HUSCH BLACKWELL

Robert C. Threlkeld

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

With nearly three decades in healthcare law, Bob draws on his vast, deep knowledge of healthcare regulations to assist healthcare provider clients with just about any sort of legal matter. He practices from Atlanta via our Link virtual office.

Although Bob offers comprehensive and practical guidance across litigation, regulatory compliance, government investigations, and healthcare transactions, the linchpin of his practice is his thorough regulatory knowledge: over the past 30 years, he has worked with many of the major health systems and academic medical centers in Georgia and the Southeast, and he has a comprehensive fund of knowledge and experience to offer clients. He also represents large physician groups, private equity-backed physician practice management companies, and ancillary providers.

Bob began his career as a trial attorney and continues to try cases when necessary to protect and vindicate client interests. Bob's experience with healthcare clients led him to concentrate on healthcare regulations, and all litigation and related transactional work. His litigation practice continues to thrive with a specific focus in healthcare regulatory issues, and he regularly handles Certificate of Need litigation, Medicare and Medicaid fraud and

"Robert Threlkeld is thorough and conscientious."

— Chambers USA 2026

Industry

Healthcare

Services

Academic Medicine
False Claims Act
Healthcare Litigation
Healthcare M&A, Joint Ventures, and Other Transactions
Healthcare Operations
Healthcare Private Equity
Healthcare Providers
Healthcare Regulatory & Compliance Counseling
Medical Staff & Governance

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abuse matters, managed care litigation, medical staff disputes, false claims and whistleblower cases, and complex licensure disputes, including the successful representation of a health system in regaining accreditation after a Joint Commission denial of accreditation. Today, he advises on Medicare conditions of participation, EMTALA issues, licensing and permitting matters, billing and compliance questions, provider-based and related care models, reimbursement structures, and other regulatory matters.

For matters before the courts, arbitration panels, and administrative appeals, Bob brings a practical, direct approach derived from his broad healthcare industry experience, engagement with the evidence in dispute, and understanding of the governing legal framework. In addition to his thorough understanding of the regulatory landscape, Bob takes a hands-on approach to the underlying facts that drive the client's strategic objectives in transactional and regulatory matters. On the transactional side, he regularly advises on hospital affiliations and other complex deals, often drawing on early experience with complex Chapter 11 matters and fraudulent conveyance cases relating to fair market value, a crucial factor in healthcare transactions.

Clients value Bob's depth of experience, commitment to understanding each organization's unique needs, and comprehensive knowledge of how various providers and health systems operate. He is energized by working with brilliant, driven individuals in the healthcare sphere and is dedicated to finding the solutions that will allow them to continue their mission of patient care.

Experience

LITIGATION

- Successfully defended on appeal a major academic medical center in connection with a lawsuit challenging the establishment of a new hospital as allegedly violating Georgia's Hospital Acquisition Act.
- Successful agency appeal and resolution on behalf of major for-profit hospital of EMTALA fine resulting in reduction of five to ten percent of original assessment, with savings of several million dollars.
- Successful defense and resolution of qui tam action against major academic medical center in matter alleging violations of False Claims Act arising out of allegedly unnecessary and experimental surgeries.
- Obtained dismissal with prejudice of qui tam action alleging violation of Georgia's qui tam statute by faculty practice, in first reported appellate case dealing with required intent and sciences of such statute.

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Experience

- Obtained multimillion-dollar federal court judgment following arbitration on behalf of academic medical center for breach of consulting contract involving Medicaid upper payment limit program.
- Successfully represented three physicians in connection with a multimillion-dollar dispute over equity interests in a radiation oncology company resulting in a multimillion-dollar settlement for each of the three physicians.
- Obtained multimillion-dollar judgment after jury trial in action challenging fraudulent transfers and conveyances.
- Obtained jury verdict in federal court action on behalf of whistleblower alleging retaliation under False Claims Act for cooperation with governmental investigation.
- Successfully represented an Oregon community hospital in obtaining a pre-litigation settlement of managed care claims in excess of $1 million against a publicly-traded health insurer.
- Obtained a multimillion-dollar settlement in an arbitration proceeding brought by a Chicago not-for-profit health system against a publicly-traded managed care company.
- Obtained dismissal with prejudice of a Medicare secondary payor whistleblower lawsuit in federal court in Arkansas.
- Successful defense of licensure revocation hearings for assisted living facilities of publicly-traded company.
- Obtained a favorable settlement for the pharmacy operations of a publicly-traded company for investigation of billing practices in Georgia.
- Successful representation on appeal of hospital system in connection with physician's challenge to hospital governing board's ability to make final decision in credentialing disputes.

