



ASHLEY L. CRISS

PARTNER

acriss@tykalaw.com

+1 202.266.7903

Washington, DC



“Behind almost every big event in the United States is an insurance component. This enables us as coverage attorneys to be involved in some of the most exciting and provocative cases. Insurance cases lend well to limited discovery and early resolution, allowing our team to get in many reps as trial and appellate litigators in state and federal courts.”

Ashley L. Criss

Ashley Criss represents insurers in connection with coverage issues and disputes arising under professional liability, general liability, and other insurance policies. She is an experienced litigator who has represented some of the largest insurers in complex cases of all types in federal and state courts nationwide. She also serves as defense counsel for lawyers and other professionals in pending professional liability lawsuits, threatened claims, and in response to subpoenas.

Ashley has extensive experience providing counseling and litigating claims under general liability policies in the mass tort sexual abuse context, including in landmark cases. In addition to litigating coverage disputes, she advises insurers on coverage issues as claims develop.

EDUCATION

- The George Washington University Law School, J.D., with high honors
 - Federal Circuit Bar Journal, member
 - Order of the Coif
- Furman University, B.A., *magna cum laude*

HONORS

- Best Lawyers | Ones to Watch in Insurance Law (2024-2027)
- Business Insurance | Break Out Award (2026)
- Super Lawyers | Rising Star (2019-2026)
- Law360 | Rising Star for Insurance (2025)

As a former educator, Ashley loves mentoring and teaching others, particularly litigation and legal writing skills. She is deeply committed to developing the next generation of attorneys.

BAR + COURT ADMISSIONS

- District of Columbia Bar
- Maryland Bar
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Maryland
- U.S. District Court, District of Columbia

EXPERIENCE

- Secured summary judgment win in Nevada federal court under a D&O policy where court held that an entire lawsuit is a single “claim” and that an antitrust sublimit applied, resulting in complete dismissal of the insurer under a sublimit provision. *EB Holdings II, Inc. v. Illinois Nat’l Ins. Co.*, Case No. 20-cv-2248 (D. Nev. Feb. 27, 2026).
- Secured victory for insurer in Illinois federal court on a cyber insurance coverage issue, setting important precedent for how endorsements for cyber-related incidents interact and are enforced. *Office of the Special Deputy Receiver v. Hartford Fire Ins. Co.*, No. 22-cv-3709 (N.D. Ill. Mar. 31, 2025).
- Successfully defended removal to Minnesota federal court in insurance dispute stemming from a copyright infringement claim. The case was dismissed in January 2025 after reaching a favorable settlement. *Broadhead, LLC v. AXIS Ins. Co.*, Case No. 23-cv-2314 (D. Minn.).
- Secured affirmance of summary judgment decision for insurer in Sixth Circuit addressing specific entity exclusion in investment advisor liability policy. *CapWealth Advisors, LLC v. Twin City Fire Ins. Co.*, No. 23-5359, 2024 WL 1134647 (6th Cir. Mar. 15, 2024).
- Briefed, argued, and defeated a motion to dismiss by an insured seeking to escape a coverage action under a GL policy in Minnesota federal court. *General Star Indemnity Co. v. Toy Quest Ltd.*, Case No. 22-cv-2258 (D. Minn. Aug. 2, 2023).
- Secured summary judgment for insurer in Tennessee federal court on the grounds that a specific entity exclusion applied to a lawsuit against insured alleging a conflict of interest based on its affiliation with the excluded entity. *CapWealth Advisors, LLC v. Twin City Fire Ins. Co.*, Case No. 21-cv-00036, 2023 WL 2700706 (M.D. Tenn. Mar. 29, 2023).

- Obtained summary judgment resolving all claims in favor of professional liability insurer in Cook County court, including a claim seeking coverage for \$3.2 million in alleged claim expenses and a bad faith claim. The court held that a court-ordered special master investigation into the insured law firm's fee request in an underlying foreign exchange transaction class action did not trigger the professional liability policy's insuring agreement because the investigation was not a claim by reason of provision of services "for others." The court also held, as a matter of first impression in Illinois state court, that the insurer had no independent duty to pay claim expenses where no potentially covered damages were sought from the insured. *Thornton Law Firm LLP v. Continental Cas. Co.*, Case No. 2020 CH 06970 (Ill. Cir. Ct., June 2, 2022).
- With the ACLU of Maryland, represented on a pro bono basis incarcerated individuals sentenced to life imprisonment as juveniles, resulting in a settlement reached in 2021 that mandates substantial reforms to the parole process in Maryland.
- Won motion to dismiss in favor of insurance adjuster on statute of limitations grounds on a Florida negligence claim, which was affirmed on appeal by the Eleventh Circuit. *Evanston Ins. Co. v. William Kramer & Assocs., LLC*, 815 F. App'x 443 (11th Cir. 2020).
- Obtained a decision by the Connecticut Supreme Court (on certified question from the Second Circuit) that the statute of repose barred a claim against an insurance adjuster. The decision is an important precedent for professionals and other defendants regarding the continuing course of conduct and related wrongful act doctrines. *Essex Ins. Co. v. William Kramer & Assocs., LLC*, 205 A.3d 534 (Conn. 2019).
- Obtained ruling by California federal court granting management liability insurer's motion to dismiss lawsuit seeking coverage for securities class action based on prior acts exclusion barring coverage for claims arising out of wrongful acts before policy inception. *Jayhawk Private Equity Fund II LP v. Liberty Ins. Underwriters, Inc.*, No. 17-cv-5523, 2018 WL 11605692 (C.D. Cal. June 7, 2018).
- Obtained summary judgment in favor of insurer in federal Colorado court with briefing on summary judgment complete within 46 days of the filing of the lawsuit. The court held that a pre-policy letter was a "claim" prior to an EEOC charge and discrimination lawsuit, barring coverage as a result. *Scottsdale Indem. Co. v. Convercent, Inc.*, No. 17-CV-01236-RBJ, 2017 WL 5446093 (D. Colo. Nov. 14, 2017).

PROFESSIONAL & CIVIC AFFILIATIONS

- Pathfinder, Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) 2021
- Intern, Children's Defense Fund, Juvenile Justice Policy Group (2015)
- Intern, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Program Legal Group (2014)
- Secondary Social Studies Teacher, Teach for America, Duval County Public Schools

(2010-2012)

- Intern, Richard W. Riley Institute, Diversity Leaders Initiative (2009-2010)
- Intern, Law in Action, Office of Stephen J. Henry (2008)