

Jackson and Wilson

Important Legal Information for
Consumers



"Nine Questions You Should Ask Every Lawyer"

Finding the "Right" lawyer can make a HUGE difference in the outcome of your case

JacksonandWilson.com
800.661.7044

Part of our Legal Series...

"Legal Tips for Consumers"

Questions or Comments?

800-661-7044

JacksonandWilson.com

All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. Except as permitted under the United States Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a data base or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher. The publisher, author, and copyright holder (collectively "we") have used our best efforts in preparing this book. No legal advice is being provided in this book and no attorney-client relationship is established or confirmed by this book.

Other than the use of our best efforts, we make no representations or warranties with respect to this particular book. In particular, we make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this book. We specifically disclaim any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. No warranties may be created by implication. No oral or written statement by us or any sales representatives or other third party shall create any warranties. We do not guarantee or warrant that the information and opinions stated in this book will produce any particular results, and we caution readers that the advice and strategies contained in this book may not be suitable for every individual or business. We, individually or collectively, shall not be liable for any monetary loss, physical injury, property damage, loss of profit or any other personal or commercial damages, including, but not limited to, special, incidental, consequential or other damages.

This book is distributed with the understanding that we, individually or collectively, are not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional advice. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought. Names, characters, places, statistics and incidents used, if any, in the sample advertisements and sample marketing copy are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, organizations, data or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental and beyond our intent.

© Jackson and Wilson, Inc.
23161 Mill Creek Drive, Suite 150
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Phone 949.855.8751 • 800.661.7044 • Fax 949.855.8751
Email: info@JacksonWilson.com Web: JacksonandWilson.com



Introduction

*"Information is the currency of democracy."
- Thomas Jefferson, Third US President, Architect and Author*

The reason we wrote this book is to help people just like you. We wanted to take our more than two decades of experience and show you exactly what you need to do to protect your legal rights and find, hire, and interview the best lawyer for you and your family.

The fact of the matter is that it can be extremely challenging for people who need a lawyer to know how to find an experienced lawyer they can trust. With more than 1,000,000 lawyers in the United States (20% of them are located in California), it can be an overwhelming task to know where to start. After all, some lawyers write contracts and others practice bankruptcy law. Others handle nothing but criminal defense while some focus on estate planning. Lawyers are people and some are very good. Most make smart and good decisions. Unfortunately, like all people, others abuse alcohol, drugs, or even have criminal records.

We help victims of catastrophic injury and wrongful death. Having said that, the information and tools in this book can be used to find an excellent lawyer in your home town regardless of the type of law you need help with. That being said, we may refer to personal injury lawyers in the book but know that you can probably insert “criminal”, “estate planning”, “corporate” and almost every other kind of lawyer in place of the words “personal injury”.

=====

Special Note: Some of the information in this short ebook has been taken from our popular 98+ ebook entitled, “The Truth About Your California Personal Injury and Wrongful Death Case”. For more details or to read the complete ebook for free, simply go to <http://jacksonandwilson.com/books>

=====

OK. Let’s get started...

Although many personal injury victims, just like you, try to seek justice, most are not aware of the great myth that there is actually “liberty and justice” for all. The truth of the matter is that most people simply do not know how to protect their legal rights or can’t afford to protect themselves. Because of this, they are denied justice.

That's unfortunate because it doesn't have to be that way. Now here's some good news. Under the right circumstances and with a skilled lawyer, it is still possible to force the system to deliver justice.

We feel the "insider information" found in our books, including this one, will help you make smart decisions so that you can get all of the justice you and your family deserve in your personal injury or wrongful death case.

So where do you start? How can you find the right lawyer?

The tough part for most consumers is trying to figure out which lawyers are the good ones. Lawyers come in all shapes and sizes. As with any profession, you get the good with the bad. That's what makes the information in this book so useful.

Look, back in the early 1980's when we first started law school, we thought most lawyers were the same and basically did the same thing. We were under the general impression that once you graduated from law school and passed the bar, you'd be trained well enough to provide clients with quality representation and successfully take cases to trial.

Nothing could be further from the truth!

