



Rob Lang

Partner

Chicago
312 580 2242 direct
312 580 2201 fax
rhlang@thompsoncoburn.com

PRACTICES

- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Business Litigation
- Private Client Services
- Real Estate
- Shareholder Rights, Relations and Dispute Resolution
- Sports and Entertainment Law

INDUSTRIES

- Financial Services
- Health Care
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Professional Services
- Real Estate
- Sports and Entertainment
- Staffing/Recruiting
- Transportation and Logistics

EDUCATION

- Wake Forest University School of Law, J.D.
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, B.A.

ADMISSIONS

- Illinois

LANGUAGES

- Spanish

Litigation can be a chess match or a street fight: Rob is comfortable with either approach.

Rob is a business litigator who focuses on preventing or resolving "business divorces" and representing clients in complex contract disputes across various industries.

Business divorces, where company owners can't get along anymore, can affect everyone from individuals to multi-billion-dollar companies and frequently crop up when, during the formation of a new business, the owners do not pay close enough attention to their operating agreements or shareholder agreements — or unwisely forgo such agreements altogether. Rob works closely with his clients to prepare a good "prenuptial agreement" for their business that accounts for the various trigger points of conflict that he has seen over the course of almost 30 years of practicing law.

If litigation proves necessary, Rob is highly experienced in the complex intersection of litigation, corporate, employment, trusts and estates, and other areas of the law that frequently accompanies these types of disputes.

Rob's general litigation experience includes the successful resolution of complex contractual and other business disputes in various industries, including real estate, manufacturing (including food), health care, professional services, sports, transportation, and energy.

Rob also serves on Thompson Coburn's management committee.

Rob deeply values service to the community. He is a founding director of Fight for Chicago, a charity that provides boxing training and mentoring to disadvantaged Chicago youths. Rob recently finished a six-year tenure as a board and executive committee member of the Ronald McDonald House Charities chapter for Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana. Rob was also privileged to be honored as the "Hero of the Year" in 2011 for his pro bono work on behalf of Marklund, which provides care for people with severe developmental disabilities in suburban Chicago.

Recognitions

- Listed in The Best Lawyers in America® (by BL Rankings), 2023-2024
- Listed in Illinois Super Lawyers, 2010-2024 (by Thomson Reuters)
- Marklund Hero of the Year, 2011

EMPLOYMENT

- Thompson Coburn LLP Partner, 2011-Present
- Holland & Knight LLP Partner, 2007-2011
- Quarles & Brady LLP, 2006-2007
- FagelHaber LLC, 1997-2006
- Querrey & Harrow, 1994-1997

COMMUNITY

- Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana, Board of Directors, Chair of Governance Committee, Executive Committee
- Fight For Chicago
- Marklund

- Pro Bono All-Star, Holland & Knight LLP, 2011
- Included in Illinois Super Lawyers Rising Stars list, 2009 (by Thomson Reuters)

Experience

- **Headline-making results at trial and otherwise in high-profile 'business divorces'**

Rob represents minority owners, controlling owners, management and the company in disputes related to governance, valuation, fiduciary and other issues. His successful results for his clients have been reported in the Chicago Sun-Times, the Chicago Tribune, Crain's Chicago Business, the Gary Post-Tribune and numerous other media. A sampling of his work includes:

Dismissing post-M&A claims on behalf of a buyer of a large litigation funding business.

Successfully resolving a business divorce among family members of a well-known Chicago food service business.

Defeating a motion for a temporary restraining order brought by a son against his mother relating to family property.

Obtaining not-guilty judgments at trial for general partners accused of breaches of fiduciary duties.

Reducing an \$87 million claim to zero upon winning summary judgment in a claim against real estate general partners.

Winning an award of contempt sanctions (attorneys' fees) against a law firm arising out of a business divorce matter.

Proving oppression for a minority shareholder of a well-known fast-food franchisor, entitling the shareholder to a buyout at (undiscounted) "fair value" at trial, and forcing the majority shareholder out of control of the company.

Winning a dismissal upon summary judgment in federal court for his client in defending a large claim for the client's alleged failure to honor a promise to provide stock options.

Obtaining a judgment after a trial for a partner who was a shareholder in an automobile dealership business. Rob's client was awarded compensatory damages as well as attorney's fees as an exception to the "American Rule," which generally does not allow successful plaintiffs to recover attorney's fees.

Obtaining a temporary restraining order and then an injunction after a three-week trial on behalf of oppressed doctors whose opponents attempted to lock them out of their membership and management interests in an Indiana physician-owned hospital they founded.

