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BURKE, WILLIAMS & SORENSEN, LLP



Nathan A. Oyster

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Nathan Oyster is the Vice Chair of the Litigation Practice Group at Burke. His practice focuses on the defense of law enforcement officers and local governments in civil rights litigation, and he also provides guidance to law enforcement agencies on the implementation of policies that reduce the likelihood of litigation.

Nathan has been recognized as one of the leaders in Law Enforcement Defense litigation in California. His March 2023 defense verdict on behalf of the City of Los Angeles in a fatal officer-involved shooting case was selected by the *Daily Journal* as one of the top 20 defense verdicts in the state in the publication's annual *Top Verdicts* edition.

Nathan's litigation experience is extensive. He has tried cases in both state and federal court, with his first jury trial coming at age 24. He has also argued before both the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the California Court of Appeal. Nathan has defended nearly every type of litigation that a law enforcement agency could face, including officer-involved shootings, deaths due to excited delirium, class action litigation, malicious prosecution claims, allegations of excessive force, and allegations of unconstitutional jail conditions. He is adept at defending litigation brought under Section 1983, the Unruh Act, the Ralph Act, and the Bane Act. Nathan also advises law enforcement agencies throughout the state on a variety of policy issues.

Representative clients include the County of Riverside, the University of Southern California, and the cities of Long Beach, Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Whittier.

PRACTICES

Constitutional Law

Law Enforcement Defense

Litigation

Public Law

EDUCATION

J.D., Boston University School of Law, 2002

M.A., Political Science, Case Western Reserve University, 1999

B.A., Political Science and Economics, Case Western Reserve University, 1999

ADMISSION

State Bar of California

United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

United States District Court for the Central District of California

United States District Court for the Eastern District of California

United States District Court for the Northern District of California

United States District Court for the Southern District of California

PUBLICATIONS

An Advanced Look at Senate Bill 1421: Analyzing the Confidentiality of Certain Police Records

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Obtained a defense verdict in February 2026 in a challenging jail suicide case, which is believed to have set a southern California

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record for the largest rejected pretrial settlement offer in a single-plaintiff wrongful death civil rights case that ended in a defense verdict.

- Obtained a defense verdict in March 2023 in a fatal officer-involved shooting case in which the plaintiffs sought $20 million at the close of the three-week trial. This victory in *Rusanovskaya v. City of Los Angeles* was selected as a *Daily Journal* Top Verdict.
- Obtained a defense verdict in a fatal officer-involved shooting case in which the decedent was armed with a screwdriver.
- Obtained summary judgment in a fatal officer-involved shooting case, resulting in a published opinion. *MacEachern v. City of Manhattan Beach*, 623 F.Supp.2d 1092 (C.D.Cal. 2009).
- Defended a proposed class action lawsuit in which jail inmates alleged that their rights under the Equal Protection clause of the Constitution were violated.

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