As law school progressed and while gaining experience clerking for many different attorneys, we eventually realized that as with doctors and other professionals, smart lawyers specialized in specific areas of law. Only with a great deal of effort and over a long period of time is a lawyer able to perfect his or her skill, ability, reputation, and success rate. We learned that a good tax attorney was not necessarily an effective trial attorney and also noticed that an attorney's ability to draft an air-tight contract for the sale of a business did not also mean that same attorney had strong negotiating skills in the conference room when handling a possible settlement in a complicated products liability case.

Out of all the different areas of law, what grabbed our attention and touched us emotionally was helping victims of personal injury and wrongful death. This is called personal injury law. An area of law that's all about helping people harmed because of the wrongful conduct of others. The idea of "championing the right to equal justice for all" really hit home for us in both our heart and soul.

Helping clients find peace in their devastated lives makes us feel good and for the past two decades, has kept us passionate about practicing personal injury law. We like helping others and we like putting our legal talents hard to work to make a difference in the lives of our clients.

As far as we know, this type of book has never before been written and so we hope you find its content useful and enlightening. When it's all said and done, we believe you'll find the advice found in this book as being brutally frank and straightforward. We're not going to sugarcoat our message or any of the information we pass along to you in these pages.

The truth of the matter is that the information in this book is so unique and honest that some lawyers may not agree with our philosophy of sharing this information with the general public. But no worries, these lawyers are probably the same guys and gals that you would never want to hire in the first place.

Most people have never had to hire a lawyer. They don't know where to start, how to find a good lawyer and once located, what questions to ask or qualifications to look for. This book was written to help solve these problems and to show personal injury victims how to find, interview and hire the "perfect" lawyer to help them win their case!

For example, here's a statistic most people are not aware of. Did you know that out of all of the lawyers in the U.S., less than 5% have obtained the highest "AV" rating in ethics and ability by the 140+ year old independent company of Martindale-Hubbell? Furthermore, most consumers are also not aware that less than 5% of all U.S. law firms are listed in the Martindale-Hubbell Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers.

Both of these independent ratings are conducted without the lawyer or law firm knowing that they are being reviewed by their peers (other lawyers and judges in the local community). And here's something every consumer should know-- lawyers are not allowed to spend money to "purchase" a positive rating. The Martindale-Hubbell ratings are truly an independent system consumers can and should use and trust when researching and selecting a lawyer.

Regardless of where you live, this book will help you find, interview and hire a legal stud and even more important, will help you avoid the legal duds. The further you drill down into and read this book (and our related books), the more you'll understand why we truly believe that hiring the "wrong" attorney to handle your personal injury case (or any other case for that matter) will get you the same kind of results as putting a screen door on a submarine. The end result is extremely predictable and probably disastrous!

One fact many injury victims are not aware of is that most lawyers who practice law simply do not know how to protect your interest and maximize the value of your personal injury case. One reason is that a majority of lawyers don't practice plaintiff personal injury or wrongful death law. They handle contracts, criminal defense, estate planning, bankruptcy, and other worthwhile and needed legal services.

Of those lawyers who do promote themselves as personal injury lawyers, truth be told, many have never settled a big case or even taken a case to trial. Worse yet, some personal injury lawyers have never even set foot inside a courtroom door!

The challenge for most personal injury victims is how to find an experienced and highly rated personal injury lawyer. The two questions we hear most is, "How can I find the right lawyer for me?" and "How do I know the lawyer I'm thinking about hiring is an experienced personal injury lawyer?"

Because you only have one chance to investigate, prepare, negotiate and eventually settle or try your personal injury or wrongful death case, it's critically important that you "get it right" the first time. There are no second chances!

The purpose of this book is to give you valuable information which will allow you to make smart decisions when finding and hiring a personal injury and wrongful death lawyer.

We've tried to write this book in a way that is easy to read and understand. The truth of the matter is that we wrote this book so that you would have good information and know exactly what questions you need to ask any attorney you are interviewing with the intention of possibly hiring for your personal injury case. We also wanted to give you important information you need to know before you ever discuss the facts of your case with an insurance company claims adjuster.

Please be advised and understand that it is not the purpose of this book to try and get you to hire our law firm. Frankly, we're glad to say that because of the hard work and effort we've put in to building our firm and strengthening our client and referral relationships, we have a very successful and busy law practice.

