HUSCH BLACKWELL

Robert Hess

SENIOR COUNSEL

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OVERVIEW

After 12 years in-house advising a major university's health system and health schools, Robert counsels academic medical centers and other healthcare clients on regulatory compliance matters.

Robert provides health systems and healthcare providers with advice regarding state and federal regulatory requirements, including licensure, reimbursement rules, Medicaid and Medicare requirements, medical staff privileging and credentialing, Stark Law and Anti-Kickback compliance, 340B program matters, and graduate medical education requirements. Drawing on his broad range of experience, he helps health systems successfully plan and complete strategic transactions and integrations.

While Robert works frequently with healthcare clients generally, a significant portion of his practice focuses on academic medical centers, medical schools, and university health systems. He regularly assists these clients in managing the multi-layered legal issues surrounding their missions of providing patient care, teaching students and medical residents, and serving as research leaders. It's a balance Robert understands on a personal level, after serving on the University of Missouri's legal team for more than a decade.

After beginning his career at the firm as a healthcare-focused attorney, Robert accepted a position in 2012 as the university's first dedicated healthcare attorney. He eventually came to lead a team of seven legal professionals and coordinated the delivery of legal services for the university's academic health system, health schools,

Industries

Education
Healthcare

Services

340B Drug Pricing Program
Academic Medicine
Healthcare M&A, Joint Ventures, and Other Transactions
Healthcare Operations
Healthcare Providers
Healthcare Regulatory & Compliance Counseling
Higher Education
Medicaid Reimbursement Strategies
Medical Staff & Governance
Nonprofit Organizations & Religious Institutions
Pharmacy
Post-Acute Care

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and other clinical operations. Robert served as the primary legal advisor to the senior executive leadership of both MU Health Care and MU School of Medicine before returning to Husch Blackwell in early 2025.

Robert's entire legal career has been dedicated to the healthcare industry. As a summer associate in the firm's Jefferson City, Missouri office in the early 2000s, he was assigned to healthcare regulatory work and quickly found his passion: Robert loved helping healthcare clients advance their mission in a complex legal and business environment. He thrives on supporting clients whose goal is pursuing excellence in the service of others.

Thanks to his time with the UM system, Robert is truly immersed in the client perspective. He knows firsthand what constitutes practical, useful legal counsel, and he knows how crucial it is to understand a client's capabilities, objectives, and preferences. Robert's goal is always to meet clients where they are with sound, actionable advice tailored to their specific situation.

Experience

- Grew and led seven-member team providing comprehensive legal support for the clinical operations and health schools of a university with $2B+ in annual patient care revenue.
- Counseled academic health system on the successful integration of a community hospital affiliate with $200M+ in annual revenue.
- Advised academic health system on successful combination of multiple affiliated and unaffiliated physician groups into a unified physician organization.
- Assisted sponsoring institutions and training sites in complying with graduate medical education requirements and negotiating affiliation agreements.
- Obtained increased Medicaid reimbursement for health provider client through administrative litigation and successfully defended the decision on appeal.
- Partnered with health care executives to develop and execute strategies to impact state and federal policy goals through grassroots, executive, and legislative advocacy, rulemakings, and litigation.

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Education

- J.D., Vanderbilt University Law School
  - Order of the Coif
  - *Vanderbilt Law Review*, Managing Editor
- B.Eng., Vanderbilt University
  - Chemical Engineering
  - *magna cum laude*

Admissions

- Missouri
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri

Clerkships

- The Hon. W. Duane Benton, Missouri Supreme Court, 2001-2002

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