

Michelle Chai

Partner



Queen's Marquee

600-1741 Lower Water Street

Halifax, N.S.

B3J 0J2

Phone: +1.902.444.1704

Fax: +1.902.420.1417

mchai@stewartmckelvey.com

Language(s) spoken: English

Bar Admission(s): Nova Scotia, 2013

Legal Assistant(s): [Arabella McKimm](#)

Michelle provides sound legal solutions and risk management to corporate commercial clients in a variety of industries including banking, energy, telecommunications and construction. She also works with insurers in such areas as disability insurance, personal injury and property insurance. Michelle has represented clients in commercial arbitrations, Nova Scotia Supreme, Small Claims and Federal Court matters, as well as appeals before the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, Federal Court of Appeal, Nova Scotia Court of Appeal and Supreme Court of Canada. Some of the ways Michelle helps her clients include:

- Co-counsel in 1 week trial at Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, successfully representing Canadian bank in getting judgment for fraudulent misrepresentation, breach of the duty of good faith, breach of contract, etc.
- Co-counsel in 7 day out-of-province commercial arbitration, successfully defending Nova Scotia corporation against claims for breach of the duty of good faith, breach of contract, etc.
- Co-counsel in 3 week trial at Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, successfully defending insurer against claim for long term disability benefits.
- Assisting importers with appeals of *Customs Act* tariff classification before Canadian International Trade Tribunal, successfully defending multi-national corporations
- Defence of professional malpractice, disability insurance, personal injury and property damage claims for national and international insurers, as well as self-insured corporations (incl. banks and transportation companies).
- Advice on trademark and copyright litigation issues, including assistance with Federal Court litigation.
- Assistance with multimillion-dollar commercial litigation and arbitrations, in the areas of contractual disputes, energy and construction.

Practice Areas

Bankruptcy, Receivership & Insolvency
Class Actions
Construction
Education
Environmental & Natural Resources
Insurance
Intellectual Property
Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution

Education & Career

Education

Université de Moncton, Trial Advocacy Program, 2016
Dalhousie University, JD, 2012
Queen's University, BAH Political Studies & History, 2009

Activities

Member, Stewart McKelvey Halifax Students Committee
Member, Stewart McKelvey Diversity & Inclusion Committee
Member, Board of Directors, Lawyers Insurance Association of Nova Scotia, 2021 - present
Co-Chair, Gender Equity Committee, Nova Scotia Barristers' Society, 2022 - present
Member, Gender Equity Committee, Nova Scotia Barristers' Society, 2019 - present
Instructor, Civil Trial Practice, Dalhousie University Schulich School of Law, Winter 2020 - Winter 2021
Member, Board of Directors, Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia, 2014 - 2021
Secretary, Executive, Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia, 2017 - 2021
Member, The Advocates Society, 2024 - present
Member, Canadian Defence Lawyers Association, 2013 - present
Member, Board of Directors, Young Canadian Arbitration Practitioners, 2017 - 2020
Member, Young Canadian Arbitration Practitioners, 2011 - present
Member, Canadian Bar Association, 2012 - present
Presenter/volunteer, Canadian Bar Association, Law Day, 2013 - 2018
Member-at-Large, Canadian Bar Association, Women's Lawyer Forum, 2018 - 2019
Member, Canadian Bar Association Equality Committee, 2014 - 2017
Member, Canadian Bar Association, Interim Governance & Equality Committee, 2017

Accolades

Best Lawyers™ 2025 "Ones to Watch", Alternative Dispute Resolution, Insurance Law

Thought Leadership

Supreme Court of Canada denies leave to appeal of Alberta ruling on post-death life insurance conversion (Part II)

August 15, 2024

Supreme Court of Canada denies leave to appeal of Alberta ruling on post-death life insurance conversion

August 13, 2024

Discovering a Denial: Recent Ontario decision sheds light on discoverability of claims against LTD insurers

June 03, 2022

Richards Estate sets the limits on actions against LTD insurers

February 27, 2020

Client Update: Limitation periods & denial of LTD benefits: the NSSC decision in Cameron

May 09, 2018

Client Update: Supreme Court of Canada dismisses appeals in punitive damages cases

May 26, 2016

Client Update: Nova Scotia Court of Appeal Substantially Reduces Punitive Damages in LTD Case (Plus a Primer on the New Nova Scotia Limitations Act)

November 23, 2015

Client Update: Recent Developments: Disability Insurance Policies

December 17, 2014

Client Update: Nova Scotia Supreme Court awards \$500,000 in Punitive Damages in LTD case

July 09, 2014

Publications

Co-Author, "Supreme Court of Canada denies leave to appeal of Alberta ruling on post-death life insurance conversion", *Canadian Journal of Insurance Law*, Volume 42, No. 5 (November 2024)

Author, "Field trip frenzy: liability for off-campus activities", *Discovery: Atlantic Education and the Law* – Spring 2019

June 12, 2019

Presentations

"Practical Concerns in the Wake of Thomson v Ivari", Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association 2024 Legal Section

Annual Meeting

September 13, 2024

Panelist, “How to Succeed in Real-Life Negotiation”, CBA National New Skilled Lawyer Series webinar

May 09, 2023

Panelist, “Faster, Cheaper, Better: Maximizing Efficiency with the Technology You Have”, Advocates’ Society Atlantic Symposium

August 29, 2022

Panelist, “Transforming Your Law Practice for Remote Advocacy and E-Litigation”, CBA National Skilled Lawyer Series webinar

February 10, 2021

Caselaw Update, Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association 2019 Claims and Anti-Fraud Annual Conference

May 08, 2019

Legal Update, Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association 2018 Claims and Anti-Fraud Annual Conference

May 09, 2018

Documentary Discovery Roundtable, Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association 2017 Legal Section Annual Meeting

October 05, 2017

A Mari Usque Ad Mare – Update from Atlantic Canada (and beyond), Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association 2016 Legal Section Annual Meeting

September 22, 2016