



**Melanie Morgan Norris** | Of Counsel

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**LICENSURE** OH | WV  
**EDUCATION** J.D. Ohio State University

Melanie Norris is highly respected for her ability to defend and protect the interests of her clients. Her practice is a unique blend of direct representation of insurance companies and defense of oil and gas producers facing litigation. Melanie's skills as a litigator are enhanced by her researching, writing, and public speaking abilities. Clients appreciate her insight and candor in advising them of their risks while helping them achieve their goals.

Melanie is the co-leader of the firm's Insurance Coverage Team. She is often called upon to assist in insurance coverage opinions and bad faith litigation, as well as insurance arson and fraud investigations. She also practices in the areas of general personal injury and commercial litigation defense.

A lifelong resident of Belmont County, Ohio, Melanie is very familiar with the Utica Shale and is an integral part of the firm's energy litigation team. Her work for large oil and gas producers includes landowner lease and mineral title litigation, as well as resolving access and right-of-way disputes.

## REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

Has issued coverage opinions and litigated coverage issues on a variety of commercial property and liability claims, including claims for business interruption coverage

Rendered coverage opinion for insurance company regarding insured physician, pharmacy, and healthcare clinic defending patient's lawsuit over prescription drugs

Sought preliminary and permanent injunctions on behalf of major energy company to prevent interference with rights-of-way and major gas transmissions lines

Prepared numerous coverage opinions and represented insurers in declaratory judgment actions involving claims arising under various types of insurance policies

Defended oil and gas companies in landowner lease litigation

Conducted investigations and examinations under oath and defended insurers in claims involving suspected arson or fraud

Defended and mediated claims of statutory bad faith and breach of contract

Jury trials on behalf of both individual and corporate defendants including claims of wrongful death,

nursing malpractice and personal injury

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

2000                    Steptoe & Johnson PLLC

## **RECENT PUBLICATIONS / SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

Steptoe & Johnson's First Look Summer 2018 Insurance Newsletter

West Virginia Insurance Commissioner Issues Guidance on "Full Coverage" Policies

Co-author of "What Legal Tools and Defenses are Available to Insurers?" For the Defense, a publication of the Defense Research Institute, Fall 2015

Article, "Privacy Claims Under CGL Policies" Steptoe & Johnson Insurance Law Update (Winter 2014)

Co-author, "Coverage Trigger Issues: What is the X Factor?" For The Defense, a publication of the Defense Research Institute, May 2014

White Paper, co-author of "Evolving Theories of Lease Termination Litigation," EMLF, May 2014

## **MEMBERSHIPS AND AWARDS**

### **PROFESSIONAL**

Best Lawyers® 2020 Morgantown, WV Litigation - Insurance, Lawyer of the Year

The Best Lawyers in America®

Defense Trial Counsel of West Virginia

Defense Research Institute

Ohio County Bar Association

Ohio State Bar Association

Inns of Court