

PARTNER

JOANNE R. SOMMERS

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Indianapolis

PRACTICES

BUSINESS

ENVIRONMENTAL

INSURANCE COVERAGE

LITIGATION

REAL ESTATE

INDUSTRIES

INDIVIDUALS & CLOSELY HELD BUSINESSES

MUNICIPALITIES & GOVERNMENT

PETROLEUM MARKETERS

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT & CONSTRUCTION

OVERVIEW

Joanne Sommers is uniquely experienced in both litigation and transactional matters. Joanne's broad foundation allows her litigation practice to inform her transactional practice, and vice versa, to help obtain the best, most cost-effective outcome for her clients.

Joanne focuses her litigation practice on insurance coverage law. She represents policyholders in property and liability insurance coverage and insurance agent liability litigation. Joanne has deep and broad experience with a variety of insurance policies, including commercial general liability, umbrella liability, first-party property (including business interruption), directors and officers, errors and omissions, and pollution liability. Joanne also prosecutes and defends environmental cost recovery and other complex commercial claims, including breach of contract, construction defect, and real estate disputes.

Joanne focuses her non-litigation practice on transactional real estate and business matters for both buyers and sellers. Many of these deals concern environmentally contaminated properties. Joanne can assist clients with all aspects of asset and stock transactions, from contract drafting and negotiation, through due diligence, and to closing. Joanne uses her insurance and environmental training to help clients navigate any environmental concerns and maximize their likelihood of obtaining insurance coverage to pay for any required investigation and remediation.

Joanne also counsels both start-ups and established businesses on corporate governance and employment matters.

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Joanne served as a law clerk at Plews Shadley Racher and Braun LLP prior to joining the firm as an attorney. She was also an intern for Judge Jane Magnus-Stinson of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, Judge Timothy Oakes of the Marion Superior Court, and Judge Heather Welch of the Marion Superior Court.

AWARDS

- 2027, Selected for inclusion in *Indiana Super Lawyers* in Insurance Coverage
- 2024, Selected as a finalist for *Indy's Best and Brightest* in the Law Category
- 2023-2027, Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® – Litigation – Environmental and Litigation – Insurance
- 2022-2025, Selected for inclusion in *Indiana Super Lawyers – Rising Stars*
- 2022, Recipient of *The Indiana Lawyer's* Up and Coming Lawyer Award

EDUCATION

- J.D., 2015, Indiana University, Robert H. McKinney School of Law, Indianapolis, IN, *summa cum laude*
- B.A., 2011, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, *summa cum laude*

BAR ADMISSIONS

- State of Indiana, 2015
- United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, 2015
- United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, 2105
- United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, 2016
- United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, 2023

AFFILIATIONS

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Environmental Law Network, Co-Chair of Future Leaders Division
- Indianapolis Bar Association
- Indiana State Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- Sagamore Inn of Court – Associate Member (2017-2021)

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COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- Groundwork Indy – Board of Directors
- Daubenspeck Community Nature Park – Board of Directors
- Heritage Place of Indianapolis – Board of Directors (2017-2024), President (2021-2024)
- Kids' Voice of Indiana – Volunteer Guardian ad Litem

ARTICLES & EVENTS

- 2025 | Author
  I received a "Reservation of Rights" letter from my insurance company – now what?

- 2024 | Panelist
  Conducting Discovery for Summary Judgment and Trial, American Bar Association

- 2024 | Co-Author
  Corporate Transparency Act: What Your Business Should Know

- 2022 | Speaker
  Discovery Issues in Insurance Coverage Litigation, Indianapolis Bar Association

- 2021 | Panelist
  Agency Relationships: Policyholders, Insurers and Everyone In Between, Indianapolis Bar Association

- 2017 | Co-Author
  Pointers from the 'Prentice and the Practiced, Indiana Lawyer

- 2016 | Speaker
  Competition and Confidentiality Issues in Employment Contracts, Indiana Petroleum Marketers Association's 2016 HR Compliance Seminar

- 2015 | Publication
  "Indiana's Midwifery Statute and the Legal Barriers that will Render it Unworkable," Indiana Law Review, Volume 48, Issue 2 (2015)

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