Cassels



Melissa Burkett

Partner

Contact Information

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Office

Calgary

Expertise

- Litigation
- Appellate Advocacy

Biography

Melissa Burkett* is a partner in the Litigation Group at Cassels. Melissa brings over 17 years of experience as a litigator, with a broad practice that includes complex civil and commercial disputes, energy sector disputes, environmental liability matters, procurement and construction disputes, and public law disputes, including judicial reviews and statutory appeals. She has appeared before all levels of court in Alberta and Manitoba, the Supreme Court of Canada, the Supreme Court of British Columbia, the Federal Court, the Tax Court of Canada, as well as various administrative boards, tribunals, and arbitral panels.

In addition to her litigation practice, Melissa serves as President and a Director of the Association of Women Lawyers (Calgary). She is also a Director of the Board of The Advocates' Society, a Member of the Alberta Regional Advisory Committee for The Advocates' Society, and a Member of the Executive of the Alberta Chapter of the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers, She is a former Chair of the CBA Public Sector Lawyers Section, the Administrative Law and Young Lawyers Sections of the Manitoba Bar Association, and a former Member of the Manitoba Bar Association Council.

Melissa teaches civil procedure at the University of Calgary as a sessional instructor. She is committed to advancing the public interest, improving access to justice, and supporting the professional development of women, racialized lawyers, and other marginalized members of the legal profession.

For her contributions to the legal community, Melissa received the 2021 Women in Law Leadership Award for Leadership in the Profession (In-House/Government) and the 2022 Calgary Black Chambers Achievement Award in Law.

Prior to joining Cassels, Melissa served as a senior litigator with Alberta Justice, Legal Services Division in Calgary, where she represented and advised the Alberta Crown, ministries, and administrative boards in litigation, administrative, regulatory, and arbitral proceedings.

*denotes Professional Corporation

Achievements

- Calgary Black Chambers Achievement Award, Law (2022)
- Women in Law Leadership (WILL), Leadership Award (2021)

Insights

- Supreme Court of Canada Clarifies Spoliation: Preservation Duties Matter, but Remedies Remain Discretionary

Education / Bar Admissions

- LL.M., New York University School of Law, 2007
- LL.B., Université de Moncton, 2006
- B.A. (Adv.), University of Manitoba, 2003

- Manitoba, 2008
- Alberta, 2012

Associations

- Association des juristes d’expression française de l’Alberta
- Association of Women Lawyers (Calgary)
- Canadian Association of Black Lawyers (Alberta Chapter)
- Calgary Bar Association
- Canadian Bar Association
- The Advocates’ Society