While the primary reason we wrote this book is to help a person or family find a good lawyer in their home town, another reason is to save us both valuable time.

You see, until this book was written, we were always required to try and explain all of this important information to a potential new client during an office meeting or short telephone call which, because of the vast amount of material involved, is similar to trying to give someone a haircut over the telephone... it just can't be done. By presenting this information in the form of a book, we do not need to have to worry about forgetting to tell you something during a rushed office meeting or phone call. You can take your time and read all this information on your own schedule.

Additionally, this book also allows us to share valuable information with people who have minor cases that we simply don't handle. It truly is a win-win tool providing the injured consumer with valuable information you may not be able to get anyplace else.

After you've read this book, get a highlighter and read it again marking up all the sentences and paragraphs you find useful. Share this powerful material with your family and friends so that they can make smart legal decisions too. After all, remember what Thomas Jefferson once said, "Information is the currency of democracy." When it comes to finding, interviewing and hiring a good lawyer, we think you can take all the information in this book to the bank!

As we mentioned above, we have to make sure our time is spent wisely with serving our existing clients. We limit our practice to helping victims of major catastrophic injury and

wrongful death cases. We do not and cannot represent people involved in minor accident cases.

This is not to imply that minor accident victims are not hurt and do not have rights. They do and they should take steps to protect their rights. Just as a surgeon makes a decision to limit his or her practice to heart or brain surgery (rather than knee or ankle), we too made a professional decision, many years ago, to focus our attention and efforts to help people and their families in matters involving major catastrophic injury and wrongful death cases.

Please keep in mind that although we don't handle small accident cases, we know many very good lawyers who do. Lawyers who are well respected and who have set up their offices in a slightly different fashion so that they can accommodate minor injury victims. If you've been involved in a minor accident and don't know what to do next, simply give us a call and we'll be happy to share their names and numbers with you.

That being said, we do want to help as many people as we can and honestly believe this book is the best way to accomplish our goal. Most of the information we would discuss and go over with you in our office is referenced in this book.

Read this book from cover to cover and you'll know more about your rights than most people who have already been through the entire personal injury or wrongful death claim, litigation, and trial process. You may even know more about personal injury or wrongful death law than a new attorney taking on his first personal injury case. This book is just that good!

We've written this book to answer these questions and many more. To give you information you can put to use right away to help protect your legal rights and to help you find a well respected and experienced personal injury and wrongful death lawyer to help you with your important case.

We trust you will find this information valuable and useful. Call us with any questions or needs. Also visit our web site (JacksonandWilson.com) for more good consumer tips and information.

TIPS

1. Use these information, resources and tools in this book to find a good lawyer. Information is "power" so use the power in this book to protect your legal rights!
2. If you need help finding a good lawyer in your city or state, give us a call. We'd be glad to help!

Nine Questions You Should Ask Every Lawyer

Chapter

1

Finding the "Right" lawyer can make a HUGE difference in the outcome of your case

After finding a great lawyer, the next step is to meet with her to see if you "connect" and to find out whether or not she has what it takes to represent your interest. If you haven't already done so, you may want to get and read our free report entitled, *"Three Good Ways to Find a Great Lawyer"*.

The first thing to do when meeting with a lawyer is to schedule an office appointment. While you don't need to talk directly to the lawyer to set up an appointment, your actual meeting should be with the lawyer himself as opposed to meeting with a paralegal or legal assistant.

Why? So that you can meet the lawyer and get a good feel for what he or she is really like. Meeting with a law clerk or paralegal will not allow you to do this.



After spending a few minutes getting to know each other, ask the lawyer if it would be alright to ask him a couple of questions. Pull out this book and ask the following questions.

After you ask each question, listen carefully to the answers. Watch the lawyer as he answers your questions. Does he look you in the eye? Is he confident? Does he make you feel comfortable? Do you feel like you trust him?

Question No. 1: "How Long Have You Been Practicing Law?"

The attorney's answer to this question is important and can be very revealing. It literally takes many years to become proficient in the legal profession. We recommend that you make sure any attorney you are thinking about hiring has, at a minimum, at least 10-15 years of substantial litigation experience in personal injury and wrongful death matters.

