



# Ronald L. Hicks, Jr.

*partner*

For more than three decades, Ron has handled complex and commercial litigation in trial and appellate courts at the state and federal level, and before arbitration and mediation panels throughout the Atlantic Coast and Midwest. As a trial and appellate lawyer, his litigation practice focuses on claims involving misappropriation of trade secrets, intellectual property disputes, breach of restrictive covenants, business competition matters, partnership and business owner disputes, contract and warranty claims, creditors' rights and fraudulent transfers, estate and fiduciary liability, insurance coverage, real estate title disputes, oil and gas litigation and telemarketing and online marketing matters. He is member of the Allegheny County Academy of Trial Lawyers and serves as an arbitrator, an early neutral evaluator and an e-discovery dispute Special Master for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Being an out and proud member of the Pittsburgh LGBTQ+ community, Ron serves as co-chair of the firm's LGBTQ+ Business Practice Group. In this role, he represents LGBTQ+ business owners and clients across industries, often serving as outside general counsel. He advises on general corporate issues and business transactions, including entity formation and operation, contract drafting and review, document retention and destruction policies, internet and social media matters, and intellectual property concerns including trademarks, copyrights, trade secrets and warranties.

As co-chair of the firm's Election Law Practice Group, Ron has represented local, state and federal Republican candidates and political committees, serving as their general or litigation counsel. For nearly 30 years, Ron has handled a variety of election law disputes, including election contests, ballot recounts, nomination objections, absentee, mail-in and provisional ballot challenges, and other pre- and post-election litigation. In addition, he has planned and participated in Election Day operations, including for the past five presidential campaigns. He regularly provides training on Pennsylvania election processes and procedures. He is the solicitor for the Republican Committee of Allegheny County and has previously served as a deputy solicitor for the Pennsylvania Republican State Committee. He is the secretary and a member of the Board of Governors for the Republican National Lawyers Association (RNLA). In

## CONTACT

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## EDUCATION

Wake Forest University, J.D., 1987

Pennsylvania State University, B.A.,  
1984

## SERVICES

### Litigation

- Arbitration and mediation
- Commercial litigation
- Noncompetition and trade secrets litigation
- E-Discovery
- Insurance litigation
- Professional liability
- Intellectual property litigation

### Business Competition, Advice & Litigation

- Non-competition and trade secret counseling and litigation

### LGBTQ+ Business

2018, RNLA awarded Ron with the Robert J. Horn Chairman’s Award for his nationally distinguished service in protecting the honesty and accuracy of U.S. elections.

Ron has an AV Preeminent Rating from the *Martindale-Hubbell*® Peer Review Rating program. He was named a “Lawyer of the Year” by *Best Lawyers*® 2022 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in the area of Litigation – Real Estate and was ranked in the areas of Commercial Litigation, Litigation - Bankruptcy, Litigation – Construction. He was also named to the *Pennsylvania Super Lawyers*® list, included in Who’s Who in American Law and named to the Order of the Barristers.

## REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Obtained orders striking a 24-year-old default judgment and dismissing a quiet title action claiming adverse possession of severed oil and gas rights based on such judgment, which orders were affirmed on appeal.
- Obtained, after 30 days of trial in a New Jersey state court, a \$12.8 million verdict against a client’s legacy insurance companies for environmental clean-up damages.
- Enforced an employee’s restrictive covenants by obtaining, following a two-day hearing in federal court, a preliminary injunction imposing a 12-month non-compete in the employee’s former territory, an 18-month non-solicitation of his former employer’s customers and employees, and an indefinite ban on disclosing or using in any manner the client’s confidential information or other property.
- Protected a manufacturer’s customer information and other trade secrets by obtaining, after a three-day evidentiary hearing in federal court, one-year and 10-year injunctions to prevent their misuse by a former salesman and a terminated dealer.
- Obtained, after two 10-day jury trials in federal court, judgments totaling over \$14 million for siblings against their brother/uncle and his wife for misappropriation and fraudulent transfer of family assets, and protecting those judgments by obtaining pre-verdict and post-judgment freeze orders, a declaratory judgment in Florida state court that a condominium was not homestead property, and a declaratory judgment in federal bankruptcy court that the judgment against the wife was not dischargeable.
- Served as lead trial and appellate counsel in *In re: Canvass of Absentee Ballots of November 2003 General Election*, 843 A.2d 1223 (Pa. 2004), in which the Pennsylvania Supreme Court declared the “in-person” delivery requirement for absentee ballots under the Pennsylvania Election Code was mandatory, resulting in a Pennsylvania Superior Court Republican candidate winning her election by 28 votes out of more than 2.25 million cast.

