



John Heil

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John focuses his practice on business and commercial litigation, complex civil rights litigation, the representation of insurance carriers in liability coverage disputes, and the defense of catastrophic tort actions. John also defends professional liability actions directed at attorneys, federal “whistle-blower” suits brought against publicly funded medical institutions, and personal injury claims brought against individuals and their employers. John is a Co-Chair of the firm’s Business and Commercial Litigation Practice, Chair of the firm’s Drone Law Practice, and the head of the Peoria office’s Mentoring Program.

John’s business and commercial practice includes litigating cases involving allegations of breach of contract, fraud, and deceptive business practices on behalf of large and small businesses and their employees throughout the state. John is also heavily involved in the defense of federal civil rights actions and associated state law claims leveled against members of the law enforcement community and other public officials. In this context John routinely defends allegations of false arrest, excessive force, deliberate indifference, and denial of due process of law.

John joined Heyl Royster in 2007 after serving for eleven years as a trial attorney with the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office. During his years as a prosecutor, he prepared and argued hundreds of motions, over one hundred bench trials, and eighteen felony jury trials. As a member of the Civil Actions Bureau, John defended Cook County, Illinois, its elected officials, and employees in state and federal court. John was part of the team charged with defending the elected State’s Attorney and his Assistants in several high profile federal civil rights actions in the Northern District of Illinois. He received his J.D., with Honors, from Chicago-Kent College of Law and a B.S., *magna cum laude*, from Bradley University.

Publications

“Supreme Court Confirms Dismissal for Failure to State a Claim Without Prejudice is a ‘Strike’ Under the PLRA’s Three-Strikes Rule,” *Illinois Defense Counsel Quarterly* (2020)

“Appellate Court Provides a Primer on Supplementary Proceedings Against Third Parties,” *IDC Defense Update* (2020)

“Electronic Discovery in Illinois Five Years After the 2014 Amendments to the Illinois Rules of Civil Procedure,” *Illinois Defense Counsel Quarterly Monograph* (2019)

“*Lewis v. City of Chicago*,” False Evidence and the Fourth Amendment,” *Illinois Defense Counsel Quarterly* (2019)

“A Fatal Fall in Jail Custody Was Not the Result of Deliberate Indifference,” *Illinois Defense Counsel Quarterly* (2018)

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“Plaintiffs’ Section 1983 Right to Poll the Jury: Recent Seventh Circuit Jurisprudence,” *Illinois Defense Counsel Quarterly* (2017)

“It Means What it Says: The Proper Definition of Willful and Wanton Misconduct under the Tort Immunity Act,” *Civil Practice & Procedure IDC Defense Update* (2017)

“Consciously Guard Against Unconscious Bias In The Workplace,” *InterBusiness Issues* (2017)

“Animal Abuse Case Provides Reminder as to the Low Federal Pleading Standard,” *Illinois Defense Counsel Quarterly* (2016)

“Is This Really Happening? The Emerging Use of Drones for Commercial Purposes,” *Skywritings, The Newsletter of the Aviation Law Committee of the Defense Research Institute* (2016)

Public Speaking

“We Are Settled, Right? Settling Claims of Minors, Disabled Persons, and the Deceased” Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel (2020)

“Liability - Weird & Unusual Cases”
Greater Peoria Claims Association (2019)

“Civil Rights Litigation Under Section 1983”
Heyl Royster’s Annual Governmental Holiday Seminar (2018)

“Drones and Insurance”
CorVel U Fall Seminar (2018)

“Advancing Your Case in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois & Practice Pointers: Section 1983 Law”
The Federal Bar Association’s Central District of Illinois Chapter Seminar (2018)

“Tort Immunity & Civil Rights Update”
Heyl Royster’s 33rd Annual Claims Handling Seminar (2018)

“Tortious & Intentional Interference with Business Relations ‘More than Defamation’”
Heyl Royster “Avoiding Litigation Part Deux” Seminar (2018)

“Commercial Drones: Flying into Litigation Turbulence”
Defense Research Institute’s Business Litigation Seminar (2017)

“Can I Park My Drone Here? How the FAA’s New Drone Regulations Affect Your District”
Illinois Association of Park Districts Legal Symposium (2016)

“Legal Aspects of Drones: Where We Are & Where We Are Heading”
Greater Peoria Claims Association’s Annual Vendor Fair & Educational Seminar (2016)

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Professional Recognition

Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent

Selected as a *Leading Lawyer* in Illinois. Only five percent of lawyers in the state are named as *Leading Lawyers*.

Professional Associations

Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel (Board of Directors, 2016-present; Chair, Civil Practice Committee)

Defense Research Institute

Illinois State Bar Association

Peoria County Bar Association

Federal Bar Association (President, Central District of Illinois Chapter)

Abraham Lincoln Court

Court Admissions

United States Supreme Court

United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit

United States District Court, Central, Southern and Northern (Trial Counsel) Districts of Illinois

State Courts of Illinois

Community Involvement

Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce: former Member of the Board of Directors; Member, Government Affairs Committee; Graduate, Community Leadership School (2011)

Education

Juris Doctor (with honors), Chicago-Kent College of Law, 1996

Bachelor of Science-Political Science and History (*magna cum laude*), Bradley University, 1993



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