

OF COUNSEL

Jennifer S. Willis

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PRACTICE AREAS

Construction

EDUCATION

University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, Sacramento
J.D., 2003

California Polytechnic State University
B.S., *cum laude*, Business Administration with Concentration in International Business, 2000

ADMISSIONS

California

Nevada

Oregon

U.S. District Court, Central District of California

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California

U.S. District Court, Nevada

U.S. District Court, Western Washington

Washington

MEMBERSHIPS

Sacramento County Bar Association, Construction Section

Claims and Litigation Management Alliance

OVERVIEW

Jennifer Willis represents contractors, developers, owners, subcontractors, and design professionals in complex construction litigation matters in both public and private projects.

Prior to joining Murphy Austin, Jennifer was a partner at a San Francisco litigation firm, where her practice focused on complex commercial litigation matters, including construction defect and asbestos defense work, as well as general liability matters. In that role, she represented clients in California, Oregon, and Washington in both state court and arbitrations, where she successfully defended a complex commercial arbitration and had a multi-million-dollar construction claim dismissed on the eve of trial.

Jennifer also previously served as a senior trial attorney in the Sacramento division of a national insurance company, splitting her practice between construction defect litigation and general liability defense, representing clients in personal and commercial business lines, including personal injury claims, traumatic brain injury, wrongful death, slip/trip and fall, products liability, bodily injury commercial, construction defect, premises liability, and contractual disputes.

Prior to her work as a senior trial attorney, Jennifer's private practice focused on litigating complex civil actions in front of juries in state and federal court, arbitration panels, and in the California Court of Appeals – Fourth District. She has appeared in federal and state cases in California, Oregon, Texas, Illinois, Florida and Pennsylvania. Jennifer advocated for her clients from trial through appeal. She has represented both Appellants and Respondents in various jurisdictions. Jennifer's private practice also emphasized client counseling of matters to resolve claims without litigation and assisted in business transactions.

Jennifer received her B.S., *cum laude*, in Business Administration with Concentration in International Business from California Polytechnic State University. She received her J.D. from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law,

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(CLM)

Women Lawyers of Sacramento

where she was the managing editor for *The McGeorge Law Review* and graduated in the top twenty-five percent of her class. Jennifer was also a competition team member for the ABA Negotiations and Settlement Team and VIS International Commercial Arbitration Team, competing in Vienna, Austria.

EXPERIENCE

- Counsels and represents clients in complex construction litigation matters, arbitration disputes, pre-litigation process, and mediation proceedings.
- Drafts, reviews, and revises construction contracts and negotiates settlements.
- Secured defense award after two-week binding arbitration for a commercial solar client.
- Obtained summary judgment in favor of business for a slip and fall outside of a Northern California restaurant.
- Successfully resolved suit against manufacturer client involving high exposure water intrusion claim at a Southern California luxury resort and spa.
- After filing Motion for Summary Judgment, secured dismissal for waiver of fees and costs of $10 million construction defect claim in Northern California.
- Appellate Experience – Trial counsel received defense verdict for product manufacturer after jury trial of Product Liability and Montana Consumer Protection Act claims. On appeal, verdict was upheld by Montana Supreme Court (Montana).
- Obtained dismissal of putative class action lawsuits in Federal Court prior to class certification (Pennsylvania).
- Earned defense award after binding arbitration initiated by vendor/manufacturer against client on breach of contract claim (Texas).
- Obtained multi-million-dollar settlement from Fortune 500 Energy Company after flooding of client's property (Oregon).
- Led aggressive motion and discovery practice in commercial litigation resulting in favorable rulings from Federal District Court resulting in client recovery of more than $32 million from component part manufacturer and vendor (Florida).

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