

## Michael L. DeBona

Partner

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### OVERVIEW

Michael DeBona is a seasoned litigator and Partner in the Subrogation Department. Michael has a nationwide practice representing insurers in property losses caused by defective products and construction defects, and he recovers millions of dollars annually for his clients. He specializes in water losses arising from product design and manufacturing defects.

In his products liability practice, Michael pursues claims against major appliance and plumbing manufacturers after their products fail and result in floods. In his construction practice, he pursues claims against construction and real estate companies, architects, engineers, and other design professionals whose negligence results in catastrophic property damage.

As a trial lawyer, Michael has successfully tried dozens of cases to verdict as lead counsel at both jury trials and bench trials. He has also secured dozens of favorable outcomes before binding arbitration panels.

Michael's unique perspective, honed through prior defense work, allows him to anticipate opposing strategies and craft compelling case narratives that resonate with judges, juries, and arbitrators alike. His litigation practice blends strategic rigor with creative problem-solving, particularly in cases involving complex expert issues. He litigates cases in state and federal courts throughout the United States, including in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, California, Texas, Illinois, Maryland, Virginia, Florida, and the District of Columbia.

### RECOGNITION AND INVOLVEMENT

Michael has been named as a *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America* since 2021 for Insurance Law and since 2023 for Litigation - Construction.

Michael handles pro bono cases for the Senior Law Center, where he assists Pennsylvania seniors with their legal matters. He also serves as a volunteer attorney for the Philadelphia Bar Association's Legal Line.

### PRACTICES

Subrogation

### BAR AND COURT ADMISSIONS

Pennsylvania

New Jersey

New York

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey

### EDUCATION

Villanova University School of Law, JD

Rutgers University, BA, *magna cum laude*

## REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Achieved million dollar settlement in complex product liability and construction defect case in New Jersey

Litigated product and construction defect claims in New York action involving a water loss occurring at the top floor of one of Manhattan's tallest skyscrapers, affecting 30 floors and causing over \$20 million in damages

Defeated defendant's *Daubert* challenge resulting in tripling of settlement offer in complex product liability action

Convinced federal court that statute of repose did not bar million dollar product liability claim, defeating summary judgment and resulting in settlement at 70% of full damages

Conducted and defended expert depositions in construction defect case resulting in immediate doubling of six figure settlement offer

Represented global insurer in multi-million dollar water loss at historic landmark hotel in Washington, DC

Briefed and argued opposition to defendant's preliminary objections seeking to dismiss insurer's strict liability cause of action, which the judge overruled on all grounds

Overtaken arbitration award involving three issues of first impression

Obtained summary judgment for insurer by persuading court to narrowly apply seemingly far-reaching Supreme Court precedent

Prosecuted declaratory judgment action rescinding insurance policy and precluding coverage of \$25 million claim

## IN THE NEWS

White and Williams Announces 2026 Partner and Counsel Promotions  
1.12.26

Best Lawyers® Recognizes 49 White and Williams Attorneys  
8.15.24

White and Williams Announces Partner and Counsel Promotions  
*Press Release*, 1.17.24

Best Lawyers® Recognizes 45 White and Williams Lawyers  
*Firm News*, 8.18.23

Best Lawyers® Recognizes 40 White And Williams Lawyers  
*Firm News*, 8.18.22

Best Lawyers® Recognizes 38 White and Williams Lawyers  
8.19.21

## EVENTS

Spread Theories in Water Losses  
2025 NASP Annual Conference  
Chula Vista (San Diego), CA, 10.28.25

Highway to the Danger Zone: Using Alternative Safer Designs to Prove a Product Liability Case  
2025 NASP Annual Conference  
Chula Vista (San Diego), CA, 10.27.25

## PUBLICATIONS

Negligent Undertaking Claim Against Amazon May Succeed Where a Products Liability Claim Fails  
*The Subrogation Strategist*, 4.29.24

In Pennsylvania, Contractors Can Be Liable to Third Parties for Obvious Defects in Completed Work  
*The Subrogation Strategist*, 6.13.23

Amazon Can be Held Strictly Liable as a Product Seller in New Jersey  
*The Subrogation Strategist*, 7.11.22