



Michael E. Tardif

Partner

Michael E. Tardif is a former Senior Assistant Attorney General and Chief of the Torts Division of the State Attorney General's Office (AGO). Mike joined the AGO in 1974 after graduating from the University of Washington School of Law. He initially practiced labor and administrative law, beginning in the Employment Security Division, and then becoming Chief of the Olympia Section of the Labor and Industries Division. In 1980, he obtained a Masters Degree in Business Administration from the University of Puget Sound. Mike transferred to the Torts Division in 1982 and became Chief of that Division in 1987. During his long career in the Torts Division, Mike handled trials and appeals in virtually every area of government liability, including civil rights, employment, regulatory, highway design, corrections law enforcement, and social welfare. He has been involved in state risk management and insurance programs, and has drafted and testified about tort legislation.

Mike has been a speaker at dozens of state and national classes and seminars on government tort liability. He has been a member of several committees and project panels of the national Transportation Research Board, a Division of the National Academy of Sciences, for 30 years, providing expertise to the Board on issues of liability for highway design and improvement. Mike was a member of the Washington State Bar Association Disciplinary Board from 1985 until 1988 and was Chair of the Board in 1987-88. In 2007, Mike retired from his position in the Torts Division and founded the Freimund, Jackson, and Tardif law firm to continue his practice defending government agencies, officials, and employees in tort, civil rights, and employment lawsuits.

Mike has received the peer-reviewed rating of "AV" from Martindale Hubbell, which places him among a select group of lawyers nationwide who have been recognized by their peers as consistently performing at the highest level, both in terms of legal ability and ethics.

Areas of Focus

- Administrative Law
- Civil Rights & Employment
- Law Enforcement & Corrections
Personal Injury Defense
- Transportation

Practices

- Civil Rights
- Employment Law
- Government Tort Defense
- Law Enforcement
- Litigation

Education

Seattle University, B.A. 1971
University of Washington, J.D. 1974
University of Puget Sound, M.B.A.
1980



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Representative Experience

Co-author of Washington State's 45 Year Experiment in Governmental Liability, 29 S.U. Law Rev. 1 (2005).

Author of the comprehensive government liability bill introduced and heard in the 2006 Legislative Session.

Legal advisor to Governor Gardner on the 1986 Tort Reform Act, which was signed by the Governor without veto of any section.

Prevailed in all twenty of his appeals briefed and/or argued in state and federal courts during his tenure in the Torts Division. Mike obtained reversals in five out of five appeals of multi-million dollar verdicts ranging from \$2.7 million to \$22.5 million.

Mike has been a speaker and author of materials on the subjects of government tort liability and risk management at dozens of CLEs sponsored by the Washington State Bar Association, Washington Defense Trial Lawyers, Washington State Trial Lawyers' Association, local bars, the Government Lawyers' Association, the Attorney General's Office, and the Transportation Research Board.

Transportation Experience

Mike represented the Washington State Department of Transportation in tort lawsuits during his entire tenure with the Torts Division. For most of that time, Mike was the Department of Transportation's primary legal advisor on matters related to tort liability, including risk management issues and drafting of standards and manuals to minimize tort liability.

He first became involved with the Transportation Research Board in 1984 and became a member of the Task Force on Torts in 1987. He has been an active member of the Committee on Tort Liability and Risk Management, and the subcommittee on 23 U.S.C. § 409. Mike was the author of the multi-state amicus brief to the United States



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Supreme Court in *Pierce County v. Guillen*, a 2003 case interpreting section 409, which limits use of federal highway safety data in tort litigation.

Mike was a project panel member for the National Cooperative Highway Research Program Project 11-07 and Project 8-54. He is currently on the oversight panel for Project 21-06, the panel responsible for the National Cooperative Highway Research Program to create and revise selected studies on transportation law.

Legal Employment

Washington State Legislature

- House Judiciary Committee, Legal Intern, 1973

Office of the Attorney General

- University of Washington Division, Law Clerk, 1973-1974
- Employment Security Division, Assistant Attorney General, 1974-1978
- Hospital Commission, Assistant Attorney General, 1976-1978
- Labor and Industries Division, Olympia Section Chief, 1978-1982
- Torts Division, Assistant Attorney General, 1982-1986
- Employment Security Division, Division Chief, 1986-1987
- Torts Division, Division Chief, 1987-2001
- Torts Division, Senior Attorney, 2001-2007

Freimund Jackson & Tardif, PLLC

- Managing Partner, 2007-present



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Other Significant Legal Activities

Washington State Bar Disciplinary Board

- Member 1985-1988
- Chairperson 1987-1988

Transportation Research Board

- Task Force on Torts, 1987-1990
- Committee on Tort Liability and Risk Management, 1990-2007
- Task Force on Context Sensitive Design, 2003-2007
- Legal Research Committee, Member and Chair, 2005-2015

To contact Michael, call 360.534.9960.