Sure, there are exceptions to this rule and we know of several very good, ethical attorneys with less than 5 years of experience. What they lack in settlement and trial experience they

make up for with intelligence, drive, passion and the wherewithal to associate in experienced counsel to help them with trial. Unfortunately, these "exceptions" are far and few between and frankly, why take a chance? Let's move on to the next question...

Question No. 2: “What Percentage Of Your Practice Is Devoted To Personal Injury And Wrongful Death Cases?”

For the past 10-15 years of his or her practice, at least 90% of the attorney's time should have been focused on representing personal injury clients in major catastrophic injury and wrongful death cases. Why not 100%? There are two good reasons.

First, the reality of the situation is that good personal injury and wrongful death trial lawyers (trial lawyers also make the BEST negotiation and settlement lawyers) are hard to find and most experienced attorneys will handle the litigation needs of past clients and friends in other areas of law such as business, criminal or estate planning litigation. They find it interesting and challenging to take on other cases and help people succeed in other areas of law (it's a competitive nature that top lawyers have and frankly, it's difficult to hold back).

Second, we truly believe that the experience and knowledge gained in taking these other types of cases to trial allows a personal injury attorney to gain new insight to various "outside-the-box" litigation approaches he or she may not normally be exposed to during personal injury litigation. In the long run, this can prove to be very beneficial to the client in a personal injury case.

We've taken various trial techniques we've learned in civil, business and criminal trials and successfully used the approaches in complicated personal injury cases and trials. In our opinion, this made a huge difference in the ultimate favorable outcome to our clients in these cases.

Another way to look at and evaluate the answers to the above two questions is by looking at the following metaphor. Let's say, God forbid, you need open heart surgery. How would you like to be the very first patient that particular surgeon has ever operated on? Not a pleasant thought is it? The fact of the matter is that you want YOUR surgeon to be a successful specialist in performing open heart surgery and also one who has done the procedure hundreds and even thousands of times before. As with medicine, in law it's important to get things done right the first time. There are no second chances.

Here's something else to think about. Believe it or not, the successful handling of a catastrophic injury or wrongful death case is many times more complicated than what your heart surgeon is required to do during surgery. Bypass surgery may take several hours (with the surgeon actually involved “hands on” for only 30-45 minutes), your legal case may take months or even years. The surgeon may be required to make dozens of important decisions during the procedure. Your lawyer will be required to make hundreds, and even thousands, of legal and procedural decisions during the handling of your personal injury case.

Why in the world would someone who's life is turned upside down because of a serious personal injury or wrongful death ever settle for anything less than the best? The answer to this question is that most consumers simply just don't know any better. Now you do! Be smart and be thorough when it comes to selecting your personal injury attorney.

Question No. 3: “How Many Court And Jury Trials Have You Had And What Were Your Results?”

Have you had any court trials? How about jury trials? When was the last trial you had? How many of these trials involved serious catastrophic injury or wrongful death? What were the results and verdicts?

Many years ago when we first started to practice law, we read an interesting statistic. Apparently, most California lawyers have only tried an average of 3 trials during their entire career. As supported by the facts and contrary to what you watch on television, most lawyers are not trial lawyers.

In our opinion, the handling and trial of a personal injury or wrongful death case demands a much higher level of expertise and commands a great deal more pre-trial and trial related work and effort than most other types of legal cases. For example, in criminal cases, rarely will the prosecution or public defenders do their own pre-trial preparation (they each have huge governmental support staffs to help them with the work). In work comp and bankruptcy practices, in most cases the "trials" are actually hearings which only take a couple of hours or days.

In a catastrophic injury or wrongful death case, there are generally many complicated and intertwined issues involving medical treatment and bills, loss of earnings, property damage, liability, expert testimony, health insurance, civil liability, procedure, negotiation, settlement, damages, jury, trial and appeal issues. On almost a daily basis, a personal injury lawyer literally holds the value and quality of a client's life in his or her hands and there truly is no greater burden, challenge or privilege. The right personal injury lawyer will recognize this fact and step up to the challenge.

