group, all of whom have handled high-exposure cases in front of juries. Regardless of the complexity of the matter, our continuing goal is to ensure that our clients are fully informed of the status of all litigation so that the most effective strategic decisions can be made at every stage.

## Experience

- Obtained summary judgment as to our clients in a dram shop action venue in Sussex County Superior Court ( NJ). Plaintiff was seriously injured by an intoxicated driver employed as a bartender by our clients, a wedding reception facility, bar and inn. Plaintiff alleged that after a wedding reception and after party, our bartender served herself alcohol to the point of intoxication in the presence of and with the consent of a manager. The bartender then left our facility and was involved in the accident. Plaintiff claimed that our client allowed the bartender to serve herself alcohol to the point of intoxication, that plaintiff did not "serve" herself under the NJ Dram Shop Act since consumption was after hours, that our client was liable for common law tort claims of negligent screening, hiring, training, supervision and retention, and that public policy should not preclude plaintiff from a recovery for her significant injuries. We argued that the NJ Dram Shop Act expressly provided that the Act was plaintiff's exclusive remedy for any claims arising out of the negligent service of alcohol, and that there was no evidence that the bartender was "visibly intoxicated" at the time she served herself, therefore there could be no recovery under the Act. The court agreed and in a 21 page opinion granted our motion for summary judgment.