



PRACTICE AREAS

- ▶ Business Litigation
- ▶ Construction
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Real estate
- ▶ Trade secrets

EDUCATION

- ▶ J.D., University of San Diego School of Law (1984)
- ▶ B.A., University of Southern California (1981)

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

- ▶ California State Courts
- ▶ U.S. District Court, Southern and Central Districts of California
- ▶ U.S. District Court, District of Columbia
- ▶ 9th Circuit Court of Appeals
- ▶ United States Supreme Court
- ▶ District of Columbia Bar

AFFILIATIONS

- ▶ State Bar of California
- ▶ San Diego County Bar Association
- ▶ Supreme Court Historical Society
- ▶ American Board of Trial Advocates (Advocate)
- ▶ Fellow, The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb)
- ▶ The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb) North American Branch (NAB) Board Member
- ▶ Panelist, American Arbitration

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STEVEN J. COLOGNE

Steve Cologne is the Firm's immediate past Managing Partner, serving 2017-2023. His law practice is focused on civil trials in California state and federal court. He represents clients in employment litigation, breach of contract disputes, trademark litigation, and other commercial litigation matters.

Currently, Mr. Cologne's areas of expertise include:

- Partnership/shareholder disputes;
- Real estate litigation;
- Employment discrimination and related claims;
- Complex commercial litigation;
- Public entity defense work; and
- Trade secret litigation

In his practice, Mr. Cologne devotes substantial time advising clients in pre-litigation situations to resolve potential disputes and avoid the uncertainty and cost of litigation. Drawing on his significant trial experience, he helps clients achieve outcomes that support the continued success of their businesses. This proactive approach can save considerable attorney's fees, time, and opportunity costs, particularly given that even successful litigants often regret the expense, delay, and disruption associated with trial.

With more than 40 years of experience, Mr. Cologne primarily represents businesses in complex litigation at the state and federal level. He currently serves as the primary litigation counsel for San Diego Unified School District on a variety of claims in State and Federal court.

In addition to his law practice, Mr. Cologne achieved the distinction of being certified as a Fellow in The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb) effective May 2020. On May 4, 2020, he was admitted to practice law in the District of Columbia. In December 2020, he was appointed a Panelist with the American Arbitration Association (AAA). Mr. Cologne's arbitration experience can be found [here](#).

Mr. Cologne joined Higgs Fletcher & Mack in 1999 after previously enjoying 15 years as an associate, partner and shareholder with the law firm of McInnis, Fitzgerald, Rees & Sharkey, then San Diego's premier litigation firm.

STEVEN J. COLOGNE

As an arbitrator, Mr. Cologne focuses on complex commercial disputes, including in the areas of employment, construction and professional liability. His experience as managing partner of a law firm gives him a unique perspective and an understanding of legal needs within a business context.

He earned the highest rating (AV) available from Martindale-Hubbell for ethics and legal ability and has been selected by his peers and recognized by Best Lawyers in America® each year from 2008-2024. He has been named to the San Diego Super Lawyers® list since 2007. He has earned the rank of Advocate with the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), the premier association of trial attorneys, with nearly 65 jury trials to verdict. For his demonstrated leadership and vision, the San Diego Business Journal named him to the "500 List of Most Influential People in San Diego" from 2017-2023. In 2017 The Daily Transcript named him as one of the "50 Influential Leaders" in San Diego.

In 2020, Mr. Cologne was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award by the University of San Diego School of Law. Here is a [video](#) from the Awards ceremony.

An active participant in both the legal community and the greater San Diego community at large, Mr. Cologne is a member of a number of professional organizations including the Association of Business Trial Lawyers, State Bar of California Labor and Employment Law section. In 2025, Mr. Cologne authored an article on Discovery in Arbitration which was published in the Los Angeles Daily Journal.

Mr. Cologne is a past Executive Editor of San Diego Lawyer,™ the journal of the San Diego County Bar Association, and served as a Board Member of the San Diego County Bar Foundation, the charitable arm of the Bar. He is proud to serve as counsel for The Old Globe Theater in San Diego, the top regional theatre in the country, for the past 30 years. In addition, Mr. Cologne was elected Board Emeritus of the University of San Diego School of Law Board of Visitors.

In his free time, he enjoys wilderness backpacking, horseback riding, outdoor photography, and foreign travel.

AWARDS & HONORS

- Distinguished Alumni Award, University of San Diego School of Law
- San Diego Business Journal, San Diego 500 List of Most Influential People in San Diego, under the category of Professional Services (2017-2023)
- San Diego Magazine "Top Lawyers," recognized by Martindale-Hubbell as an AV Preeminent Peer Review Rated Lawyer (2020)
- Recognized by Best Lawyers in America® (2008-2027), Commercial and Personal Injury Litigation
- San Diego Super Lawyers® (2007-2026)
- Daily Transcript, 50 Influential Leaders in San Diego (2017)

