



ALEMAYEHU A. AYANAW

Partner

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Alemayehu (Ali) Ayanaw specializes in complex business litigation, with a focus on asbestos, talc, and mass toxic tort matters as well as premises, retailer, and product liabilities cases. He has a proven track record of effectively advocating for manufacturers, retailers, and premises owners in large-scale toxic tort litigation, securing favorable results via motion practice and settlement negotiations. He is experienced in preparing for and defending clients in trials concerning lawsuits alleging asbestos exposure, whether as manufacturers of products or owners of premises.

Mr. Ayanaw mainly handles cases filed in Madison, St. Clair, and Cook Counties in Illinois and St. Louis City, Missouri. Additionally, he serves as national coordinating counsel for multiple clients, overseeing their defense strategies across various jurisdictions across the country.

Before joining HeplerBroom, he served as Attorney Advisor for the Office of Independent Trustees of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Trust. In this capacity, he helped to oversee the day-to-day operation of the \$20 billion fund BP established to address the claims of those affected by the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

During law school, he gained valuable experience as a clerk in the General Counsel offices of a national food products producer and distributor, as well as a global biopharmaceutical company. These

PRACTICES

Asbestos
Premises Liability
Products Liability
Toxic Tort

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Illinois
- Missouri

EDUCATION

- Washington University School of Law, J.D., 2012
- University of Kansas, M.S. in Higher Education Administration, 2009
- University of Missouri-Columbia, B.A. in Psychology, 2006

LAW SCHOOL HONORS/INVOLVEMENT

- Minority Corporate Counsel Association, Microsoft Corporation Fellow

roles provided him with insights into the legal needs and expectations of corporate clients.

- Wiley Rutledge Moot Court Board
- Faculty Appointments Committee

Honors

Honors & Awards

- Illinois Leadings Lawyers
 - Emerging Lawyer (2018-2025)

Professional Associations

- Defense Research Institute
- Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel

Insights

Events & Speaking Engagements

SEPTEMBER 27, 2024 | EVENT

HeplerBroom Attorneys to Play Key Roles at Asbestos Conference

APRIL 23, 2018 | EVENT

HeplerBroom Attorneys Plan Annual Law Day Event

Publications

- Amicus brief, accepted by Illinois Supreme Court in *Moon v. Rhode*, addressing the discovery rule in an action brought under the Wrongful Death Act. (Co-author)
- “PA 98-1131 - Can it Really ‘Breathe Life’ into a Time-Barred Claim?” *IDC Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 2. (2015) (Co-author).

Blog Posts

JUNE 24, 2025 | BLOG

Missouri Court of Appeals Reaffirms Requirements for Admitting Text Messages

JULY 19, 2022 | BLOG

Illinois Bans Incineration of PFAS

APRIL 4, 2019 | BLOG

Illinois Senate Bill 1596—Employers' Civil Liability to Employees

News

APRIL 25, 2024 | FIRM NEWS

HeplerBroom Partners Attend Missouri Asian American Bar Association Dinner