CONSTRUCTION EXECUTIVE

THE TOP 50 CONSTRUCTION LAW FIRMS

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The Top 50 Construction Law Firms®: Keeping a Sharp Eye on the Contract

BY CYBELE TAMULONIS

With the explosion of new technologies in construction, changes to contract documents, and the growing challenge posed by an ever-increasing number of state and federal laws and regulations, contractors need expert legal advice more than ever to manage risk and protect profits.

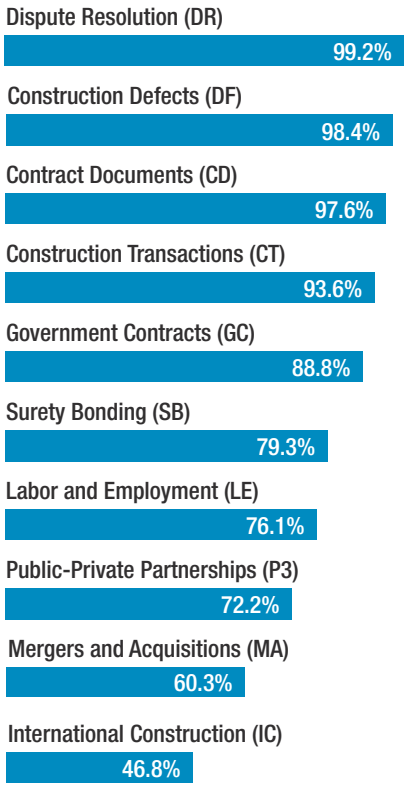
Law firms specializing in construction have the unique industry experience essential to guide their clients through a complex maze of compliance and contracts to ensure the health of the construction enterprise.

For this inaugural ranking, *CE* reached out to hundreds of law firms throughout the United States with a dedicated construction practice to find out who the leaders are, and what legal issues are keeping them busy.

Contract dispute resolution was the most heavily practiced area of construction law, with more than 99% of firms involved. Achieving a speedy and efficient outcome when disputes arise is a top priority for construction firms looking to prevent project delays and avoid expensive litigation.

"A significant concern that's always front and center in the client's mind is the pace and cost of resolving disputes," says Bob Chambers, partner at Smith, Currie & Hancock. "We address this by looking at multiple opportunities as they progress through alternative dispute resolution efforts or other legal procedures."

Most Common Areas of Construction Law Practiced
(% of firms reporting)



IN 2018, THE TOP 50 CONSTRUCTION LAW FIRMS BROUGHT IN A REPORTED $585 MILLION IN CONSTRUCTION PRACTICE REVENUE WITH AN AVERAGE YEAR-OVER-YEAR INCREASE OF 8.98%

With proper representation, a construction firm can usually get to an equitable solution quickly. "Pre-litigation, during litigation, even post-litigation or during an appeal, an opportunity may arise to get something settled, and the earlier, the better," Chambers says.

Burke Robinson, partner and co-founder at Long & Robinson, notes, "The trend at our firm in recent years has been to litigate contract disputes and prevent language in contracts that limits dispute resolution to arbitration." With written discovery, depositions, subpoenas, and live evidence given at scheduled hearings, arbitration often requires the same demands of a lawyer as litigation.

Law firms that manage contract administration are increasingly in high demand. Contractors are turning to lawyers for assistance in accessing the real-time impact of job changes, delays and cost overruns in order to keep projects on track and avoid potential claims.

Contract documents that enforce payment are a growing concern. "We address that on the front end by negotiating and drafting essential and enforceable contract language," Burke says. "We also protect and enforce our client's mechanic's lien and surety bond rights. And where appropriate, we've become very specialized in identifying and taking advantage of all available insurance coverage to address a particular loss."

Methodology for The Top 50 Construction Law Firms

CE developed The Top 50 Construction Law Firms ranking by asking hundreds of U.S. construction law firms to complete a survey. The data collected included: 1) 2018 revenues from the firm's construction practice; 2) number of attorneys in the firm's construction practice; 3) percentage of firm's total revenues derived from its construction practice; 4) number of states in which the firm is licensed to practice; and 5) the year in which the construction practice was established. The ranking was determined by an algorithm that weighted the aforementioned factors in descending order of importance. Note: A sizeable number of law firms elected not to share revenues, which affected their ranking. On page 37, *CE* has provided additional breakouts, such as "Law Firms With Most Construction Attorneys," which includes many of the firms that chose not to report revenues. For more information, contact surveys@magazinexperts.com.

