

Civil Rights

Plunkett Cooney attorneys routinely defend claims alleging civil rights violations against both private and public sector clients. These matters range from discrimination claims brought under state civil rights acts to alleged violations of the United States Constitution. Plunkett Cooney attorneys have successfully defended against these claims at all levels of the federal and state court systems.

Plunkett Cooney attorneys have represented public sector clients in a broad range of civil rights claims, including the successful defense of hundreds of police departments and officers involved in claims of alleged unconstitutional conduct in the law enforcement setting. These include claims of excessive force, arrest without probable cause and due process claims asserted by pretrial detainees.

Plunkett Cooney also has extensive experience representing public sector clients against First Amendment claims. The firm's experience covers all aspects of First Amendment law, including claims brought by members of the press, allegations of retaliation for exercising one's First Amendment rights, cases involving libel and slander and lawsuits brought under RLUIPA (Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act).

Plunkett Cooney has represented public entities and officials against all types of due process and equal protection claims in the zoning and land use arena and in the area of employment law. The firm also has experience representing public entities against equal protection claims in the police practices setting and in the decision-making process engaged in by various boards and officials.

In addition to discrimination claims in the public sector, Plunkett Cooney's Employment Practice Group members represent clients against claims of racial discrimination, gender discrimination, age discrimination, sexual harassment, national origin discrimination and religious discrimination. Our attorneys practice in the state and federal trial courts every day, defending lawsuits brought under Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §1983 and state civil rights acts such as Michigan's Elliot Larsen Civil Rights Act. Additionally, Plunkett Cooney attorneys are frequently called upon to represent clients in EEOC and Department of Civil Rights proceedings.

The firm's unparalleled expertise in the area of civil rights extends to claims brought under 42 U.S.C. §1981, which prohibits discrimination in making and enforcing contracts. Our attorneys have expertise in the nuances of Eleventh Amendment immunity, which applies to a variety of governmental entities, and they have worked with clients to understand and comply with new requirements imposed by the passage of ballot proposals related to governmental preferences.