



MICHAEL CHAIT

Of Counsel

Business Litigation

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Curious is a good thing to be, it seems to pay some unexpected dividends.

Iggy Pop



MICHAEL CHAIT

Mike Chait brings nearly two decades of experience in high-stakes litigation, offering clients strategic, business-focused legal guidance across a wide range of industries. Known for his creative problem-solving and deep industry insight, Mike represents clients in complex disputes in both state and federal courts, as well as in arbitration and other alternative dispute resolution forums. In addition to his litigation practice, Mike advises on regulatory compliance, transactional matters, and a broad range of commercial issues.

Mike began his legal career at Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp in Los Angeles, where he handled sophisticated commercial and intellectual property matters. He later became managing partner at Montgomery Scarp & Chait in Seattle, where he led a diverse litigation practice that included transportation liability, catastrophic injury defense, employment disputes, and business litigation. His clients span industries such as interactive entertainment, rail, manufacturing, and retail—reflecting his commitment to understanding each client's business and delivering legal solutions aligned with their strategic goals.

Mike lives on Vashon Island with his three daughters. When not in the office, you can find Mike in the kitchen fermenting something, growing things to ferment, or cheering on his old team, the UW Crew.

EDUCATION

J.D., University of Southern California Law School

B.A., University of Washington, *cum laude*

AREAS OF PRACTICE

Business Litigation
Intellectual Property
Labor & Employment

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

BNSF Railway Company v. Thomas Clark. Represented railroad to address a medical examiner's attempt to use statutory procedure to avoid disclosure of key materials; obtained writ of mandate on summary judgment, preventing medical examiner's use of the procedure, which was affirmed by the Washington Supreme Court.

Chumbley, et al. v. Snohomish County. Represented property owner alleging violations relating to permitting of adjacent property's water treatment system in landslide zone; obtained ruling from Court of Appeals holding that Land Use Petition was timely and County was not preempted from enforcing land disturbing activities and critical areas ordinances.

Bartz v. Burlington N. Santa Fe, LLC. Represented railroad in wrongful death action; obtained dismissal on the pleadings, with the Court of Appeals affirming, as an issue of first impression, that statutory immunity applied to injuries to trespasser occurring upon a railroad bridge or trestle.

Rossich v. BNSF Railway Company. Represented railroad in claims by former employee of retaliation in violation of Federal Railroad Safety Act, alleging termination for reporting an injury; obtained defense verdict after three week jury trial in United States District Court.

Global Direct Components, LLC v. Lippert Components, Inc. Represented RV component manufacturer in lawsuit alleging misappropriation of trade secrets; obtained defense verdict following three week jury trial.

AWARDS AND HONORS

Best Lawyers in America[®], Commercial Litigation, 2025

ACLU of Southern California – First Amendment Award

Public Counsel – Pro Bono Award

ARTICLES AND PRESENTATION

Author, "Fennemore attorney Mike Chait's mid-year check in on employment compliance with the recent state and local updates in employment laws," *Puget Sound Business Journal*, August 1, 2024

A Second Bite at The Apple: State Law Wrongful Discharge Claims, NARTC Special Litigation Conference, presenter, 2018

Social Media & Privacy: Building Your Online Presence and Protecting Your Digital Assets, California Club, panelist and moderator, 2014

Michael Chait, Susan Ross, and Sarah Taylor Wirtz, Tips for Conducting an Internal Investigation, MS&K Corporate Alert, 2014

Michael Chait and Susan Kohn Ross, Cybersecurity Update – How Are You Impacted?, MS&K Corporate Alert, 2014

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Trustee of the Board, Washington Trial Defense Lawyers

Chair, Court Rules Committee, Washington Trial Defense Lawyers

Chair, Court Rules and Procedures Committee, Washington State Bar Association

Member, National Association of Railroad Trial Counsel

Member, Federal Bar Association of the Western District of Washington

Jury Diversity Task Force, Washington State Minority and Justice Commission

Member, Phi Beta Kappa

ADMISSIONS

Washington

California

United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

United States District Court, Western District of Washington

United States District Court, Eastern District of Washington

United States District Court, Central District of California

United States District Court, Northern District of California

United States District Court, Southern District of California