The lawyers that do handle and try other types of cases are all incredible lawyers and we tip our hats to each and every one of them, especially when it comes to juggling the high volume of cases many are forced to handle. Having said that, we believe that a catastrophic injury or wrongful death case, litigated all the way to trial, is substantially more work than the above types of cases and, exponentially more difficult. So when you ask your potential attorney how many cases (or more specifically, personal injury and wrongful death cases) he or she has taken to trial, make sure you get a clear and accurate response.

Because insurance defense attorneys and insurance companies all know which personal injury lawyers try their cases and get the best results for their clients, you want to be

represented by an attorney who has a strong reputation for obtaining consistently large settlements and judgments.

Question No. 4: “Will I Be Interacting Directly With You Or Someone Else In Your Office?”

The attorney you hire should have the time to meet with you in his or her office and talk with you over the telephone. The attorney you hire should be the attorney appearing in depositions, hearings and court on your behalf. The attorney you hire should be the attorney who will negotiate on your behalf and if necessary, take your case to trial.

Here's a little unknown truth that many people are not aware of. After you meet with the senior partner during your initial consultation, many busy law firms have secretaries, law clerks and paralegals do all the work on the file and young inexperienced associate lawyers work the file, negotiate, and even appear in court on your behalf. The senior attorney or partner may rarely work on or look at the file.

This is an ugly truth that many clients are not aware of. Now you are!

For this reason, if your initial consultation is scheduled with a clerk, paralegal or new associate attorney because the "experienced" partner does not have time to meet with you, we strongly suggest that you turn and run the other direction as fast as you can.

What we've observed about these types of law firms is that your file will not get the attention it deserves. In more cases than not, the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. The last thing you need is to have your file used as a "test" or "learning" case for a new non-lawyer paralegal or associate.

While standard paperwork can and should be delegated and handled by an experienced and trained support staff, it is important that you establish a personal "one on one" relationship with the actual attorney who will be handling your case. Make sure that any written retainer agreements you agree to sign clearly spell out that the attorney you are retaining is the attorney who will be handling your file and personally representing you during the entire litigation process and trial. As a courtesy, we're always willing to review other attorney's retainer agreements and advise you on whether or not they not only comply with California law, but also have your best interest in mind.

Question No. 5: “Are You "AV" Rated By Martindale-Hubbell And What Other Awards Or Ratings Have You Received?”

"Yes" is the only answer you should settle for. Most consumers are not familiar with the "AV" rating but this is why it is so important. According to the 140-year-old independent company named Martindale-Hubbell, an "AV" rating identifies a lawyer and firm as having

(1) very high to preeminent legal ability and (2) the highest level of expertise, experience, integrity and overall professional excellence.

What is key about this rating is that the actual independent review and rating of an attorney is made by other attorneys and judges in the local community. The attorney who is being reviewed does not even know the process is taking place. You can't pay to get "AV" rated. Your reputation and experience are all that matters.

By presenting an attorney with an "AV" rating, Martindale-Hubbell is making the statement that other attorneys and judges in your community clearly believe that the "AV" rated attorney consistently "shows a demonstration of the highest professional and ethical standards." Isn't that the kind of lawyer you want protecting your interest?

Once again, while there are many good lawyers practicing law who have not yet been awarded an "AV" rating (only about 5 out of 100 receive this honor during their legal career), unless you know the attorney personally, why take a chance with someone who is not highly rated by his or her peers? You can easily confirm an attorney's rating status by going to www.martindale.com

Question No. 6: "Are You An Active Member In The Local, State And National Trial Lawyer Organizations? How About Your Local Community?"

Good personal injury trial attorneys share tips, tools, information, and techniques with other attorneys across the state, country and world. It's important for your attorney to be "plugged into" these organizations so that you can benefit from the exchange of information.

In Orange County, we have the Orange County Trial Lawyers Organization. At the state level, we have the Consumer Attorneys of California. Nationally, many excellent personal injury and wrongful death trial lawyers belong to the American Association for Justice.

All of these organizations and their members work hard on a daily basis to educate personal injury attorneys and consumers on issues involving their important consumer rights. We share information, pleadings, discovery and documents via personal relationships, conferences, meetings, web site memberships and email lists.