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Experience

- Successful representation of major not-for-profit hospital system in Georgia in connection with claims and dispute against major, publicly-traded managed care company resulting in a multimillion-dollar settlement in favor of the hospital system.
- Successful representation of cardiologist in False Claims Act suit filed in federal court in Georgia.
- Successful representation of specialty orthopedic physician practice in connection with dispute and claims against single specialty practice management company involving long-term management agreement.
- Successful resolution of qui tam action against hospital and physicians alleging violation of False Claims Act relating to various supervision and compensation relationships.

CERTIFICATE OF NEED

- Represented not-for-profit healthcare system in obtaining approval for largest CON regulated hospital project then existing in state of Georgia.
- Represented large not-for-profit healthcare system in obtaining Certificate of Need to establish radiation therapy services, reversing desk level agency decision over opposition of agency and competitive system, and defense of same at court of appeals.
- Obtained Certificate of Need approvals for five freestanding rehabilitation hospitals in Georgia over last eight years, including three decisions reversing initial agency denial of CON and defending same on appeal.
- Obtained approvals for well over $2BN of new and expansion CON projects in Georgia.
- Represent eight-hospital not-for-profit health system in numerous Certificate of Need matters, including new hospital, radiation therapy, ambulatory surgical, neonatal intensive care, and multiple other matters.

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Experience

- Successful representation of academic medical center in connection with obtaining a Certificate of Need for a new 100 bed hospital in Columbia County over the opposition of two competing healthcare systems.
- Successful representation of not-for-profit hospital in obtaining a Certificate of Need for obstetrical services over opposition of large healthcare system.
- Successful representation of publicly-traded entity providing inpatient rehabilitation services for Certificate of Need for new hospital, reversing desk level agency decision.
- Successfully represented a faculty practice plan of academic medical center in connection with its application for a Certificate of Need for ASC over the opposition of various existing providers.
- Successfully represented a national behavioral company in obtaining a Certificate of Need and defending on appeal a unique senior psychiatric program to be operated as a hospital within a hospital.
- Successful opposition to Certificate of Need for open heart surgical services after evidentiary hearing and appeal.

REGULATORY/TRANSACTIONAL

- Successful appeal of denial of accreditation by major accreditation agency respecting large not-for-profit healthcare system.
- Successful self-disclosure to OIG's Anti-Kickback protocol respecting hospital/physician management services arrangement that was not operated consistently with underlying contractual documentation and requirements.
- Advised large not-for-profit system on sale of hospital and related assets, including advice on various regulatory matters uncovered during transaction process.
- Represented faculty practice plan in connection with restructuring of major academic medical center.

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Experience

- Representation of major not-for-profit health care system in connection with acquisition of four cardiology practices and establishment of Heart Center of Excellence.
- Represented 150-member physician group in connection with unwind and termination of long-term practice management agreement with publicly-traded practice management company.
- Representation of major not-for-profit healthcare system in connection with acquisition of assets and equity interests in prominent radiation therapy centers.
- Unwind of 60-physician multi-specialty group from long-term management contract with practice management company and repurchase of assets.
- Representation of integrated healthcare system in employment of physicians in large multi-specialty group.
- Representation of integrated healthcare system in acquisition of interests in highly specialized hospital-based practice.

Recognition

- *Chambers USA*
  - Healthcare, 2009-2026
- *The Best Lawyers In America®*
  - Health Care Law, 2011-2027

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Education

- J.D., Georgetown University Law Center
  - *cum laude*
  - *Georgetown Law Journal*, Associate Editor
- M.A., Harvard University
  - Mellon Fellow
- B.A., Emory University
  - *magna cum laude*

Admissions

- Georgia
- Maryland
- District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Georgia
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Georgia
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Georgia
- U.S. District Court, District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court, District of Maryland
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

Community Leadership

- Blue Heron Nature Preserve Board of Directors, 2014-present

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*Bob is licensed in Georgia, practicing in Atlanta. Contact Bob via email or phone for in-person/virtual meetings. Use the address 3550 Lenox Rd NE, Suite 2100, Atlanta, GA 30326, for mail/deliveries.

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