



Practice Overview

Denise E. Chambliss is a shareholder in the firm with offices in Pleasanton, San Jose, and San Mateo. She is the founding chair of their Trust and Estate Litigation Practice Group and previously chaired the firm's Estates and Trusts Practice Group.

Denise has over twenty-five years of litigation experience, with a concentration in Trust and Estate matters since 2011. She has experience in legal issues involving trust accountings, breach of fiduciary duty, defense of trustees, surcharge, creditor claims, challenges to estate planning documents based on lack of capacity or undue influence, and financial elder abuse. Hoge Fenton's trust and estate litigation group also oversees ancillary trust administrations and probate matters related to the litigation where necessary. Denise's cases are based primarily in the greater San Francisco area and surrounding counties but also extend south to Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and San Diego counties, and north to Marin and Solano counties. She regularly speaks and writes on these topics as well.

In the area of trust and estate disputes, Denise represents individual and corporate trustees, as well as executors and beneficiaries. Her practice balances the representation of fiduciaries and beneficiaries, along with petitioners and respondents.

Denise has first chair experience in over fifteen trials and/or binding arbitrations. She was lead trial counsel in the financial elder abuse case of R.M. v. K.M., a decision currently pending on appeal before the California 1st Appellate District Court, Case No. A168157. Denise was lead trial counsel at the four-day bench trial before the Santa Barbara County Probate Court in the case of Wilkin v. Nelson

(2020) 45 Cal.App.5th 802, a case of first impression of judicial reformation of a pour-over will (judgment affirmed on appeal holding community property assets belonged to surviving husband and not controlled by the residue term in the pour-over will). She also served as first chair in an eight-day bench trial, resulting in successful Judgment on Quiet Title Complaint on undue influence claim and in defeat of an improper asset protection irrevocable trust. Foust v. Foust, Alameda County Case, reported at 2015 Verdicts Lexis 7891. Further, Denise has also managed cases on appeal, including oral arguments before the Court of Appeals.

Denise has been recognized as a Super Lawyer since 2015 and as a Best Lawyer since 2021 for her trust and estate litigation practice in Northern California. Hoge Fenton's trust and estate litigation practice has been recognized by Best Lawyers since 2021, as well as Hoge Fenton's trust and estate practice.

Practice Areas

- Trust and Estate Litigation

Education

- J.D., South Texas College of Law, Houston
- B.A., University of Houston

Admissions

- California
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

Primary Contact

- Denise E. Chambliss

Related Attorneys

- Denise E. Chambliss
- J. Timothy Maximoff
- Steven D. Siner
- Ariel G. Siner
- Heather L. Boshears
- Dennis S. Zell
- Clare Capaccioli Velasquez