When it comes to community service, find out if your potential lawyer is active. What groups or organizations is he or she involved with? For many reasons, it's extremely important for your lawyer to be "connected" to his or her local community. Interacting with other lawyers, experts and even judges outside the courtroom and in a community service setting will directly and indirectly foster new relationships and strengthen old friendships.

Question No. 7: “Can You Provide Me With The Names Of 5-10 Past Clients Who Are Willing To Share Their Experiences With Me About Your Representation And Firm?”

You can sit all day in the attorney's office and listen to the attorney tell you just how great he or she is when it comes to handling a personal injury case or taking a wrongful death case to trial. While the attorney may be very convincing, you just might find out that the truth is slightly different than the story you're being spoon fed.

If fact, you may want to read the free report posted at our blog entitled, “Sometimes Things Are Not as They Appear When it Comes to Lawyer Advertising” which discusses how some lawyers are so persuasive, they could sell ice to Eskimos.

In any case, how do you know if the lawyer you are meeting with is being honest with you? It depends. Frankly, we believe it's much smarter, and better, to independently and objectively confirm the lawyer's abilities by talking with some of his or her past clients.

We suggest that you ask for a list of 5-10 names and numbers of past clients you can contact for a reference. These are people who have already agreed to have you contact them to independently to confirm what you've been told or have read about the attorney.

It is not OK for the attorney you are interviewing to respond with something like, "my cases are confidential and I can't disclose this information." The defense attorneys and insurance companies know what cases the attorney has handled and so should you. If you get this kind of response, be very cautious.

Good lawyers have plenty of happy and satisfied clients who are more than willing to share their experiences with you. The smart attorneys have already made arrangements to share client names and numbers with you. If the attorney does not already have a list available, we guarantee that he or she will put one together in no time if they are truly interested in handling your case. If the lawyer doesn't have a list, that's OK. Give her a day or two to provide you with the list.

Question No. 8: “Do You Have Testimonials From Past Clients And Other Attorneys Which I Can Take With Me And Read?”

Client testimonials are an excellent way to see what people have to say about the lawyer you are meeting with. Good lawyers with satisfied clients will have plenty of written client testimonials for you to take with you and review. If an attorney does not have, or cannot give you client testimonials, you need to ask, “WHY NOT?”

It's true that some very good attorneys simply do not take the time to ask for testimonials but on the other hand, how do you know if this is the case with the attorney you are sitting across from. The attorney may not have testimonials because simply put-- he does not have

any happy clients. Just as with the unbiased Martindale-Hubbell "AV" rating discussed above, getting independent third party confirmation and validation as to the attorney's ability and a client's experience with that particular attorney is simply the smart way to go.

Question No. 9: "As My Case Works Its Way Through The Legal System, Will You ALWAYS Look Me In The Eye And Tell Me What You HONESTLY Think And Believe As Opposed To What You Think I Want To Hear?"

We believe that an attorney needs to be honest with his client. Why? Because if you have a good case, you want your lawyer to tell you. And if your case is weak or has other difficult legal challenges, you need to know about each problem when they happen.

You always want your lawyer to be truthful and honest with you concerning his assessment of the case and your options. The last thing you ever want is to have your lawyer tell you what she thinks you want to hear rather than the truth and what you really need to hear.

When it comes to getting advice from your lawyer, honest opinions and feedback are absolutely necessary. It's not unusual for us to tell 18 out of every 20 incoming potential clients that we don't think they have a strong case and that we can't help them. We'll tell the potential client why we feel the way we do and we'll also share advice. But if they don't have a case that we can help them with, we simply share our honest thoughts, say "thank you" and suggest alternatives. End of story.

How's that for being brutally honest!

You see, it's in the your best interest to know where you stand and what the pros and cons are with your claim. You need to hear the truth—good or bad—whether you like it or not.

As we see it, the real problem is that many of the potential cases we decide not to handle continue to call other lawyers until they finally find someone who will agree to represent them. They end up eventually being led down the wrong legal path to dissatisfaction and in some cases, financial disaster. The bottom line is that it's just better to have an experienced lawyer be up front with you about the merits of your case from the very beginning. We can't think of a single exception to this time tested rule.

TIPS

1. You only get one chance to settle your case or take it to trial. Make sure to use these 9 questions to find out whether you or sitting across from a legal stud or legal dud!

