



Sonia Das Sturm

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Sonia believes that knowledge is the strongest foundation for client advocacy. With over two decades of experience in complex litigation, her deep understanding of the litigation process makes her a dependable decision-maker during the most critical moments of handling a claim.

Practice Areas

Labor & Employment
Litigation
Product Liability
Toxic Tort

Biography

Sonia Das Sturm is Senior Counsel at Lewis Wagner & Trimble, where she focuses on defending clients in asbestos-related and mass tort cases. With over two decades of experience, Sonia has built a robust practice in Indiana's mass tort litigation and workers' compensation matters. She first joined Lewis Wagner & Trimble as a law clerk in 1999, eventually becoming an associate and partner, managing the firm's asbestos, silica, and coal tar pitch mass tort dockets. Sonia also handled general insurance defense, negligence claims, appellate practice, and environmental insurance coverage litigation. After leaving the firm in 2013, Sonia spent the next decade representing employers through insurance companies and third-party administrators in all aspects of workers' compensation cases, including mediation and appeals to Indiana's highest courts. In 2024, she returned to Lewis Wagner & Trimble, bringing her extensive experience and passion for client advocacy back to where her career began. Outside the office, Sonia enjoys cooking, tennis, fishing, kayaking, and camping.

Accolades, Affiliations and Activities

- Indiana State Bar Association
 - Diversity Committee, Chair, 2015-2016
 - Board of Governors, At-Large Member, 2015
- Indiana Conference for Legal Education Opportunity - Advisory Board Member
- Defense Trial Counsel of Indiana - Chair, Worker's Compensation Section, 2019-2020
- Indiana Super Lawyers* - 2009-2024
- Indiana State Bar Association - Presidential Citation, 2016
- Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review* - Rated AV® Preeminent
- Fellow, College of Workers Compensation Lawyers

Publications and Presentations

For over 20 years, Sonia has contributed to legal education through presentations and publications, particularly regarding worker's compensation. Sonia has presented for the Indiana Continuing Legal Education Forum (ICLEF) and other continuing education providers on various topics in worker's compensation. Additionally, Sonia is invited to make several presentations each year to insurance companies and employers on relevant legal topics. Past publications and presentations include:

- "Walking in the Shoes of Your Opponent," ICLEF, November 9, 2022.
- "An Analysis of the Past, Present, and Future Accidents Arising Out of Employment and the Applicability to Telecommuters," *Defense Trial Counsel of Indiana*, October 29, 2020.
- "Concurrent and Multi-Jurisdictional Issues in Worker's Compensation Accidents," ICLEF, March 8, 2019.
- "Fundamentals of Workers' Compensation: An Overview of Considerations When Settling a Workers' Compensation Case and Ethical Considerations in Workers' Compensation," *Sterling Education Services*, March 9, 2017.
- Worker's Compensation Annual Institute, ICLEF, Program Co-Chair, November 5, 2014.
- "Indiana Worker's Compensation Deskbook: Informal and Formal Dispute Resolution," ICLEF, November 7, 2013.
- "Weighing All the Risks in a Worker's Compensation Case," *The Indiana Lawyer*, August 14, 2013.
- "Handling the Worker's Compensation Case from Start to Finish: Hearings: Practice and Procedure," *National Business Institute*, August 14, 2013.
- "Worker's Compensation Liability for Failure to Comply with Ind. Code 22-3-2-14," ICLEF Advanced Worker's Compensation Seminar, March 15, 2013.
- "Worker's Compensation and Chronic Disability" *Lorman Education Services*, February 1, 2013.
- "The Current State of Future Medical Treatment and Palliative Care Under the Indiana Worker's Compensation Act," *Travelers Insurance*, December 1, 2011.
- "Survey of Recent Developments in Worker's Compensation Law," *Defense Trial Counsel of Indiana*, November 18, 2010.
- "Case Law Update," *Indiana Worker's Compensation Institute*, October 7, 2010.
- "Compensation Case Law: What You Need to Know to be Proactive," *Council on Education in Management*, September 30, 2010.
- "Workers Compensation Liens Against Third Party Claims," *Indiana Worker's Compensation Institute*, July 1, 2010.
- "Protection of Workers Compensation Liens Against Third Party Suits," *Indiana Worker's Compensation Institute*, July 1, 2010.
- "Case Law Update" *Sterling Education Services, Inc.*, June 29, 2010.
- "Case Law Update—Recent Decisions that May Impact Your Organization," *Council on Education in Management*, September 15, 2009.
- "Are there Circumstances Under Which an Employee May be Employed by More than One Employer?", *Lewis Wagner & Trimble Newsletter*, October 1, 2008.
- "Preventing Bad-Faith Claims with Due Diligence to Protect Your Organization," *Council on Education in Management*, September 9, 2008.
- "The Anatomy of a Bad-Faith Claim," *Indiana Worker's Compensation Institute*, April 3, 2008.
- "Recent Developments in Case Law, Legislative Updates, and Emerging Trends You Need to Know," *Council on Education in Management*, May 7, 2007.
- "Workers' Compensation Update 2007: Tactical Solutions for Conquering Your Workers' Compensation Challenges," *Council on Education in Management*, Program Chair, May 7, 2007.
- "Recent Developments in Worker's Compensation Law," *Indiana Lawyer*, July 1, 2006.
- "Can an Injured Employee Be Considered the Employee of More Than One Employer at the Time of the Injury?", *Lewis Wagner & Trimble Newsletter*, September 1, 2005.
- "2003 Survey of Recent Developments in Insurance Piracy," *Indiana Law Review*, November 4, 2004.
- "The Availability of the Fair Use Defense in Music Piracy and Internet Technology," *Federal Communications Law Journal*, May 1, 2000.

Selected Cases and Representation

Defense counsel in worker's compensation 2021 decision affirming an insurance company's denial of compensability where a traveling employee sustained a syncopal episode in the course of employment but failed to prove his accident arose out of employment.

Defense counsel and appellate counsel in a 2017 worker's compensation decision successfully denying claims to include neck/cervical spine injuries where the injured worker suffered only compensable injuries to the knee and shoulder.

Defense counsel and appellate counsel in a 2016 decision defeating claims that a worker's compensation insurer acted with a lack of diligence in the handling and adjusting of a worker's compensation claim.

Contributing appellate brief writer in *J.C. Penney Co. v. Simon Property Group, Inc.*, 928 N.E.2d 579 (Ind. Ct. App. 2010) (affirming the trial court's grant of summary judgment to a shopping mall owner and security company, finding they owed no duty to a passerby who was attacked by a Canada goose on property that was not owned, maintained, retained, controlled secured or supervised by the mall owner or security company).

Principal appellate brief writer in *DAP, Inc. v. Akaiwa*, 872 N.E.2d 1098 (Ind. Ct. App. 2007) and related cases (addressing the applicability of a statute of repose, Ind. Code § 34-20-3-2 (subsequently invalidated in other cases) in asbestos-related product liability claims).