Cassels

Geoffrey B. Shaw

Senior Counsel

Contact Information

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Office

Toronto

Expertise

- Commercial Litigation
- Class Actions
- Franchise
- Hospitality
- Private Equity
- Securities Litigation
- Entertainment & Sports
- U.S. Cross-Border

Biography

Geoffrey (Geoff) Shaw* serves as senior counsel in the Litigation Group at Cassels. The main focus of Geoff's practice is the resolution of franchise law disputes through trial, appeal, mediation or arbitration. Geoff has been described by clients in *Lexology Index* as being the "go-to-guy" and "at the top of his game" when it comes to class action defence in franchising. He is also recognized as a Legal Eagle by *Franchise Times*, a designation given to the top 100 franchise lawyers in North America. Geoff has a number of important reported decisions in the franchise law area and his class action work on behalf of Pet Valu was highlighted by *Lexpert* magazine. Geoff also practices in the field of tax litigation and securities regulatory work.

A few of his notable cases include:

- Achieving favourable settlement approval on behalf of a franchisor of a franchisee-led class action where the judge acknowledged: "the outcome of this class action by settlement is very poor for the Class Members, who have gained nothing"
- Acting for a number of franchisors to successfully restrict departing franchisees from doing franchise business contrary to their non-competition covenants
- Achieving dismissal of $100 million franchisee-led class action over rebates on behalf of franchisor
- Currently defending major pharmaceutical claim in 4 opioid related class actions

Geoff is a past instructor at the Bar Admission Course – Civil Procedures Section and Intensive Trial Advocacy Workshop – Osgoode Hall Law School in expert testimony and cross-examinations. He teaches Franchise Law at Queen's University. Geoff recently completed his second term as a member of the International Franchise Association (IFA) Legal Symposium Task Force. He regularly speaks and writes for various franchise law conferences and publications. He is a contributing editor to Federated Press' Franchise & Distribution Journal, contributing author of Dispute Resolution & Franchise Litigation in Canada, part of the American Bar Association's publication Fundamentals of Franchising – Canada, and contributing co-editor for the Canadian portions of the American Bar

Association's publication Covenants Against Competition in Franchise Agreements, 3rd and 4th editions.

**Services provided through a Professional Corporation*

Achievements

- *Best Lawyers in Canada* (Franchise)
- *Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory* (Franchise Law: Franchisor)
- *Chambers Canada* (Franchising)
- *Franchise Times* (Legal Eagles)
- *Lexology Index: Canada* (Franchise) (formerly *Who's Who Legal*)
- *Lexology Index: Franchise* (formerly *Who's Who Legal*)
- *Lexpert Special Edition*, Litigation
- *Martindale Hubbell*, Distinguished™ Rating

Client Commentary

- "Geoffrey sees things that no one else does. He is an incredible litigator."– *Chambers Canada (Franchising)*
- "He is very strategic, very detailed and very thorough." – *Chambers Canada (Franchising)*
- "Incredibly skilled." – *Chambers Canada (Franchising)*
- "He is very good at what he does." – *Chambers Canada (Franchise)*
- "At the top of his game." – *Who's Who Legal (Franchise)*
- "An accomplished attorney who is well worthy of being ranking as one of the top lawyers in the country." – *Chambers Canada (Franchise)*
- "A strong name in franchise litigation." – *Chambers Canada (Franchising)*

Insights

- What We're Up To – Franchise (Winter 2020)
- Taking Control: Sobeys and Franchisees found to be a Common Employer
- What We're Up To: Winter/Spring 2020

Pro Bono & Community Involvement

- Greater Toronto Hockey League, Former Vice-President and Member of the Board of Directors (2012-2016)
- Huntsville Hospital Foundation, Member of Board of Directors, Chair of the Governance Committee

- Ontario Hockey Federation, Former Member of the Board of Directors (2018 – 2020)

Education / Bar Admissions

- LL.M., Osgoode Hall Law School, 2011
- LL.B., Queen's University, 1984

- Ontario, 1986

Associations

- American Bar Association, Forum on Franchising
- Canadian Bar Association
- Canadian Franchise Association, Member, Government Relations Committee
- Canadian Tax Foundation
- Ontario Bar Association, Former Member, Franchise Law Executive Committee (2010-2014)
- The Advocates' Society
- Toronto Lawyers Association