Matthew R. Barrett

Partner

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Services

Complex Commercial Litigation

Business & Finance

Mergers & Acquisitions

Contracts & Commercial Agreements

Trade Secrets

Matt Barrett is a commercial litigator who handles a wide variety of business disputes across many industries, with a focus on post-closing merger and acquisition litigation, shareholder disputes, restrictive covenant, trade secret, and unfair competition claims, trust and estate controversies, and fiduciary claims. Matt's litigation background also allows him to counsel on preventative measures that enable clients to spot and avoid legal issues that may disrupt their business operations before they arise.

Matt litigates business disputes in courtrooms across the country and frequently represents clients in arbitration proceedings and in mediation. A significant portion of Matt's practice is dedicated to advising buyers and sellers concerning disputes that arise out of merger and acquisition transactions. Matt has significant experience litigating fraud claims and other post-closing disputes concerning representations and warranties or other key terms in the contracts that govern complex commercial transactions. Outside of the merger and acquisition context, Matt's business litigation practice focuses on fiduciary claims concerning family-owned or closely held businesses and minority shareholder rights, as well as "business divorce" cases.

He has also successfully litigated contract claims involving vendors, customers, and former employees, as well as other business-to-business disputes. Matt has significant experience prosecuting and defending restrictive covenants including non-competes, non-solicitation clauses, and non-disclosure provisions, as well as counseling clients involved in trade secret misappropriation, tortious interference, and other unfair competition claims. A portion of Matt's practice also includes litigating disputes that arise during bankruptcy proceedings.

Matt also regularly advises individuals and institutional trustees in contested trust and estate matters. He has significant experience litigating will contests and representing executors and trustees in breach of fiduciary duty claims and other disputes that arise in the administration of trusts and estates.

Prior to joining the firm, Matt was a partner in the Litigation Group at HMB Legal Counsel, a well-established, corporate-focused law firm based in Chicago, Illinois.

Matt was recognized as an Illinois “Rising Star” in 2022 and the three years prior for Business Litigation by *Super Lawyers* magazine.

Experience

*Second chaired 13-day bench trial involving will contest dispute over control of a multi-million-dollar family-owned business, which resulted in a directed judgment in favor of the client. *In re: Estate of Mark Coffman*, Ill. Cir. Ct., Case No. 2018 P 000065 (Kendall County, IL). Led the drafting of the appellate brief and argued the appeal, resulting in a unanimous decision affirming the trial court’s judgment. *In re: Estate of Mark Coffman*, 2022 IL App (2d) 210053. Led the drafting of the appellate brief in the Illinois Supreme Court, resulting in a unanimous decision affirming the lower courts. *In re: Estate of Mark Coffman*, 2023 IL 128867.

*Won summary judgment in favor of the seller of a business in a post-M&A indemnification claim relating to the buyer’s allegations of breaches of representations concerning the business’s top customers and refusal to pay deferred purchase price amounts to the seller, which resulted in an over $9 million dollar judgment in favor of the client, which included 100% of the client’s attorneys’ fees and costs. *Arkes, et al. v. The Tharpe Company, Inc., et al.*; Ill. Cir. Ct., Case No. 2014 CH 19100 (Cook County, IL).

*First-chaired evidentiary hearing concerning objections to the proposed sale of multi-million-dollar real estate asset, resulting in approval for trustee to sell the asset as proposed. *In re: McMahan*, Bankr. N.D. Ill., Case No. 2018-14064.

*Won summary judgment in a breach of contract case concerning issues of contract formation and authority. *Beacon Hill Staffing, LLC v. SaveUp, Inc.*, Ill. Cir. Ct., Case No. 2015 L 012521 (Cook County, IL).

*Obtained injunction to secure and return misappropriated trade secrets and confidential information, as well as protect the client’s key customers from unfair competition from a former employee of the client who had gone to work for a direct competitor.

*Obtained denial of temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction sought against client relating to the enforceability of a factoring agreement.

*Experience gained by attorney prior to joining Kilpatrick

Education

Loyola University Chicago School of Law J.D. (2012)

Boston College B.A., English and History (2009)

Admissions

Illinois (2012)

Court Admissions

U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Professional & Community Activities

Chicago Bar Association, Member

American Bar Association, Member

Insights

Perspectives

Kilpatrick Client Success | Helping US Beef Keep More of Its Dough
April 23, 2026

News Releases

131 Kilpatrick Attorneys Recognized in 2025 Edition of Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America®
August 16, 2024

News Releases

Unanimous Decision at the Illinois Supreme Court in High-Stakes Will Contest
December 1, 2023

Webinars

Contract Rights and Insurance Claims Under COVID-19
April 8, 2020