HUSCH BLACKWELL



Frederic "Rick" Norris

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

Rick is a seasoned trial lawyer who defends companies when the stakes are high, the facts are complex, and the path to resolution demands a disciplined litigation strategy.

Rick leads Husch Blackwell's Mass Tort & Product Liability practice group. He helps companies turn complex litigation portfolios into more manageable business risks, bringing greater consistency, cost control, and predictability to both individual cases and the portfolio as a whole. Rick works closely with in-house legal teams to develop practical defense strategies aligned with each client's risk profile and business objectives, helping clients determine where to resolve and where to try cases.

Rick serves as National Coordinating Counsel and trial counsel in hundreds of cases involving alleged silica exposure from the fabrication and installation of quartz countertops. He also serves as National Counsel for a manufacturer of talc-containing products and as trial counsel in litigation involving asbestos, herbicides, and other alleged toxic exposures. Across these matters, Rick represents companies in the petrochemical, agricultural, construction, and automotive industries in claims involving mesothelioma, other malignancies, silicosis, catastrophic injury, and wrongful death.

A critical part of Rick's trial strategy is developing and preparing expert teams. He works with defense experts to build clear, credible testimony and develops strategies for challenging opposing experts, helping clients address the scientific and technical issues that can drive both case outcomes and broader portfolio risk. His recent trial experience includes matters involving artificial stone countertops, herbicides, talc, and premises liability claims. In particular, Rick was co-lead trial

Industries

Manufacturing
Transportation

Services

Asbestos Litigation
Complex Torts (CXT)
Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution
Product Liability
Toxic Tort

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counsel in a case recognized by the *Los Angeles Daily Journal* as a "Top Defense Verdict" and has been a member of the trial team in two major defense wins in cases involving a popular herbicide.

As a member of the firm's Complex Torts (CXT) and Innovāt Alliance National Asbestos Defense teams, Rick helps clients move beyond case-by-case defense toward coordinated, portfolio-wide strategies. He combines claim evaluation, historical investigation, shared intelligence, and consistent execution across multiple jurisdictions to help clients strengthen their position across the litigation portfolio.

Whether managing a large litigation portfolio or preparing a high-risk matter for trial, Rick focuses on the outcomes that matter most to clients: disciplined spending, efficient resolution, consistent decision-making, and a defense strategy that supports long-term risk management. His goal is not to try every case, but to help clients make deliberate decisions about which matters warrant investment, which should be resolved efficiently, and which need to be tried. When trial is the right strategy, Rick brings the preparation, expert strategy, and courtroom experience necessary to pursue the client's objectives.

Experience

SILICA / ENGINEERED STONE LITIGATION

- ***Gonzalez v. ADB Global Trade LLC, et al.*** | Lead Trial Counsel
  Represented a distributor in litigation involving alleged silica exposure from work with artificial stone countertops.
- ***Garcia-Rosas v. Architectural Surfaces, Inc., et al.*** | Lead Trial Counsel
  Represented a distributor in litigation involving alleged silica exposure from work with artificial stone countertops.

HERBICIDE LITIGATION

- ***Allegrezza/McCostlin v. Monsanto Company*** | Trial Counsel
  Defended an agricultural company in litigation alleging the plaintiff's non-Hodgkin lymphoma was caused by use of defendant's herbicide. The court entered a directed verdict for the client at the close of plaintiffs' evidence, which was affirmed on appeal.
- ***Johnson v. Monsanto Company*** | Trial Counsel
  Defended an agricultural company in litigation alleging herbicide caused non-Hodgkin lymphoma. The trial resulted in a unanimous defense verdict.

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Experience

- ***Jimenez v. Monsanto Company*** | Trial Counsel
  Defended herbicide manufacturer in a matter involving a juvenile plaintiff. Plaintiffs dismissed the case on the eve of trial after significant favorable pretrial rulings concerning causation evidence.

ASBESTOS, MESOTHELIOMA & TALC LITIGATION

- ***Chapman v. Avon Products, Inc.*** | Lead Trial Counsel
  Represented an automotive parts supplier. The court granted nonsuit in favor of the client following plaintiffs' opening statement.
- ***Von Salzen v. Imerys Talc America*** | Lead Trial Counsel
  Represented a supplier of talc in a mesothelioma matter. The client obtained a full dismissal during plaintiffs' case-in-chief.
- ***Wittman v. Imerys Talc America*** | Trial Counsel
  Represented a supplier of talc in a mesothelioma matter.
- ***Fenstermacher v. 3M Company, et al.*** | Co-Lead Trial Counsel
  Represented a contractor defendant in a mesothelioma matter conducted as a remote jury trial.
- ***Morton v. The Pep Boys, Manny, Moe & Jack of California*** | Lead Trial Counsel
  Defended an auto parts supplier in a lung cancer case involving alleged asbestos exposure.
- ***McKee v. Metalclad Insulation LLC*** | Lead Trial Counsel
  Represented a contractor in a mesothelioma matter involving alleged exposure to insulation materials at a steel mill.
- ***Houpt v. A.K. Steel Corporation, et al.*** | Lead Trial Counsel
  Represented a contractor in a 12-day mesothelioma trial involving alleged exposure to refractory materials. The jury found the client only one percent responsible.

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Experience

- ***Ganoe v. Air & Liquid Systems Corp.*** | Trial Counsel
  Represented an insulation contractor in a wrongful death mesothelioma matter that resulted in a defense verdict.
- ***Kordestani v. Exxon Mobil Corporation*** | Trial Counsel
  Represented two major petrochemical companies in a mesothelioma matter arising out of a refinery in Iran.
- ***Petitpas v. Ford Motor Company, et al.*** | Trial Counsel
  Represented a premises owner in mesothelioma litigation involving alleged exposure to automotive friction products. The verdict was recognized by the Daily Journal as one of its "Top Defense Verdicts."
- ***William Marvin Webster v. 3M Company, et al.*** | Trial Counsel
  Represented a major petrochemical company in mesothelioma litigation involving alleged premises exposure. The court granted nonsuit for the client at the close of plaintiff's case, and the result was affirmed on appeal.
- ***Kalil v. ABB, Inc., et al.*** | Trial Team
  Represented a talc supplier as a member of the trial team in a mesothelioma matter that resulted in a defense verdict after a two-week trial.

PREMISES & GENERAL LIABILITY LITIGATION

- ***Morales v. Cosmic Concepts*** | Lead Trial Counsel
  Represented a convenience store in litigation concerning an alleged personal injury from a car encroaching the front curb of the convenience store.
- ***Flanary v. 7-Eleven, Inc.*** | Trial Counsel
  Defended a convenience store in premises liability litigation alleging inadequate security.

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Recognition

- Rising Star, Southern California Super Lawyers, 2014-2019
- Daily Journal, 40 Under 40, 2019

Education

- J.D., Southwestern Law School
  - *magna cum laude*
  - *Southwestern Law Review*
  - Dean's List
  - Dean's Merit Award and University Scholarship
- B.A., University of California, San Diego
  - Political Science

Admissions

- California
- U.S. District Court, Central District of California
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of California

Community Leadership

Rick participates in his neighborhood council and coaches his children's softball team.

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*Contact Rick to set up an in-person consultation by appointment in the Los Angeles office.

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FT Innovat Alliance Nomination

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