

MELISSA P. READING

Partner

Melissa Phillips Reading represents companies and individuals in civil tort litigation, primarily medical malpractice defense. She defends healthcare providers from pre-suit investigation through appeal, as well as assisting them with other interactions with the civil legal system such as navigating depositions, responding to subpoenas and requests for records, and government and medical board investigations.

Melissa has handled cases involving a variety of specialties and settings, including ophthalmology, anesthesiology, long term care, obstetrics, pulmonology, critical care medicine, plastic surgery, cosmetic surgery, emergency medicine, hospital medicine, nursing and advanced practice nursing, and medical assisting. In addition to motions practice, discovery and trial at the trial court level, Melissa handles appeals for her clients, including development of interlocutory and final appeals. Additionally, Melissa represents healthcare professionals in regulatory board complaints and investigations.

Prior to joining Hancock, Daniel, & Johnson, PC, and returning to her hometown, Melissa practiced healthcare liability defense for twelve years in Atlanta, Georgia. Ms. Reading has been recognized as a "Rising Star" (in healthcare and civil litigation defense) in "Georgia Super Lawyers" every year since 2012. She began her legal career serving as a law clerk to the Honorable G. Ernest Tidwell, United States District Court, Northern District of Georgia, and practicing at a nationally recognized, Atlanta-based law firm.

Career Highlights

Martindale Hubbell AV Preeminent®, 2016 - 2025
Super Lawyers Mid-South, 2021 - 2024
Super Lawyers Georgia Rising Star, 2012-2020 ed.
Atlanta Bar Association, 2007–2019
- Judicial Tenure & Selection Committee (2017–2019)
- Member at Large, Board (2014–2016)
- Board, Women in Profession Section (2007–2014)
Atlanta Legal Aid, Distinguished Service Award, 2012
Law Clerk, Judge Tidwell, United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, Atlanta, Georgia, 2004 - 2006
Order of the Coif, Emory University School of Law, 2004
Intern, Field Placement, Justice Hugh Thompson, Georgia Supreme Court, Fall 2002



Practice Areas

Appellate
General Tort, Insurance and Product Liability Defense
Health Regulatory Boards
Medical Malpractice- Long Term/Assisted Living Facility
Medical Malpractice Defense

Licensure

Georgia
North Carolina
Tennessee
Virginia
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia
U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia
U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee

Academic Credentials

Vanderbilt University, B.A.
Emory School of Law, J.D.

MELISSA P. READING

Partner

Publications

Ex Parte Communications Between Defense Counsel and Treating Physicians: Has HIPAA Really Changed the Landscape?, For the Defense, October 2011

Speaking Engagements

Electronic and Other Medical Records: What to Look For and Where to Find it, NBI, Inc., March 2019.

Valuing Damages and Settling the Case, NBI, Inc., March 2019

Medico-Legal Issues of the Electronic Health Record, Georgia Association of Ophthalmologists, February 2016

A Key To Successful Teamwork: Effectively Communicating With Your Client, Outside Counsel Conference, National Forklift Manufacturer, November 2011

Nuts and Bolts: Medical Malpractice for Optometrists, Southeastern Conference of Optometrists, March 2009 and Southern College of Optometry, May 2011