## BAR ADMISSIONS

- Pennsylvania
- Supreme Court of Pennsylvania
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania

## SERVICES (CONTINUED)

### Government & Regulatory Affairs

- Election law representation

### Business Growth & Operation

- Business transactions
- Corporate governance
- Insurance

### Energy

- Coal and mineral rights
- Oil and gas

### Entrepreneurship & Startups

- Entity formation
- Operations, transactions and governance

### Privacy & Data Security

- Records management and privacy policies
- Retail and web commerce
- Social media

- Supreme Court of the United States

## PRESENTATIONS

- “A Conversation with PNC Employees & Service Partners,” A Digital Pride Experience, PNC Proud and Women Connect, June 8, 2022
- “Being a Better Lawyer in Working with the LGBTQ+ Community,” Porter Wright Annual Ethics Seminar, Dec. 9, 2021
- “LGBTQ Business Symposium,” Porter Wright, Oct. 11, 2021
- “RNLA Members Call: Election Law Changes & How COVID-19 May Impact Voting,” Republican National Lawyers Association, March 27, 2020
- “How to Get Your Social Media, Email and Text Evidence Admitted (and Keep Theirs Out),” NBI, Dec. 21, 2018
- “Election Law Matters,” American Inns of Court, Pittsburgh Chapter, Dec. 20, 2018
- “Pennsylvania Election Day,” RNLA, October 2018
- “Leveraging Networks,” ACBA’s Women’s Institute for Leadership in the Law, Aug. 21, 2018
- “Election Day Operations,” RNLA National Election Law Seminar, Aug. 4 & 5, 2018
- “How to Get Your Social Media, Email and Text Evidence Admitted (and Keep Theirs Out),” NBI, July 31, 2018
- “Dealing with International Contracts: The Cost Savings Edition,” ACC Webcast, March 7, 2018
- “Business Attorney’s Guide to Information Technology,” NBI, Dec. 19, 2017
- “Drafting an Asset Purchase Agreement: Key Provisions,” NBI, Nov. 13, 2017
- “The Ethical Obligations of the Lawyer in a World of Increased Information and Security,” RNLA National Election Law Seminar, Aug. 5, 2017
- “Legal Holds: Ten Tips to Properly Execute a Defensible Litigation Hold,” ACC Small Law Office Department Webcast, May 11, 2017
- “The Rules of Evidence: A Practical Toolkit,” NBI, April 28, 2017
- “Advanced Contract Drafting Techniques and Tips for Choice of Law and Venue Clauses,” ACC Webcasts, Virtual Roundtable Series II, Program 3, Nov. 17, 2016
- “Dealing with ‘Rambo’ Litigators: How to Counter Unfair Tactics and Intimidation,” ALI-CLE Webinar, Nov. 14, 2016
- “Penalty: Holding on the Offense! Everything You Need to Know About Legal Holds,” ACC 2016 Annual Meeting, Oct. 18, 2016
- “How to Get Your Social Media, Email and Text Evidence Admitted (and Keep Theirs Out),” NBI, Aug. 31, 2016
- “Mock Trial – Provisional Ballot Challenges,” RNLA Summer Election School, Aug. 15, 2015
- “The Rules of Evidence: A Practical Toolkit (Handling Email, Social Media and Other ESI & Ethical Considerations),” NBI, July 31, 2015
- “Being Counsel to a Campaign,” RNLA Summer Election School, Aug. 10, 2014
- “Natural Gas Title Washing,” Best of the Oil and Gas Law Colloquium, Jan. 23, 2014

## PUBLICATIONS

- “The interplay between indemnification provisions and insurance clauses in contracts for goods and services,” *ACC Docket*, March 2014

- “Debunking the myths surrounding natural gas title washing: ‘How can one’s title be divested if natural gas was not and cannot be the subject of a proper real estate tax assessment?’,” *Pennsylvania Bar Association Quarterly*, January 2014

#### PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Litigation Counsel of America, Fellow
- Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County, Diversity Committee
- Allegheny County Bar Association, Civil Litigation Section, LGBT Rights Committee, Committee for Diversity & Inclusion, Appellate Practice Committee, Court Rules Committee, Political Action Committee, Finance Committee, Women in Law Divisions Gender Bias Committee
- Allegheny County Bar Foundation, 2016 Fellow
- Republican National Lawyers Association, Board of Governors, Secretary
- American Bar Association
- Pennsylvania Bar Association

#### HONORS | AWARDS

- City & State PA, Pride Power 100, 2022
- City & State PA, Pittsburgh Power 100, 2022
- City & State PA, Top Fifty Over 50, 2021
- Republican National Lawyers Association, 2018 Robert J. Horn Chairman’s Award
- *Pennsylvania Super Lawyers*®
- *Best Lawyers*®, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania “Lawyer of the Year,” Litigation – Real Estate, 2022
- *Best Lawyers*®, Commercial Litigation, Litigation – Bankruptcy, Litigation – Construction
- Martindale-Hubbell®, AV Preeminent
- *Who’s Who in American Law*®
- Order of the Barristers

#### COMMUNITY

- Three Rivers Business Alliance, Board of Directors, President, 2017-present, Steering Committee, 2017-2019
- Penn State University College of the Liberal Arts Alumni Society, Board of Directors, 2012-2017, Mentor, 2010-2015
- Penn State Alumni Association, Life Member
- Pennsylvania Society, Member
- Republican State Committee, Commonwealth Club, Member
- Republican Committees of Allegheny County and Pittsburgh, Solicitor, 2010-present, 2003-2008, Committeeperson Pgh. 3rd Council Dist. Ward 17, 2004-present