Obtaining a court-ordered receivership of a profitable company in Colorado on behalf of an oppressed minority shareholder.

Obtaining an appellate court reversal of the trial court's dismissal of a physician's petition for discovery.

- **Successful representation of clients facing other types of claims at trial and otherwise**

Rob has tried and argued cases in other types of disputes, with results published on ESPN, ABC News, Fox News and multiple other media outlets, such as:

Obtaining a not guilty judgment at trial for a client accused of misappropriating corporate assets.

Obtaining a not-guilty arbitration award for a general partner to a large real estate venture as to a multimillion-dollar claim brought by several well-known professional athletes, including NBA All-Stars such as Michael Jordan.

Obtaining not-guilty verdicts for a public transportation entity in a series of personal injury lawsuits; in one case, successfully won a counterclaim for the client.

Obtaining a dismissal upon summary judgment for a publicly-traded client defending a commercial eviction claim.

Obtaining a summary judgment in a \$25 million claim filed against commercial lender, defeating the borrowers' lender-liability claims.

Winning on appeal for physician clients in a precedent-setting non-compete case. The appeals court reversed a preliminary injunction against Rob's clients. On remand, the trial court awarded the clients hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages and attorney's fees caused by the temporary restraining order.

Obtaining a multimillion-dollar settlement for a publicly traded food distributor in its claim against a publicly traded restaurant chain for breach of a master distribution agreement.

Representing technology licensees in license agreement disputes, including those involving alleged royalties due the licensor.

Obtaining a favorable settlement for an internationally known charity in a case involving an heir's challenge to the decedent's bequest to the charity.

Obtaining a settlement for a well-known charity in a large breach of contract case.

Representing a former NFL head coach in dispute and contract matters.

Winning a heavily contested plan confirmation trial for a Chapter 11 bankruptcy client/debtor.

Obtaining a not-guilty judgment at trial and prevailing on a large counterclaim in commercial lease dispute before the Circuit Court of Cook County's Chancery Division.

Obtaining a preliminary injunction for an elite college athlete enabling him to resume his playing career.

- **Sampling of reported decisions:**

Shannon v. Bd. of Trustees of U. of Illinois, 2024 WL 218103 (C.D. Ill. Jan. 19, 2024)

Hyder v. Ham, 2023 IL App (1st) 221658

VeroBlue Farms USA, Inc. v. Wulf, 2023 WL 2481272 (N.D. Tex. March 13, 2023)

VeroBlue Farms USA, Inc. v. Wulf, 2023 WL 348016 (N.D. Tex. , Jan. 20, 2023)

FishDish LLC v. VeroBlue Farms USA, Inc., 2022 WL 1093271 (N.D. Iowa April 12, 2022)

VeroBlue Farms USA, Inc. v. Wulf, 2021 WL 5176839 (N.D. Tex. Nov. 8, 2021)

In re VeroBlue Farms USA, Inc., 2021 WL 6689161 (8th Cir. Aug. 24, 2021)

In re VeroBlue Farms USA, Inc., 6 F.4th 880(8th Cir. 2021)

In re VeroBlue Farms USA, Inc., 2021 WL 1583150 (Bankr. N.D. Iowa April 22, 2021)

In re VeroBlue Farms USA, Inc., 2020 WL 5988200 (Bankr. N.D. Iowa Oct. 7, 2020)

Ginsburg v. ICC Holdings, LLC, 2017 WL 5467688 (N.D. Tex. Nov. 17, 2017)

Freiburger v. Timmerman, 2016 WL 4493448 (N.D. Ill. Aug. 26, 2016)

BPI Development L.C. v. Grange, 181 F.Supp.3d 604 (S.D. Iowa 2016)

In re Estate of Feinberg, 2014 IL App (1st) 112219

In Re Merrillville Surgery Center, LLC 2013 WL 3338418 (N.D. Ind. July 2, 2013)

Northwest Podiatry Center, Ltd. v. Ochwat, 2013 Il App (1st) 120458.

Sierra Glass & Mirror, Inc. v. Trainor Glass Co., 2009 WL 10726524 (S.D. Cal. Feb. 27, 2009)

DDJ Capital Management LLC v. Rhone Group, LLC, 19 Misc.3d 1124(A) (Sup. Ct. 2008)

Ogdon v. Hoyt, 2006 WL 1933362 (N.D. Ill. June 16, 2006)

Heien v. Colson Caster Corp. 2004 WL 5499524 (D. Wyo. June 29, 2004)