

THE LIGHTFOOT WAY

Since our founding, we have adhered to a set of guiding principles we refer to as “The Lightfoot Way.” Chief among these principles is **the value and emphasis we place on service** — to our clients, our communities and each other. That core tenet defines Lightfoot as a firm and shapes our unique approach to what we do: **litigation, compliance and investigations.**

In addition to service, there are other elements of The Lightfoot Way that set us apart:

We have one focus

Lightfoot is a litigation firm. That is what we do, and we are good at it. As a firm, we are dedicated to solving our clients' problems. From complex, bet-the-company litigation to internal and government investigations, risk management and compliance, Lightfoot attorneys work hard to find innovative solutions that allow our clients to focus on their core mission and achieve success.

We are not afraid of going to trial

When a case must go to trial, our lawyers have the experience, skills and temperament to take it all the way, up to and including an appeal. If an out-of-court resolution best serves our client's needs, we efficiently and aggressively pursue that result. We do not engage in endless procedural tasks or unnecessary discovery in order to avoid trial. Our trial skills and experience benefit our clients, whether in the courtroom or at the negotiation table. Our clients know this. That is why they choose us. Our opponents know this, too — and that is why they take us seriously.

We listen

Our attorneys know that no two clients are alike, and we do not believe in cookie-cutter solutions. We recognize the need to know our clients, listen to them and understand their goals. We never forget that every matter we handle is the client's matter, not ours. Our job is to craft a resolution strategy based on each client's needs and challenges.

We are nimble

At Lightfoot, we assemble client teams based on the specific needs of each individual matter. While our lawyers have particular areas of focus, we are not bound by a rigid practice group structure. As a result, we can provide the exact fit for each client's case. This flexibility extends to our billing arrangements as well. We are able to offer options that suit our clients' needs, whether that involves a contingency fee, a flat fee or some other arrangement.

We demand excellence of ourselves and those around us

Giving our absolute best is who we are. It is in our DNA as a firm. We challenge ourselves to reach the limits of what we have done before — and stretch beyond. The firm dedicated itself to this value when it was formed, and it remains at the heart of the firm and what we want to be.

OUR HISTORY

We were founded in 1990 by a group of lawyers in Birmingham, Alabama, who left a full-service firm to establish a litigation boutique. Our founding name partners — **Warren Lightfoot, Sam Franklin** and the late Jere White — wanted to break out of the traditional mold for managing a law firm. From the very beginning, Lightfoot, Franklin & White was a place where inclusion was encouraged, work-life balance was emphasized and quality legal work mattered most.

The firm also became the training ground for some of the brightest, most experienced defense lawyers in our state and beyond. We were founded during a time when Alabama was home to jurisdictions that were openly hostile to corporations, and plaintiffs' lawyers were pursuing new avenues of attack not attempted anywhere else, particularly in the realm of toxic torts and class actions. Lightfoot's lawyers were at the forefront of defending clients against these emerging lawsuits, and our lawyers developed novel approaches and tactics of their own. We honed our legal skills in this fire, sharpening them as we became dedicated advocates for our clients.

Today, Lightfoot continues to advance its reputation as a formidable defense litigation firm. In fact, for the 2025 ranking, we were recognized by *Benchmark Litigation* as a “**Top 20 Trial Law Firm**” in the nation for the eighth year in a row, placing us in good company among some of the most admired litigators from practices with long legacies of excellence.

We are sought out by leading companies from around the country to handle litigation, internal investigations and compliance matters. We expanded to Texas, where we serve clients in the state and surrounding region from our Houston office.

Named Managing Partner in 2026, Wes Gilchrist is focused on the firm's next chapter:



We built this firm on service, excellence, and trial readiness. My focus is to continue our tradition of excellent client experience, expanding our deep bench of seasoned and up-and-coming trial lawyers, and maintaining a client roster that is second to none.

— Wes Gilchrist, Managing Partner

Though much has changed in the world since 1990, our founding values remain the same. We are a firm that puts service first, pursues excellence, attracts talented attorneys from all backgrounds and gives nothing but our best to every client and matter. It is who we are. It is The Lightfoot Way.

They have a very deep bench. They also have a **good pipeline** of up-and-coming and younger partners and senior associates to fill the ranks...I do think they're good value for

money.— *Lightfoot Client via Chambers Insight Report 2022*

There are a number of consistent leaders, supplemented by a rotation of **young, engaging and professional associates**. It is a very strong team that is willing to tackle immediate problems and advise on root-cause issues.— *Lightfoot Client via Chambers Insight Report 2022*