Joshua Quinter, senior construction counsel at Offit Kurman, agrees. "The most common issue our clients have is getting paid for their work. While there is capital to build projects, cash flow remains tight for many owners and contractors. We deal with this in how we structure our clients' contracts, encouraging them to actively manage their A/R, and not wait to take action if they aren't getting paid."

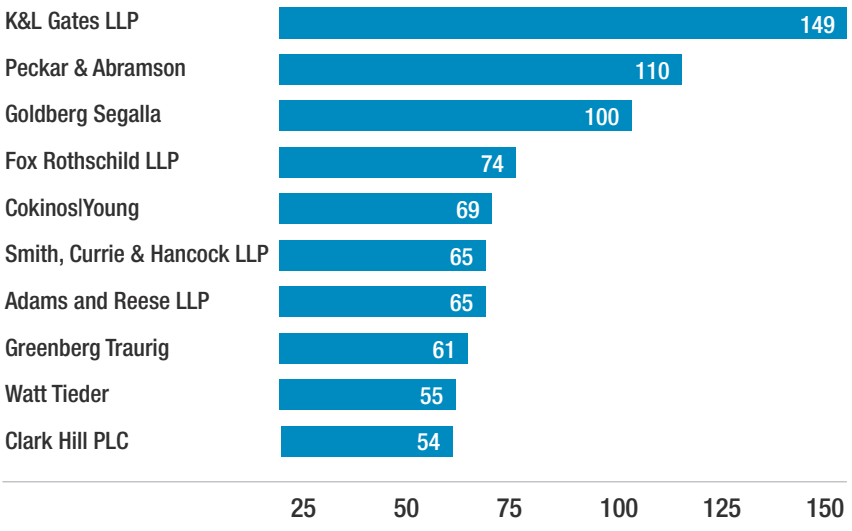
Law firms are also paying attention to the industry-wide labor shortage. "Clients are experiencing one of the strongest construction markets we've ever seen in the United States—with a workforce that is depleting as quickly as technology is progressing," notes Steven M. Charney, chairman of Peckar and Abramson.

As contractors reach out to a less experienced workforce, there is a corresponding increase in risk for project delays, quality issues and safety concerns. "There is pending legislation on apprenticeship ratios, training and other issues that will impact the market," Quinter notes. "Failing to manage safety in situations where people could get injured can end up being a big deal."

Businesses that retain counselors experienced in the unique aspects of construction law are more likely to come out ahead when a contract dispute arises. As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The legal ramifications of a poorly worded contract, failing to keep track of new employment and safety laws, and many other risks can easily be avoided with a capable construction law firm in the contractor's corner.

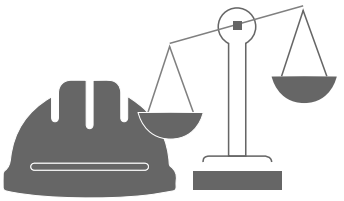
Cybele Tamulonis is marketing manager at MagazineXperts. For more information, email surveys@magazinexperts.com.

Top 10 Law Firms Ranked by Number of Construction Attorneys



KEY: [1]**Number of states** where the firm is licensed to practice law, including Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico. [2]**Areas of practice are abbreviated**: Contract Documents (**CD**), Construction Defects (**DF**), Construction Dispute Resolution (**DR**), Construction Transactions (**CT**), Government Contracts (**GC**), International Construction (**IC**), Labor and Employment (**LE**), Mergers and Acquisitions (**MA**), Public-Private Partnerships (**P3**), Surety Bonding (**SB**) [3]**Percentage of overall firm revenues** that its construction practice represents. **(-)** Not provided.

