

James “Jim” C. Milton

Shareholder & Director

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An experienced trial and appellate attorney, Jim Milton practices in the areas of commercial litigation, water law, and trusts and estates litigation. He also serves on the firm's Board of Directors. Throughout his career he has focused on assisting clients with trusts and estates litigation, including probate, will contests, guardianship and elder abuse. He also serves as a discovery master and a mediator and arbitrator in trust and estate disputes.

Within this practice, Jim regularly assists other attorneys in resolving complex probate, trust and guardianship disputes - whether as first or second chair litigator, strategy consultant, or resource for research and preparation of pleadings and legal arguments. Jim also provides compliance reviews in guardianship and probate matters, and assists in resolving complex real title issues in the fiduciary context.

Additionally, Jim has developed a water law practice that includes defending developers and municipal utility authorities against claims asserted by rural water districts, as well as drafting wholesale water contracts.

Jim has an individual AV Preeminent peer review rating by Martindale Hubbell and has provided outstanding representation to myriad clients, including:

- *Zink v. Avery, McGill and Shackelford*, 2017 OK CIV APP 44

Fellow The American College of Trust and Estate Counsel

Practices

Litigation

- Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- Appellate
- Complex Commercial Issues
- Insurance Law & Tort Defense

Environmental Services

- Water Law

Estate Planning & Trusts

- Elder Law
- Estate Planning & Administration
- Trusts & Estates Litigation

Family Law

- Guardianships

Municipal & Public Authority

Education

- Oklahoma State University (B.S.B.A. in Finance and Economics)
- University of Texas School of Law (J.D., *with honors*, 1995)

Admissions

- Oklahoma
- Cherokee Nation Tribal Courts

Experience

- 2012 - Present Hall Estill
- Doerner, Saunders, Daniel & Anderson, LLP

Honors & Awards

- Recognized as Best Lawyers' Tulsa Lawyer of the Year in Trusts & Estates Law in 2025 and 2027
- Recipient of the 2022-2023 4th Quarter Golden Rule Award presented by the Tulsa County Bar Association
- Recognized as Best Lawyers' Tulsa Lawyer of the Year in Litigation-Trusts & Estates in 2021
- Recognized as a Top 50 attorney in Oklahoma by Super Lawyers
- Recognized as a Super Lawyer in Oklahoma in Estate & Trust Litigation

- Recognized as a Band 3 attorney in General Commercial Litigation by Chambers USA
- Recognized as a Band 1 attorney in Chambers High Net Worth Guide for Private Wealth Law
- Recognized as a Best Lawyer in America in Commercial Litigation, Litigation-Municipal, Litigation Trusts & Estates and Water Law
- Recipient of the Tulsa County Bar Association President's Award in 2009, 2018 and 2019
- Recipient of the 2011 Oklahoma Bar Association Golden Gavel Award on behalf of the OBA Civil Procedure & Evidence Code Committee, which he chaired for 12 years
- Named to the 2006 Journal Record "Achievers Under 40"
- Recipient of the 2009 Leadership in Law Award presented by the Oklahoma Bar Association and the *Journal Record*
- Named to the 2013 Power Attorneys & Legal Professionals list by the *Tulsa Business & Legal News*

Community & Professional Involvement

- Member, Board of Directors, American Cancer Society, Oklahoma Chapter
- Member, Oklahoma Association of Municipal Attorneys, Inc.
- Tulsa County Bar Association, President, 2019-2020; Past President 2020-2021
- Oklahoma Bar Association, Co-Chair Legislative Committee and Social Chair, Tulsa for Estate Planning, Probate & Trusts Section
- Fellow, the American College of Trust & Estate Counsel; State Chair-Elect for Oklahoma; Co-Editor, State Surveys; Member, Fiduciary Litigation Committee and Co-Chair, Will and Trust Contests Subcommittee; Member, Fiduciary Administration and Communications Committees
- Participant, Tulsa Area United Way Emerging Leaders Philanthropy Forum: Criminal Justice Reform, 2018

Articles & Presentations

- James C. Milton & Katheleen R. Guzman, *Decision and Persuasion: Re-Conceiving the Role of the Planner where Undue Influence is Suspected*, 44 ACTEC L.J. 137 (2019)
- Served at program co-chair for the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) “Heart of America Fellows Institute,” April 2018 (Oklahoma City).
- Author of Op Ed, "Protecting Judicial Review," that was featured in the book, *"How Bad It Was How Good It Is - The Value of an Independent Oklahoma Judiciary,"* written by Bob Burke. (2015)
- Served as panelist, moderator, speaker or organizer for more than 50 continuing education seminars on issues including estate planning, trust administration, water rights and creditor rights.