



## Michael D. Hanchett

PARTNER

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### Practice Areas

Education Law

Employment Litigation

Governmental Law

Labor & Employment Law

### Education

- University of Toledo  
College of Law, J.D.,  
2016
- Ferris State University,  
B.S., 2013

### Admissions

Michigan, 2016

U.S. District Court, Eastern  
District of Michigan, 2016

U.S. District Court, Western  
District of Michigan, 2021

Admitted pro hac vice in  
Minnesota

Michael D. Hanchett serves as co-leader of Plunkett Cooney's Governmental Law Practice Group, and he is a partner in the firm's Labor and Employment Law Practice Group.

Mr. Hanchett's public-sector experience is expansive. He provides general counsel services to municipalities and represents their interests in state and federal courts when government liability disputes arise. He has particular expertise in police liability litigation, including search and seizure, use of force, pursuits and corrections law. Mr. Hanchett also has experience representing municipalities in the area of employment law, including claims of alleged discrimination, retaliation and civil rights claims brought under state and federal law.

Public school districts and institutions of higher education also rely on Mr. Hanchett to resolve litigation involving §1983, Title VII, Title IX, ADA, ELCRA, sex harassment, hostile work environment, wrongful termination, retaliation and claims brought under the Whistleblower Protection Act. He has also successfully defended claims filed against school districts with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

In addition, Mr. Hanchett has handled insurance coverage matters involving environmental contamination, property damage, arson, construction defects and motor vehicle liability. He also has experience defending construction related claims, including alleged design defects and personal injury disputes.

Mr. Hanchett has the distinction of being honored by Best Lawyers in America as "One to Watch" in the area of municipal law since 2021 and by Michigan Lawyers Weekly as a 2024 "Up & Coming" Lawyer.

MICHAEL D. HANCHETT Cont.

## Representative Client Work

- Obtained summary judgment in federal court on behalf of a Michigan county and a prosecuting attorney in a \$16 million wrongful conviction claim brought by the plaintiff who was incarcerated for 26 years
- Obtained summary judgment in federal court for officer involved in excessive force case based on qualified immunity
- Successfully defended municipality in federal court in a police pursuant cases where individual was struck and killed by fleeing suspect
- Successfully defended municipality in federal court in jail liability case involving the death of an inmate
- Successfully defended municipality and jail officer in federal court in jail liability cases involving claims of improper strip searches at the jail
- Obtained summary judgment in federal court for officers on alleged excessive force and illegal search and seizure claims based on qualified immunity where the plaintiff sought over \$5 million in compensatory and punitive damages
- Successfully represented county jail officers in federal court regarding excessive force claims brought by inmate with the court granting summary judgment on all charges
- Substantial experience working with municipal boards and commissions, defending their actions and designing rules of procedure to guide their activities
- Successfully represented insurer in additional insured coverage action arising out of a slip and fall at shopping complex that allegedly resulted in a significant injury to plaintiff
- Successfully represented insurer on a property insurance claim involving suspected arson
- Successfully represented insurer in litigation involving environmental contamination claims

## Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- DRI (Construction Law, Insurance Law and Young Lawyers committees)
- Federal Bar Association - Eastern District of Michigan (Civil Rights Section, Co-chair; Newsletter Committee, Member)
- Lawyers for Civil Justice (Fellows Program, 2024)
- State Bar of Michigan (Government Law and Labor and Employment sections)
- Oakland County Bar Association
- Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association

MICHAEL D. HANCHETT Cont.

- Detroit Young Professionals

### **Community Involvement**

- City of Berkley, Michigan, Zoning Board of Appeals (2019-2021)

### **Publications and Lectures**

- "Kindred Spirits - Tricks & Treats for Public and Private Employers," Panelist, Plunkett Cooney's Labor, Employment & Government Law Practice Group Seminar, Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, East Lansing, MI, Nov. 5, 2025
- Court Functions and Civil Law, Instructor, Mott Community College Law Enforcement Regional Training Academy, Oct. 1, 2024
- Police Chief Legal Update, Co-presenter, Law Enforcement Action Forum Fall Conference, Sept. 26, 2024
- "Legal Update: Search & Seizure 2024," Co-presenter, Michigan Municipal League, Liability & Property Pool, Sept. 20, 2024
- "From Hook Up to Lock Up - Law Enforcement Liability Issues," Presenter, 24th Annual Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys/State Bar of Michigan Governmental Law Section Summer Educational Conference, June 21, 2024
- "Nuts & Bolts" of Section 1983 and Qualified Immunity: (Nearly) Everything There is to Know, Panelist, Federal Bar Association Chapter for the Eastern District of Michigan and the FBA Civil Rights Section, Theodore Levin Courthouse, April 5, 2024
- "Legal Update - Search & Seizure 2023" Seminar, Presenter, LEAF and Michigan Municipal League Presentation, Romulus Senior Center, May 18, 2023
- Macomb Community College Police and Fire Leadership Program, Speaker, March 2020
- "Practical Law" television show discussing issues facing police departments with body cameras, Featured Speaker, April 2018
- "The Law Enforcement Body-Worn Camera Privacy Act: the Implications for Police Departments and How They Can Stay Ahead of the Curve," Author, Oakland County Bar Association Laches magazine, January 2018

### **Fraternity**

- Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity

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### **Honors & Recognitions**

- *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America*<sup>™</sup> – Municipal Law, 2021-2022, 2026
- "Up & Coming Lawyer" Award, Michigan Lawyers Weekly, 2024