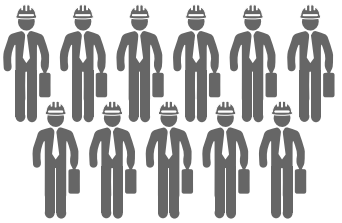
#1 Peckar & Abramson



LARGEST CONSTRUCTION LAW PRACTICE*

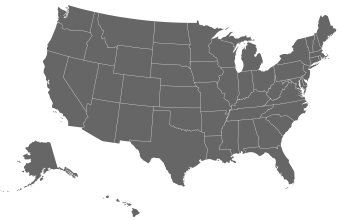
*Based on 2018 Revenues

#5 K&L Gates LLP



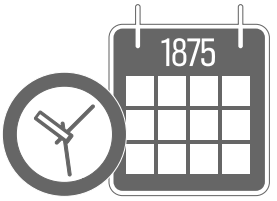
MOST CONSTRUCTION ATTORNEYS

#19 BakerHostetler



LICENSED TO PRACTICE LAW IN THE MOST STATES

#34 Lane Powell



OLDEST OPERATING CONSTRUCTION LAW PRACTICE

THE TOP 50 CONSTRUCTION LAW FIRMS

Rank	Firm	Year Founded	# States Admitted to Practice[1]	# Office Locations (U.S. | International)	# Firm Attorneys	# Firm Employees	# Construction Attorneys	# Construction Partners	Construction Practice as % of Total Firm Revenues[3]	Areas of Practice[2]
1	**Peckar & Abramson** River Edge, NJ	1978	18	10 | 0	112	99	110	60	95.3	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
2	**Holland & Hart LLP** Denver, CO	1947	9	15 | 0	438	900	43	26	14.58	CD, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3
3	**Cokinos|Young** Houston, TX	1989	4	5 | 0	75	130	69	28	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
4	**Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP** Birmingham, AL	1870	33	10 | 0	520	923	53	34	11.34	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
5	**K&L Gates LLP** Pittsburgh, PA	1946	38	24 | 21	1,816	3497	149	90	2.98	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3
6	**Smith, Currie & Hancock LLP** Atlanta, GA	1965	21	7 | 0	65	109	65	34	95	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, P3, SB
7	**Watt Tieder** Chicago, IL	1978	5	5 | 1	55	140	55	15	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, P3, SB
8	**Cohen Seglias Pallas Greenhall & Furman PC** Philadelphia, PA	1988	14	9 | 0	68	111	49	19	74.86	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, SB
9	**Fox Rothschild LLP** Philadelphia, PA	1907	41	27 | 0	930	1899	74	60	3.29	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
10	**Andrews Myers** Houston, TX	1991	2	2 | 0	47	84	30	11	71.43	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
11	**Foley & Lardner LLP** Milwaukee, WI	1842	35	24 | 3	1,070	1216	38	25	2.17	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
12	**Clark Hill PLC** Detroit, MI	1890	40	23 | 2	638	1204	54	31	4.91	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3
13	**Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC** Nashville, TN	1888	37	22 | 0	687	1351	31	18	4.04	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
14	**Seyfarth Shaw LLP** Chicago, IL	1945	37	10 | 5	466	1856	37	24	1.87	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
15	**Finch, Thornton & Baird, LLP** San Diego, CA	1987	9	1 | 0	30	54	30	13	85	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, P3, SB
16	**Carlton Fields** Tampa, FL	1901	27	11 | 0	306	615	37	22	6.15	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, P3, SB
17	**Perkins Coie LLP** Seattle, WA	1912	12	16 | 3	590	1155	17	9	1.56	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, P3
18	**SMTD Law LLP** Los Angeles, CA	2014	4	4 | 0	17	25	17	7	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, SB
19	**BakerHostetler** Cleveland, OH	1916	52	14 | 0	970	1750	14	10	1.80	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
20	**Fabyanske, Westra, Hart & Thomson P.A.** Minneapolis, MN	1981	7	1 | 0	38	24	21	11	50.89	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
21	**Moye, O'Brien, Pickert, Dillon & Masterson, LLP** Maitland, FL	1989	6	1 | 0	15	22	15	5	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, P3, SB
22	**Ahlers Cressman & Sleight PLLC** Seattle, WA	2007	4	1 | 0	15	33	15	5	97.94	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
23	**Cotney Construction Law** Tampa, FL	2012	12	14 | 0	32	58	28	12	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3, SB
24	**Stoel Rives LLP** Portland, OR	1907	31	10 | 0	376	734	13	10	4.26	CD, DF, DR, CT, IC, LE, MA, SB
25	**Adams and Reese LLP** New Orleans, LA	1951	30	17 | 0	262	541	65	44	(-)	CD, DF, DR, CT, LE, P3, SB

