



J. Banks Sewell III
Partner

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Banks Sewell is a seasoned trial lawyer dedicated to the tenacious, ethical representation of clients.

Banks joined Lightfoot shortly after the firm opened its doors in 1991. Since then, his practice has grown to include clients in numerous industries across the commercial spectrum. He has successfully tried many cases to verdict in states across the country, including catastrophic product liability, consumer fraud and First Amendment matters. The majority of Banks' time is now spent serving as national lead trial counsel for a number of manufacturers in the automotive and aviation industries.

A devoted advocate, Banks is a firm believer in the tenacious, ethical representation of clients. He tailors his efforts to meet his clients' specific needs, whether it be a speedy resolution or taking a case to trial and into appellate courts. Banks understands that knowledge of the law is not enough; effective representation requires knowledge of the client and the client's industry, as well as how to communicate with opposing counsel, the jury and the court.

Numerous legal organizations have recognized Banks for his litigation work, including *Best Lawyers*®, *Super Lawyers* and Martindale-Hubbell. Out of the office, Banks is a proud husband and father of two, as well as a committed outdoorsman and pilot. He and his family are involved in a variety of activities in the Birmingham community.

EXPERIENCE

- Winning a Defense Verdict for U-Haul in a \$130 Million Personal Injury Case
- Going above and beyond to defend an aircraft manufacturer in precedent-setting cases.
- Securing a defense verdict for a major vehicle manufacturer in a wrongful death and quadriplegia product liability action alleging a defective vehicle suspension.

PRACTICE AREAS

Aviation & Aerospace
Commercial Transportation
Media & Communications Law
Product Liability

EDUCATION

Vanderbilt University Law School (J.D., 1990)
Hampden-Sydney College (B.A., 1987)

BAR ADMISSIONS

Alabama (1990)
Michigan (2012)
Montana (2017)
Texas (2016)

- Securing a defense verdict in a product liability/negligence case involving towable equipment resulting in catastrophic personal injury including paraplegia.
- Securing a defense verdict on behalf of an automotive manufacturer in a product liability case involving an infant seriously burned in a vehicular fire.
- Securing a defense verdict on behalf of a Class 8 vehicle manufacturer resulting from a vehicular fire allegedly caused by defective brakes.
- Securing a defense verdict in a product liability case involving an injury allegedly caused by a defect in a recalled product.
- Securing a defense verdict on behalf of a major movie studio in a First Amendment/false light claim brought by a Civil Rights era icon.
- Securing a defense verdict in a bad faith/breach of contract insurance dispute involving the denial of death benefits to an insured.
- Securing a defense verdict on behalf of a national rental company in a negligence suit involving serious personal injury.
- Obtaining summary judgment for an airframe manufacturer in a multi-death plane crash case despite prior precedent finding a question of fact as to whether manufacturer had committed fraud on the FAA.
- Obtaining summary judgment for aviation company in a multi-death plane crash following successful Daubert motions against plaintiffs' liability experts.
- Serving as general counsel and national coordinating/trial counsel for a major component supplier in the transportation industry.
- Serving as national trial counsel for a Class 8 vehicle manufacturer in complex and catastrophic injury cases.
- Serving as national trial counsel for the world's largest do-it-yourself moving company.

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS

U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Media Law Resource Center

Product Liability Advisory Council

AWARDS

Alabama Super Lawyers — Personal Injury Defense: General, Product Liability Defense (2013-15)

The Best Lawyers in America® — Birmingham Lawyer of the Year for Product Liability Litigation – Defendants (2016)

The Best Lawyers in America® — Product Liability Litigation – Defendants (2008-19)

Global Law Experts, “Media Defense Attorney of the Year,” Alabama (2016)

Martindale-Hubbell, AV Preeminent Rated (2004-17)
Mid-South Super Lawyers — Product Liability (2016-19)