Our Senior Partners

Experience, passion and honesty.

Chapter

2

Our senior partners are experienced and well respected. They enjoy what helping people and treasure the opportunity to practice law.

Mitch and Lisa each have more than two decades of individual experience helping injured consumers, just like you, with their personal injury and wrongful death cases. Their clients receive excellent service and consistent solid results because of the experience, reputation, and resources Mitch and Lisa bring to each and every case.

It's difficult to get to know someone from simply reading about them in a book or on a web site. We think the best way to get a good feeling or idea about whether or not they are the right lawyers for you is to simply give them a call and talk to them on the phone. Usually in the first couple of minutes you can tell if there's a "connection" and whether or not you'd like them to take a closer look at your case.

With this in mind, here's a bit more information about our Senior Partners, Mitch Jackson and Lisa Wilson.



Lisa M. Wilson



Lisa is a true "California girl" who was born and raised in the high desert town of Lancaster, California. She is one of three daughters and while growing up, her parents owned and operated a well known dairy distributorship servicing many Southern California cities and towns.

The Wilson family was very active in the local Lancaster community participating each year in numerous community service activities and all the big fundraisers. In high school, Lisa was a multi-sport scholar athlete and to this day her jersey still hangs in her high school gym.

Lisa started her college career playing volleyball at Long Beach State and then transferred to the University of Southern California. At USC, Lisa developed an interest in the law and studied journalism and sports information. She also pledged the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. In 1982, she graduated with a major in journalism and minor in sports information.

Before law school, Lisa worked with a prominent sports agent believing she would eventually enjoy a career representing professional athletes. While in law school, Lisa won the prestigious mock trial championship and also had the opportunity to study law abroad at Cambridge University in England.

Lisa graduated from Western State School of Law in 1986 and worked for several years at large and prestigious law firm practicing insurance defense. Overtime, Lisa realized that her interest in the law focused more on helping victims of personal injury and wrongful death rather than representing and defending insurance companies and big business. She also had a keen interest in owning her own business and law firm.

Eventually, Lisa made the jump to the “other side of the fence” and in 1988, she and Mitch joined forces and became partners in the firm of Jackson & Wilson, Inc. That year, she and Mitch were also married and today, she remains an active and full time senior partner in the nationally recognized firm.

Past and present activities, organizations, and recognitions include the following:

- “AV” Rated by Martindale-Hubbell (highest rating in ethics and ability)
- Martindale-Hubbell Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers (only 5% of all law firms)
- The National Trial Lawyers (the Top 100 Trial Lawyers from each state)
- Private Arbitrator and Mediator
- Orange County Bar Association (OCBA Masters Division)
- Orange County Trial Lawyers Association
- American Association for Justice
- California State Bar
- American Bar Association
- Consumer Attorneys of California
- Multiple time member of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum (obtained one or more verdicts or settlements in excess of \$1,000,000)
- Past President of Monarch Beach Rotary Club and Paul Harris Fellow
- Lisa has also litigated and resolved numerous seven figure cases including one of Orange County’s largest first party insurance bad faith cases.

Jon Mitchell “Mitch” Jackson



Mitch was born in Tucson, Arizona. For almost 30 years his parents and family owned and operated the Saddle and Surrey Guest Ranch, an internationally known resort destination.

At the ranch, Mitch’s parents entertained guest from around the globe which included Walt Disney, John Wayne, 60 Minutes commentator, Morley Safer, and tennis stars Poncho Gonzales and Rod Laver.

Mitch’s family was active in promoting tourism in Arizona. His mother was featured on the cover of Newsweek magazine and his father served the community by being involved with numerous local and national organizations such as Rotary, the Chamber of Commerce, and most of the major Travel Associations.

Mitch grew up riding horses, hunting and fishing. In high school, he played football and baseball but his true interest gravitated to motocross, scuba diving in the Sea of Cortez, and competing as a ranked tennis player throughout Arizona and California.

After high school, Mitch attended the University of Arizona and studied civil engineering for two years. His internal passion for business, marketing, and the law, eventually led to Mitch transferring over to the business school and graduating with a degree in business administration. During college, Mitch paid the bills by waiting tables and tending bar at the ranch. On the weekends, he earned his expert hang gliding pilot rating and spent most of his time flying high above most of the mountains in Southern Arizona.

