

Susan E. Coleman

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Pronouns: she, her, hers

Susan Coleman is a Partner at Burke, Williams & Sorensen LLP with 27 years litigation experience and a strong background in constitutional law/civil rights litigation and employment law. Susan has defended individuals and officials, governmental entities and corporations in 50 civil jury trials in federal and state courts throughout California, with very successful results (over 95% defense verdicts). Susan holds an Advocate status within the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA).

Susan worked for the Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, for over 13 years. Since going to private practice, Susan has represented various entities such as the cities of Alhambra, Burbank, Hemet, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Modesto, Newport Beach, Pasadena, Simi Valley, Stockton and Riverside; the county of San Bernardino; the GEO Group; Management & Training Corporation; Alcohol Monitoring Systems Inc., the Bureau of Prisons, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and those entities' individual employees and executives.

Susan also has extensive experience with class action litigation, including several class actions on behalf of the Department of Corrections, and she represented the Board of Parole Hearings in a lengthy bench trial involving the Americans with Disabilities Act (*Armstrong v. Davis*). In the last few years, Susan has defeated class certification in cases for various clients.

Susan has specialties in certain unique areas of law including officer-involved shootings and other uses of force, alleged wrongful conviction cases and ankle-monitor related litigation (for companies such as AMS, B.I. Inc., and LCA Inc.). She also conducts personnel investigations as needed for clients.

Susan has consistently taken measures to ensure excellent representation of her clients in a cost-effective manner. For example, she recommends LVN review and summary of medical records

PRACTICES

Constitutional Law

Employment Law and Litigation

Law Enforcement Defense

Litigation

Public Law

Tort Claims and Products Liability

EDUCATION

J.D., Santa Clara University, 1994

B.A., Whitman College, 1991

ADMISSION

State Bar of California

Supreme Court of the United States

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

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California

United States District Court for the District of Colorado

AFFILIATIONS

American Board of Trial Advocates, Associate

President, Federal Bench Executive Committee, California State Bar – 2016, Vice President - 2015, and member 2012-2014

Member, Public Safety Committee, League of California Cities, 2013 - 2014

(providing a medical expertise at a fraction of attorney billing rates); she keeps brief banks on common areas of law in order to avoid re-inventing the wheel for each case; and she takes every effort to eliminate defendants and/or claims from the case at the earliest opportunity, prevailing on many cases at the motion to dismiss or demurrer stage. While many cases cannot be defeated at the initial motion stage, Susan has had excellent results in prevailing in summary judgment and at trial. She is also in favor of, and actively pursues, measures to decrease future litigation, such as pursuing the award and recovery of costs after prevailing, having plaintiffs declared as vexatious litigants where appropriate, or seeking recovery of fees and costs under FRCP 41(d) for prior lawsuits when there are successive similar lawsuits.

During law school, Susan served as Articles Editor for the Santa Clara Law Review. In addition, she held a clerkship for the California Court of Appeal, Fourth District for Justice J. Smith. After obtaining her J.D., Susan attended San Francisco State University's Master's in Tax program from 1994-1996, completing all but thesis.

RESULTS

Jury Returns Verdict for Employer in Race/Age/National Origin Discrimination Claim

County Wins Whistleblower Lawsuit

RECOGNITIONS

"Outstanding Achievement in Client Representation" award from Attorney General Jerry Brown in 2006 (received by 1 person annually in the Civil section of the CA Dept of Justice)

Fellow, Litigation Counsel of America, Trial Lawyer Honorary Society

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- **Yadkouri v. Walmart, LA Superior Court**, Case No. BC620135, verdict on 10/15/19. Opposing counsel: David DeRubertis and Amir Mostafavi of The deRubertis Law Firm. Issues: gender, age, race, and national origin discrimination, failure to prevent discrimination, and wrongful termination. Defendant: Walmart Stores, Inc.
- **Tedrick v. Walmart**, LA Superior Court, Case No. BC58996, verdict on 5/19/2017. Opposing counsel: Irving Morris, Carney Shegarian. Issues: gender discrimination, wrongful termination, failure to prevent discrimination. Defendant: Walmart Stores, Inc.
- **Branch v. Umphenour**, U.S. District Court, Eastern District (Fresno). Case No. 08-cv-016555-SAB, verdict on 1/31/2017. Issues: alleged excessive use of force and failure to protect under the Eighth Amendment. Defendant: Officer Umphenour (employee

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of CDCR).

- **Smith v. City of Los Angeles**, et al, U.S. District Court, Central District. Case No. 2:14-cv-07435-BRO-FFM, verdict on 1/11/2017. Opposing counsel: Deirdre L. O'Connor, Catherine E. Sweetser. Issues: wrongful conviction (plaintiff spent 19 years in prison until the percipient witness to a drive-by shooting recanted his testimony), fabrication of evidence, violation of Brady, Manson-Biggers, and Devereaux. Defendants: Detectives Block, DePasquale (retired LAPD detectives).
- **Jordan, Wetmore & Moler v. County of San Bernardino**, San Bernardino Superior Court, Case No. CIVDS1411180, verdict on 10/11/2016. Opposing counsel: Chris Gaspard, Corey Hall. Issues: whistleblower retaliation (Labor Code 1102.5), constructive discharge. Defendant: County of San Bernardino, Sheriff's Department.
- **Barker v. Yassine**, U.S. District Court, Eastern District (Sacramento). Case No. 11-cv-00246-AC, verdict on 8/24/2016. Opposing counsel: Stephanie Ross, Scott Lynn Hubbard of the Disabled Advocacy Group. Issues: alleged excessive use of force on a disabled inmate. Defendant: Officer Yassine (employee of CDCR).
- **Wabakken v. CDCR**, et al., U.S.District Court, Central District, Case No .12-cv-01503-GW, verdict on 8/02/2016. Opposing counsel: Derek Anderson. Issues: whistleblower retaliation (Govt Code), wrongful termination, First Amendment retaliation. Defendant: Officer Morgan (retired CDCR correctional officer).
- **Cordero v. Officer Vaeoso**, et al., U.S. District Court, Central District, Case No. 10-cv-01935-PJW, verdict on December 11, 2015. Opposing counsel: Darrin Beffa, Jodie Cheng, Karen Younkins, and Jason Kelly of Kirkland & Ellis, LLOP. Issues: alleged excessive use of force under the Fourth Amendment, failure to intervene, and conspiracy. Defendants: Officers Caballero, Flores, and Vaeoso (employees of Hemet Police Department).

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