



Derek T. Teeter

PARTNER

KANSAS CITY, MO

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OVERVIEW

Derek represents colleges and universities in complicated, prominent litigation involving federal and state civil rights statutes, constitutional rights, governmental immunities, and class actions. He specializes in cases involving sexual misconduct (Title IX), freedom of speech, due process, and religious liberty.

Derek represents higher education institutions of all types, from major research universities to private religious colleges. He represents clients at all stages of litigation, including pre-settlement negotiations, dispositive motion practice, trials, arbitrations and appeals.

Derek's clients face lawsuits from students, faculty, employees and contractors, as well as regulatory enforcement actions from the U.S. Department of Education and equivalent state agencies. Related to his litigation practice, Derek assists colleges and universities in minimizing litigation risk by ensuring compliance with requirements of federal and state regulations, with a special emphasis on Title IX (sexual misconduct) and the Clery Act (campus crime reporting). He is often called on to conduct sensitive investigations involving allegations of misconduct against prominent employees, student-athletes, and athletic teams.

Derek's compliance practice includes policy and practice audits, policy drafting, and providing training and guidance to key

Industry

Education

Services

Appellate

Collegiate Athletics

Higher Education

K-12 Education

Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution

Title IX

personnel and students. He also frequently negotiates and drafts employment contracts for key institutional leaders such as presidents, chief academic officers, and varsity coaches.

As a former federal appellate law clerk and appellate practitioner, Derek also has extensive appellate experience and maintains a national appellate practice.

Experience

- Obtained summary judgment for major research university in Title IX lawsuit challenging adequacy of institution's response to report of student-on-student sexual assault in a residence hall. Successfully argued and defended judgment on appeal before U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit.
- Represented flagship state university and faculty member in breach of contract, tort and due process lawsuit brought by student dismissed for academic misconduct. Obtained summary judgment in favor of university and faculty member and successfully argued and defended judgment on appeal to state court of appeals.
- Represented major public university and administrators in Title VII and First Amendment lawsuit brought by faculty member who was denied tenure and claimed discrimination and retaliation. Successfully appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit and obtained reversal of district court's refusal to grant qualified immunity to the administrators. Then obtained dismissal of remaining claims against the University.
- Represented private religious college sued by a faculty member who alleged he suffered religious discrimination and was constructively discharged due to disagreement with the college's religious beliefs. Obtained dismissal in the college's favor and successfully defended the judgment on appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit, which concluded the college was exempt from the faculty member's religious discrimination claim due to the college's status as a religious institution.
- Defended former superintendent and principal of school district in case involving seven-figure negligence claims brought by injured student. Obtained summary judgment in favor of clients in groundbreaking application of Paul D. Coverdell Teacher Liability Protection Act and successfully defended case on appeal to state supreme court.

Experience

- Represented private college in internal proceedings to terminate tenured faculty member for conduct inconsistent with college's mission statement and religious principles. Successfully defended termination in subsequent arbitration before American Arbitration Association.
- Conducted comprehensive historic audit of reports of sexual misconduct by clergy and employees of private, religiously affiliated institution. Advised institution by implementing updated trainings, policies and other measures to address audit findings.
- Led investigations of alleged sexual harassment and sexual assault involving sports teams at a prominent Power Five conference institutions.
- Drafted comprehensive anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies for numerous private and public institutions.
- Trained thousands of administrators, faculty, staff and students on Title IX compliance.

Recognition

- *Benchmark Litigation*, 40 & Under Hot List, 2019-2021; Future Star, 2019-2024
- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Commercial Litigation, 2021-2024
- *The Legal 500 United States*, Recommended Attorney, 2023
- *Ingram's*, 40 Under Forty, 2017
- Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers, Rising Star, 2009; Business Litigation, 2013-2017

Education

- J.D., University of Kansas School of Law
 - Order of the Coif
 - Rice Scholar
 - *Kansas Law Review*, articles editor, 2005-2006
- B.A., University of Kansas
 - with highest distinction
 - Phi Beta Kappa

Admissions

- Missouri
- Kansas
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri
- U.S. District Court, District of Kansas
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Federal Claims

Clerkship

The Hon. Paul J. Kelly Jr., U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit, 2006-2007

Community Leadership

Derek is the immediate past Board Chair of the Catholic Education Foundation of Northeast Kansas, an organization that helps children in need, of all faiths, attend regional Catholic schools. He also serves as Chair of the Board of Directors of the St. Lawrence Catholic Campus Center, which provides ministry and other support to students at the University of Kansas.

- Catholic Education Foundation of Northeast Kansas, Board of Directors, 2010-2023; Chair, 2019-2021
- St. Lawrence Catholic Campus Center at the University of Kansas, Board of Directors, 2017-present; Chair, 2023-present



2024 Benchmark Litigation -
Future Star