After graduating in 1980, Mitch took a front desk management position at Caesars in Lake Tahoe, California. After meeting and getting to know several local lawyers on the ski slopes, Mitch’s interest began to change and soon law school became his calling.

Mitch attended and put himself through Western State School of Law and during this time, he clerked for many different lawyers and firms. He found his calling and passion when he started working as a law clerk for a personal injury lawyer. It was then that Mitch knew that he wanted to use the law to help and protect injured consumers and their families for the remainder of his legal career.

Mitch was admitted to the California Bar in 1986 and immediately opened up his own practice representing victims of personal injury and wrongful death. As mentioned above, Mitch and Lisa combined forces in 1988 and since then, have never looked back. Twenty five years later they have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of thousands of people and their families.

Today Mitch and Lisa continue to practice law on a full time basis. They enjoy mentoring new lawyers on litigation and trial practice. In their spare time, both Lisa and Mitch are

actively involved in Rotary International and enjoy supporting their two children in school, community service and athletics.

Past and present activities, organizations, and recognitions include the following:

- Orange County 2009 Trial Lawyer of the Year [nominated again in 2011]
- Southern California Super Lawyer
- “AV” Rated by Martindale-Hubbell (top rating in ethics and ability)
- Martindale-Hubbell Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers (less than 5% of all firms)
- AVVO “Superb” 10.0/10 rating
- Nominated CAOC 2011 "Street Fighter of the Year"
- Nominated CAOC 2012 “Street Fighter of the Year”
- Nominated FOR 2013 CLAY Award (CA Lawyer of the Year)
- Law Dragon- “Top Rating”
- Judge Pro Tempore- Orange County Superior Court
- Appointed Arbitrator- Orange County Bar Association
- Appointed Arbitrator- Orange County Superior Court
- Private Arbitrator and Mediator
- Orange County Bar Association
- Orange County Trial Lawyers Association
- American Association for Justice
- The National Trial Lawyers (The Top 100 Trial Lawyers from each state)
- California State Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- Consumer Attorneys of California
- Multiple time member of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum (obtained multiple verdicts and settlements in excess of \$1,000,000)
- Successfully passed written exam offered by the National Board of Trial Advocacy (NBTA) for Trial Attorney Certification (qualifications- extensive trial experience, formal recommendation by numerous opposing trial counsel and trial judges)
- Past President of Monarch Beach Rotary Club and Paul Harris Fellow. Mitch has also served as an Assistant District Rotary Governor for Rotary District 5320. In 2010, he was nominated by his club for the award of “Business Rotarian of the Year”
- Daily Journal Profile- Mr. Jackson’s litigation talents, techniques and wrongful death trial verdict profiled in the July 28, 1995, edition of the California Daily Journal

TIPS

1. There is no substitute for experience. Make sure any lawyer you hire is extremely experienced in the area of law that you need help with.

Contact Info, Web Sites, Blogs, and Social Media



We've been helping victims of personal injury and wrongful death since 1986. Chances are, we can help you too. Give us a call, visit our other web sites and blogs and make sure to "connect" with us online!

We enjoy answering helping people and answering legal questions. We also like staying in touch using email and social media. Please feel free to use the following resources to "connect" with us and to also stay current on important legal issues.

Jackson & Wilson, Inc. (Since 1986)

Main Corporate Office
23161 Mill Creek Drive, Ste 150
Laguna Hills, CA 92653
Toll Free 800.661.7044 • 949.855.8751
Fax 949.855.8751 • 949.315.3687 (eFax)



Northern California Office
5050 Laguna Boulevard, Ste 112-325
Elk Grove, CA 95758

Let's Stay Connected!



Consider this our personal invitation for us to get to know each other better. Please visit our [web site](#) and also connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Google+](#). Read our free [books](#), [reports](#), watch [videos](#) or listen to [audios](#).

You may even want to visit our Youtube Channel entitled, "[California Lawyers](#)". While you're at it, also make sure to get on our [VIP email list](#) and [Blog RSS feeds](#) (we share legal updates and tips that will help you protect your important legal rights).

