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📍 Raleigh

Thomas More Buckley

PARTNER

EXPERIENCE

Thomas More Buckley serves as vice chair of the firm's **Construction Litigation and Counsel** practice. Tom represents businesses in complex commercial litigation matters, including construction defect, construction injury and death, and the defense of professional liability and licensing board actions faced by architects, engineers, real estate brokers, dental practitioners, pharmacists, and other professionals. His practice also entails defending clients against catastrophic personal injury and death claims, unfair trade practice claims, and a wide variety of business and contractual disputes, including employment discrimination, wrongful termination, and disputes related to business dissolution. With an intimate understanding of business operations across numerous industries backed by decades of complex litigation experience, Tom also acts as a trusted legal counselor to a wide variety of businesses and professional practitioners, advising on matters such as LLC and corporate formation, contract preparation and negotiation, and the creation of safety programs and employee handbooks. Tom has been certified as a mediator by the North Carolina Dispute Resolution Committee.

Tom is actively involved in professional organizations such as the International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC), the American Association Safety Professionals (ASSP), and the North Carolina Public Risk Management Association (NC PRIMA), among others. He also currently serves as counsel to the Board of the Metals Center Services Institute's Southeast Chapter. Widely recognized among colleagues and industry leaders locally, regionally, and nationally, Tom's honors include an AV Preeminent Martindale-Hubbell rating as well as regular placement on lists such as The Best Lawyers in America, North Carolina Super Lawyers, and the Business North Carolina Legal Elite.

EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Representative Matters

- *Goins v. Time Warner Cable*, North Carolina Court of Appeals (2018): The court granted a new trial on the grounds that sudden emergency instruction was improperly given.
- *Lancaster v. Harold K. Jordan and Company, Inc.*, 776 SE2d 345 (2015): The court upheld summary judgment by the North Carolina Business Court on the grounds of collateral estoppel, holding that the Lancasters were bound by prior arbitration findings because they controlled the litigation, maintained a financial stake in its outcome, and had notice of it.
- *Cantillana v. Five Oaks Homeowners Association* (2012): The court upheld a 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss a complaint by a homeowner that sought injunctive relief preventing the association from imposing fines for failure to comply with architectural guidelines. The court found that the trial court was correct in dismissing the action, given that the association's guidelines provided the requisite authority to impose fines to enforce those guidelines.
- *Harris v. Barefoot*, 704 SE2d 282 (2010): The court upheld summary judgment in a dog bite case on the grounds that the plaintiffs had failed to project evidence that the dog had a vicious propensity, and further that the defendant had reason to know of a vicious propensity. The court noted that the plaintiff's attempt to establish a vicious propensity of the breed based on a Wikipedia article was not persuasive.
- *Haynes v. B&B Realty Group*, 663 SE2d 691 (2006): The court upheld summary judgment of claims of a profit sharing agreement breach and unfair trade practice. The court held that because the profit sharing had not vested at the time of the relationship's

PRACTICES

Construction Litigation and Counsel

Civil Litigation and Trial

Commercial Litigation and Arbitration

Employment and Labor

INDUSTRIES

Construction

Municipalities and Public Entities

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termination, there was no breach of contract, and further that the plaintiff's past services for the company could not constitute legal consideration for any transfer of ownership.

HONORS & AWARDS

- Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Rating: AV Preeminent
- *Best Lawyers in America*
 - Commercial Litigation, 2013–25
 - Insurance Law, 2013–25
 - Litigation – Construction, 2024-25
 - Personal Injury Litigation – Defendants, 2024-25
 - Professional Malpractice Law – Defendants, 2025
- North Carolina *Super Lawyers*, 2010–22, 2024-25
- *Business North Carolina* Magazine Legal Elite, 2009–18

BACKGROUND

ADMISSIONS

- North Carolina
- U.S. District Courts for the Eastern and Middle Districts of North Carolina

