



Dennis J. James, Q.C.

902.896.6149
djames@pattersonlaw.ca

Assistant: Elizabeth Branscombe
902.896.6125
ebranscombe@pattersonlaw.ca

Primary Offices: Truro, Halifax

Biography

Dennis James is the managing partner of Patterson Law and provides leadership in the areas of commercial litigation, municipal law, employment law, aboriginal law and health law. In his 30 years of providing practical legal counsel, Dennis has conducted and assisted in trials at all levels of court in Nova Scotia as well as the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board and other administrative tribunals. He has taught at his alma mater - Dalhousie University - and has lectured about Business Law at the Nova Scotia Agriculture College. As a proud member of the Colchester Community, he has served on the boards of the Colchester United Way, the Marigold Cultural Centre, the Downtown Truro Partnership and the Boys and Girls Club. He has been recognized as a Litigation Star in the Atlantic since 2016 in Benchmark Canada's "Definitive Guide to Canada's Leading Litigation Firms & Attorneys", and was selected by his peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers™ in Canada since 2018 in the field of Corporate and Commercial Litigation. Dennis is recognized by Chambers Canada as a leading lawyer in the area of Commercial Litigation, receiving the highest (Band 1).

Experience

- Has been lead counsel or co-counsel in significant commercial litigation including: of civil conspiracy, securities law, shareholder disputes, breach of trust, forced sale provisions of the Condominium Act, receivership and insolvency, expropriation claims, successful prosecution of a claim under guarantees including defence of cross claim alleging Receiver's negligence, good faith in completion of commercial agreement for purchase and sale, defence to class action claim of environmental liability, employment issues, construction claims, tender law, fishery trust agreement, statutory offences under Occupational Health and Safety Act and other provincial legislation and regulation, Fisheries Act, other federal legislation and regulation, advice before professional governing bodies, property title and boundary claims and issues relating to subrogated claims.
- He is solicitor to the Municipality of the County of Colchester, Nova Scotia's fourth largest municipality, solicitor to the Town of Westville,

Areas of Law

Aboriginal Law
Administrative Law
Appeals and Judicial Reviews
Civil Litigation
Commercial Litigation
Labour and Employment
Municipal Law
Professional Liability
Property Dispute Litigation

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Solicitor to the Pugwash Village Commission and is consulted by various municipalities on a range of issues relating to municipal government. He regularly advises on all provisions of the Municipal Government Act and related provincial legislation, on collective agreement, employment issues, land use and planning issues, environmental issues, drafting and interpretation of by-laws and by-law enforcement, jurisdictional issues, Council procedure and governance, conflict of interest, negotiations with other municipalities, provincial government and First Nations.

- He advises institutional clients and public bodies on employment, governance and liability issues, construction issues including tendering, contract issues including interpretation and disputes, statutory interpretation and issues of jurisdiction.
- He is routinely consulted by non-profit and charitable organizations on issues of governance, employment and labour matters, liability issues and risk managements issues, and legislative and regulatory obligations.

Recognition

- Appointed Queen`s Counsel, 2014
- *Benchmark Canada, The Guide to Canada's Leading Litigation Firms and Attorneys*: recognized as a Litigation Star for Aboriginal, Commercial Litigation, Health Law, Labour and Employment litigation in the Atlantic (2016-2020)
- *Best Lawyers in Canada*: recognized for Corporate and Commercial Litigation (2018-2021)
- *Best Lawyers in Canada*: recognized for Municipal Law (2021)
- *Chambers Canada* - recognized in the Commercial Litigation (Canada) category , highest ranking (Band 1) (2019-present)
- Finalist for the Atlantic Canadian Litigator of the Year, Benchmark Litigation Canada, 2017
- Canadian Bar Association Community Service Award, 2014
- Martindale Hubbell International Law Directory: BV Distinguished® peer review
- Rotary Club of Truro Community Service Award, 2010

Associations and Memberships

- Canadian Bar Association
- Nova Scotia Barristers` Society
- Board of Directors, Crossley Carpets Ltd. - 1994-1999
- Principal Secretary to Premier John Savage - 1992-1993
- Roster Member for Boards of Inquiry (NS Human Rights) - 2002-present

Community Involvement

- President, Canadian Bar Association (NS) Branch, September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017

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- Vice-Chair, Cobequid Arts Council - 2008-present
- Vice Chair, Marigold Cultural Centre Co-operative Ltd - 2004-2008
- CCSA Soccer - coaching minor soccer- 2002-2013
- DSS PTG - 2002 - 2008
- Chair, CBA (National) - Conference on Aboriginal Law - Aboriginal Ownership and Management of Resources in Canada: An Analysis of Litigation and Negotiation "Getting to a Win-Win?" - 2003
- Chair, Election Readiness and General Election Campaign - Nova Scotia Liberal Party - 1999
- Colchester County United Way - various positions over a number of years, including General Campaign Chair, 1992, and President, 1996-1998
- Secretary, Downtown Truro Partnership
- Past President, Provincial Councils Boys & Girls Club of Nova Scotia, 1990-1992

Publications and Speaking Engagements

- "Drilling Down (and Up) through the quagmire of resource rights, regulations and agreements: A look at fracking, wind turbines and other research issues", CBA webinar presentation, December, 2012
- "Respectful Workplaces", presentation to NS Insurance Women's Association, September, 2012
- "Recovery of Claims under \$40,000: Can the systems respond?", CBA webinar presentation, December, 2010
- "Ebbs and Flows of Municipal Water Management" presentation, April 2008, CBA - Municipal Law.
- 2007 Lawyers Weekly, Contributor to Municipal Law Supplement on "New BSE Standards Challenge Waste Management Systems"
- November 2006: Update of Case Law on Undue Burden: Duty to Accommodate; Infonex Conference, Halifax
- Civil Procedure Workshop - Lecturer, Dalhousie Law School, 2001 - 2007
- CBA (NS) - January, 1998 Presentation "Aboriginal and Treaty Rights"
- Conference of Municipal Administrators, September, 1997 - "Access to Municipal Records"
- Lecturer on Business Law - Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Degree Program - 1989-1992; 1994-96
- Paper - "Not for Profit Organization"; "Patient's Rights", "Certificate of Titles - Professional Responsibility"; "Marketable Titles Act"; "Charter Implications of Nova Scotia's Public Education Financing"

Education and Bar Admissions

- Bar Admission: Nova Scotia, 1987
- LL.B. (Dalhousie University, 1986)
- B.A. (Honours, Dalhousie University, 1983)