

# BLANKROME

**Justin F. Lavella | Partner**

Insurance Recovery

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Justin Lavella is a partner in Blank Rome's policyholder-only insurance recovery practice, formerly the insurance practice of Dickstein Shapiro LLP. Justin focuses his practice on representing corporate policyholders, debtors' and creditors' committees, professional partnerships, federal employees, and other parties in insurance coverage disputes relating to the full spectrum of insurable losses, including mass tort liabilities, directors' and officers' liabilities, professional errors and omissions liabilities, employee theft, product contamination and recall, and first-party property damage. He represents companies in all aspects of risk management and insurance recovery, including litigation, arbitration, mediation, and bankruptcy proceedings, as well as counseling clients regarding prospective insurance placement.

Justin is a versatile litigator and negotiator with experience handling a wide array of insurance disputes. He has worked with companies and professional partnerships seeking coverage for mass tort claims, including asbestos, environmental contamination, and lead paint claims, as well as various directors' and officers' liabilities and professional errors and omissions claims. He was involved in insurance litigation related to interrogation services provided at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison. He also served as counsel in a professional errors and omissions case involving a high-profile lobbying matter.

Justin also has experience with deal-specific or industry-specific insurance policies, including representations and warranties insurance and food contamination insurance. He represented several federal employees in securing insurance coverage for the costs associated with congressional, agency, and criminal investigations.

In the realm of bankruptcy, Justin has worked with creditors' committees, debtors, as well as the former directors and officers of debtors, to secure insurance coverage for alleged business torts and mass tort liabilities. He has also advised policyholders on issues involving first-party losses, including property damage from natural disasters, business interruption losses, data breaches, and employee theft.

Justin also maintains a vibrant consulting aspect to his practice concerning the placement and underwriting of insurance coverage, with particular emphasis on directors' and officers' liability and errors and omissions liability policies. In this aspect of his practice, he has advised numerous *Fortune* 500 companies regarding coverage enhancements available in the insurance marketplace.

While studying at the University of Virginia School of Law, Justin served on the editorial board of the *Journal of Law and Politics*. He also interned with the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office in Ohio and for the county attorney of Augusta County, Virginia.

## Admissions

- U.S. District Court - Colorado
- District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court - District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court - Eastern District of Virginia
- Virginia

## Memberships

- American Bar Association
- American College of Coverage Counsel

## Education

- George Washington University, BA
- University of Virginia School of Law, JD

## Recognitions

- 2023, "Litigation Star," listed in *Benchmark Litigation*
- 2018–2023, Insurance Law in Washington, D.C., listed in *Best Lawyers in America*®
- 2017–2018, listed in *Legal 500*

## Professional Activities

Justin is a fellow of the American College of Coverage Counsel, an invitation-only organization of preeminent lawyers representing the interests of both policyholders

and insurers dedicated to improving the quality of the practice of insurance law and to increase civility and professionalism in the field.

Justin has volunteered his time to The Equal Rights Center, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Small Savers Child Development Center. He currently assists in the representation of The Equal Rights Center in actions against national real estate developers for their alleged failure to make accessible housing available to persons with disabilities, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Federal Housing Act.

He lives with his wife and two sons in Washington, D.C., and in his spare time enjoys reading and is a movie buff. He volunteers his time to his sons' schools and various sports teams.