Dennis A. Estis

Partner

Practice Leader | Construction

Iselin

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- Representation in complex commercial litigation with emphasis on construction matters, and alternative dispute resolution
- American Arbitration Association trained mediator and arbitrator with significant experience in construction, business, and condominium association disputes
- Honored with fellowship in Litigation Counsel of America, American Bar Foundation, College of Community Association Lawyers, National Conference of Bar Presidents, Construction Lawyers Society of America

Dennis represents clients in complex commercial litigation, with an emphasis on construction matters and alternative dispute resolution (ADR). In addition, his practice is focused in the area of condominium and community association law.

Throughout his career, Dennis has served as counsel to numerous national real estate developers, contractors, corporations, and public and private sector entities. He has represented a number of New Jersey municipalities and municipal entities, including one of the state's major sewerage authorities. His clients have also included a significant number of condominium associations throughout New Jersey.

An American Arbitration Association (AAA) trained mediator and arbitrator, Dennis has participated in hundreds of ADR proceedings on behalf of private and public clients. His mediation experience with construction matters includes complex construction defect cases in condominiums, disputes between architects and contractors, and

claims by subcontractors for lack of payment. He has mediated disputes between condominium associations and unit owners including those involving non-payment by owners, and disputes between unit owners. His experience as a mediator also encompasses disputes between physicians in a medical practice, business disputes between the buyers and sellers of an existing business, disputes between partners and shareholders as to their mutual rights, insurance coverage disputes, and more.

Dennis has additional litigation experience related to real estate and commercial disputes, and general equity matters.

Areas of Focus

Practice Areas

- Construction
- Construction Litigation
- Construction Contracting & Risk Management
- Litigation
- Construction Litigation
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Community Association
- Commercial Litigation
- Consumer Fraud

Industries

- Construction
- Community Associations
- Real Estate
- Public Entities

Credentials

Bar Admissions

- New Jersey, 1972
- New York, 1983
- U.S. District Court, District of New Jersey, 1972
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit, 1981
- U.S. Supreme Court, 1982

Education

- New York University School of Law, J.D., 1972
- Johns Hopkins University, B.A., 1969

Recognition

- Litigation Counsel of America Senior Charter Fellow
- American Bar Foundation Fellow
- College of Community Association Lawyers Fellow
- National Conference of Bar Presidents Fellow
- Construction Lawyers Society of America Charter Fellow
- Listed in *Chambers USA* (a publication of Chambers and Partners) in the Construction practice area (2020 – present)
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* (a trademark of Woodward/White, Inc.) in the Construction Law, Municipal Law, Commercial Litigation, Litigation - Real Estate, Litigation - Municipal, Litigation - Construction, and Community Association Law practice areas (2005 – present)
- Selected by *Best Lawyers* (a trademark of Woodward/White, Inc.) as 2024 Woodbridge "Lawyer of the Year" in Construction Law; as 2019 Woodbridge "Lawyer of the Year" in Litigation-Real Estate; as 2018 Woodbridge "Lawyer of the Year" in Construction Law; as 2016 Woodbridge "Lawyer of the Year" in Construction Law; as 2014 Woodbridge "Lawyer of the Year" in Litigation-Construction; as 2013 Woodbridge "Lawyer of the Year" in Construction Law; as 2010 Newark "Lawyer of the Year" in Construction Law
- Listed in *New Jersey Super Lawyers* (a Thomson Reuters business) in the Construction Litigation: Business, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Environmental and Business Litigation practice areas (2005 – present); listed by *Super Lawyers* as one of the Top 100 Lawyers in New Jersey (2011, 2016)
- Listed in *Lexology Index Thought Leaders: USA* (published by Law Business Research Ltd.) in the area of Construction
- Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Rated AV Preeminent (a trademark of Internet Brands, Inc.)
- Recipient of the Middlesex County Bar Association Arthur H. Miller Lawyer Achievement Award (2013)
- Recipient of the Middlesex County Bar Association Robert J. Cirafesi Chancery Practice Award (2012)
- Recipient of the Middlesex County Bar Association David Pavlovsky Service to the Bar Award (2009)

Clerkships

- Former law clerk to The Honorable Samuel Allcorn, New Jersey Superior Court, Appellate Division

Experience

Representative Matters

- Represented the City of Elizabeth in complex infrastructure litigation arising from the premature collapse of retaining walls supporting a major roadway and bridge over the New Jersey Turnpike, following a $3 million

repair project.

- The firm is representing a condominium association in $15 million construction and governance litigation against multiple defendants, involving veil-piercing claims and allocation of responsibility for significant structural and common-area defects, while also advising on risk mitigation through renovation and construction contracts.
- Represented Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey in high-stakes litigation and trial against a municipality concerning sewer utility access and alleged overcharges, including claims exceeding $2 million. The firm successfully tried the case and is defending the result on appeal before the New Jersey Appellate Division.
- Represented the New Jersey Schools Development Authority in long-running condemnation and environmental remediation litigation, securing recovery of more than $4 million in escrowed funds to reimburse cleanup costs incurred by the client.