EDUCATION

- University of California Hastings College of Law, J.D., 1990
- Boston College, B.A. (Political Science and Film Production), 1987

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- International Association of Defense Counsel
 - Chair, Employment Law Committee
 - Vice-chair for Membership, Construction Law and Litigation Committee, 2020-22
 - New Member Ambassador, 2019-present
 - Chair, Construction Law and Litigation Committee, 2017-18
 - Vice-chair for Publications, Professional Liability Committee, 2017-18
 - Committee Member, Construction Law and Litigation, Employment, Professional Liability, 2013-present
- North Carolina Public Risk Management Association (NC PRIMA)
- North Carolina Bar Association
- Wake County Bar Association

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Mediator, North Carolina Resolution Commission
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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Counsel for Board, Metals Services Center Institute, SE Chapter

PUBLICATIONS & EVENTS

PUBLICATIONS

- “OSHA Safety and Reporting Guidelines: Changes in Response to the Novel Coronavirus Pandemic and Impact on the Construction Industry,” *IADC Construction Law and Litigation Committee Newsletter*, April 2020
- Quoted in “Subcontractor Injuries: Determining Liability and the Responsible Party,” *Modern Contractor Solutions*, October 2019
- “Construction Defect Claims in the Concrete Industry: An Overview,” *Modern Contractor Solutions*, July 2019 magazine
- “Navigating OSHA’s Rules on Silica Dust Exposure,” *Modern Contractor Solutions*, January 2019
- “When Eating Crow is the Best Item on the Menu: Stipulating to Liability in Professional Liability Actions” (Co-Author), *IADC Professional Liability Committee Newsletter*, May 2018
- “A Lawyer’s Duty to Inform a Client of Errors Made in Representation” (Co-Author), *IADC Professional Liability Committee Newsletter*, May 2018
- “Welcome to the Party: Risk Sharing in Construction Defect Disputes,” *Modern Contractor Solutions Magazine*, November 2016
- “OSHA’s ‘Nudge’ On Workplace Safety,” *Modern Contractor Solutions Magazine*, March 2016

PRESENTATIONS

- “Life in the Point Cloud: The Use of 3D Scans in Defending Liability Claims,” International Association of Defense Counsel Annual Meeting, Quebec, Canada, July 9, 2025
 - “Preparing for and Responding to Regulatory Investigations,” International Association of Defense Counsel Annual Meeting, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, July 10, 2024
 - “The Law Firm of the Future—What Will ‘Return to Work’ Look Like?” Moderator, IADC Mid-Year Meeting, Austin, TX, February 2022
 - “Preparing a Safety Director for Deposition,” Presenter, North Carolina Trucking Association Annual Meeting, Myrtle Beach, SC, September 2021
 - “OSHA’s at the Door—Now What? OSHA Investigation Overview for Employment Lawyers,” Presenter, NCADA 2020 Winter Workshop, Durham, NC, January 31, 2020
 - “Employment Claims: How Recent Supreme Court Decisions and EEOC Enforcement Trends Can Impact Employers,” NCPRIMA Annual Educational Conference, Wrightsville Beach, NC, September 10, 2019
 - “Liability for Injuries for a Subcontractor’s Employee,” IADC Mid-year Meeting, Asheville, NC, July 2019
 - “Navigating Construction Delay Claims,” IADC, 2018
 - “Reptile Trial Tactics,” ADTA, 2017
 - “New ABA Ethical Guidelines on Diversity in the Courtroom,” ADTA, 2017
 - “Pre-judgment Issues in Construction Litigation,” IADC, 2017
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WEBINARS

- “Holiday Classics and Employment Law: Lessons Learned,” International Association of Defense Counsel, December 18, 2024
- “OSHA and COVID-19: Enforcement Update, Exposure Control Plans, and PPE,” Co-Presenter, GS Webinar Series, August 20, 2020
“OSHA’S Response to COVID-19,” Presenter, American Association of Safety Professionals, July 2020