SEE KEY ON PAGE 37

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26	**Smith Pachter McWhorter** Tysons, VA	1986	5	1 | 0	32	10	17	7	53.57	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, P3, SB
27	**Husch Blackwell LLP** Kansas City, MO	1916	35	18 | 0	602	1,400	37	31	1.98	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
28	**Johnston, Allison & Hord, P.A.** Charlotte, NC	1912	7	1 | 0	43	37	13	10	40.55	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
29	**Asmar Schor & McKenna PLLC** Washington, DC	2010	6	1 | 0	15	21	15	8	91.94	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
30	**Porter Hedges LLP** Houston, TX	1981	7	2 | 0	111	221	11	9	7.52	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
31	**Hudson Parrott Walker LLC** Atlanta, GA	2013	6	1 | 0	14	22	14	8	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, P3
32	**Gibbons P.C.** Newark, NJ	1926	17	7 | 0	192	307	15	12	5.45	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, P3, SB
33	**Larkin Hoffman** Minneapolis, MN	1958	13	1 | 0	74	154	14	11	(-)	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3, SB
34	**Lane Powell** Seattle, WA	1875	3	3 | 1	183	402	22	16	4.90	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
35	**Carney Badley Spellman, P.S.** Seattle, WA	1972	17	1 | 0	47	36	14	7	20.01	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, SB
36	**Frost Brown Todd LLC** Cincinnati, OH	1919	8	12 | 0	537	986	14	12	2.20	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
37	**Offit Kurman, P.A.** Plymouth Meeting, PA	1987	8	13 | 0	184	362	23	19	5.13	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
38	**Shields Mott LLP** New Orleans, LA	1995	4	1 | 0	13	10	12	6	98.81	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, P3, SB
39	**Forchelli Deegan Terrana LLP** Uniondale, NY	1976	1	1 | 1	60	120	11	8	14.06	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3, SB
40	**Riess LeMieux, LLC** New Orleans, LA	2018	3	1 | 0	7	27	7	6	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, P3
41	**Hendrick, Phillips, Salzman & Siegel, P.C.** Atlanta, GA	1981	1	1 | 0	9	14	9	3	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA
42	**Traub Lieberman Straus & Shrewsberry LLP** Red Bank, NJ	1996	13	7 | 1	102	156	12	7	10	DF, DR, IC
43	**Davis Wright Tremaine LLP** Seattle, WA	1944	24	8 | 0	585	1,207	12	6	0.93	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, IC, LE, MA, P3, SB
44	**Lewis Roca Rothgerber Christie** Phoenix, AZ	1950	29	10 | 0	229	546	18	14	1.66	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3, SB
45	**Kaplin Stewart** Blue Bell, PA	1997	3	3 | 0	33	72	7	7	15	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3, SB
46	**Huddles Jones Sorteberg & Dachille, P.C.** Columbia, MD	1995	3	1 | 0	6	9	6	5	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC
47	**Newland & Associates, PLLC** Little Rock, AR	2000	1	1 | 0	8	10	8	7	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3, SB
48	**Elmore Goldsmith, P.A.** Greenville, SC	2011	5	1 | 0	6	12	6	6	100	CD, DF, DR, SB
49	**Bryce Downey & Lenkov LLC** Chicago, IL	2001	11	2 | 0	39	33	17	8	30.77	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, LE, MA, P3, SB
50	**Long & Robinson, LLC** Kansas City, MO	2014	4	1 | 0	6	11	6	3	100	CD, DF, DR, CT, GC, SB

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