Published Cases

- In *Nobrega v. Edison Glen Associates* (2001), represented respondents in a landmark matter before New Jersey's Supreme Court addressing whether a newly enacted statute could retroactively impair vested property rights, resulting in a decision providing guidance on statutory interpretation and constitutional limits.
- In *Horosz v. Alps Estates* (1994), argued on behalf of the New Jersey Builders Association, *amicus curiae* in a New Jersey Supreme Court case clarifying when the Statute of Repose may restart, shaping long-term liability exposure for developers and construction professionals.
- In *Lamb v. Global Landfill* (1988), successfully defended municipal clients before the New Jersey Supreme Court in a case defining when an injured party may extend the deadline to file a Notice of Tort Claim, reinforcing statutory protections for public entities
- In *In re Request for Solid Waste Utility Customer Lists* (1987), represented appellants in a New Jersey Supreme Court matter determining when customer lists are protected from disclosure versus subject to public access, balancing proprietary interests against public-interest considerations.
- In *Tung v. Briant Park Homes, Inc.* (1996), represented a condominium developer in Appellate Division litigation clarifying when purchasers may assert claims under PREDFDA, narrowing exposure to statutory liability.
- In *First National State Bank v. Commonwealth Savings & Loan* (1980), represented a financial institution before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in a case affirming that specific performance is an available remedy to enforce a permanent lender's standby loan commitment.
- In *Carlyle Towers Condo Association v. CrossLand Savings* (1996), represented the plaintiffs before the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey, in a matter which clarified that a law firm would not be required to withdraw from representation because the firm had previously represented a subsidiary of the primary defendant in the action.
- In *Cardell Inc. v. Piscatelli* (1994), argued before the New Jersey Appellate Division on behalf of the appellant in a case which clarified when a court is determined to have abused its discretion in not permitting the filing of an amended counter-claim.

- In *In re the Appeal of Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:25A-1.1 et seq.* (1993), the New Jersey Appellate Division found that regulations adopted by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) regarding fire retardant treated (FRT) plywood were invalid because they were contrary to the legislative intent behind the New Jersey Home Warranty Act.
- In *Jersey City v. Roosevelt Stadium Arena* (1986), argued before the New Jersey Appellate Division on behalf of appellant-intervenor K. Hovnanian Companies, with the court holding that formal governmental action was required in order to approve a settlement where a municipality is a party to the action.

Affiliations

Memberships

- American Arbitration Association (AAA)
- Superior Court of New Jersey List of Civil Mediators (1998 – present)
- American Bar Association: Construction Litigation Committee of the Litigation and Dispute Resolution Sections (former Co-Chair); Forum on Construction Law
- New Jersey State Bar Association: Construction Law Section; Dispute Resolution Section (former Board of Directors); Nominating Committee (former Member); Equity Jurisprudence Committee (former Chair)
- Middlesex County Bar Association: former President
- Middlesex County Bar Foundation: Board of Trustees (former member)
- New Jersey Institute of Local Government Attorneys: Senior Trustee
- New Jersey Builders Association
- Community Associations Institute, New Jersey Chapter
- Diversity Law Institute
- Trial Law Institute

Personal

- Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey Board of Directors (past member)

- NYU Law School Alumni Association New Jersey Chapter (past President); Board of Directors (former member)
- Johns Hopkins University New Jersey Alumni Chapter (former Co-Chair)
- Democratic Party of Union County, New Jersey (past Chair)
- The Discovery Orchestra Board of Trustees (past President)

Insights & More

Announcements

Thirty-One Greenbaum Attorneys Selected for Inclusion in 2027 Edition of New Jersey Super Lawyers
10.12.26

2027 Edition of Best Lawyers Recognizes 50 Attorneys in 38 Practice Areas
8.20.26

Chambers USA 2026 Recognizes Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis Across 10 Practice Areas and 18 Individuals
6.04.26

36 Greenbaum Attorneys Selected for Inclusion in 2026 Edition of New Jersey Super Lawyers
3.20.26

2026 Edition of Best Lawyers Recognizes 54 Attorneys in 41 Practice Areas: Eight Greenbaum Lawyers Recognized on “Ones to Watch” List
8.21.25

2025 Chambers USA Guide Ranks Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis in Key Practice Areas and Recognizes 18 Attorneys as Leading Individuals
6.04.25

Thirty-Five Attorneys from Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis Selected for Inclusion in 2025 Edition of New Jersey Super Lawyers
3.19.25

Greenbaum Attorneys Co-Author 2025 Edition of "New Jersey Condominium and Community Association Law" Treatise
10.22.24

2025 Edition of Best Lawyers Recognizes 56 Attorneys in 39 Practice Areas: Ten Greenbaum Lawyers Recognized on "Ones to Watch" List; Three Selected for "Lawyer of the Year" Recognition
8.14.24

2024 Chambers USA Guide Ranks Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis in Key Practice Areas and Recognizes 20 Attorneys as Leading Individuals
6.05.24

Thirty-Four Attorneys from Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis Selected for Inclusion in 2024 Edition of New Jersey Super Lawyers
3.25.24

Greenbaum Attorneys Co-Author 2024 Edition of "New Jersey Condominium and Community Association Law" Treatise
11.28.23

2024 Edition of Best Lawyers Recognizes 59 Attorneys in 38 Practice Areas: Twelve Greenbaum Lawyers Recognized on "Ones to Watch" List; Five Selected for "Lawyer of the Year" Recognition
8.16.23

Client Alerts

NJ Appellate Division Reverses Certain Radburn Regulations Impacting Community Associations
2.29.24

Publications

New Jersey Condominium and Community Association Law 2027
2027

New Jersey Condominium and Community Association Law
2025

Construction Laws and Customs: New Jersey
2025

Seminars & Events

2025 ADR Day – Proven Strategies to Get Better Results in Mediation and Settlement
11.06.25

Navigating the Complex Business Litigation Program - A Bench-Bar Perspective
5.13.25