



Neale T. Johnson

Partner

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Co-Chair of the Litigation Department, Neale empowers construction industry stakeholders to solve tough legal problems.

Neale applies more than 25 years of experience with construction dispute resolution to negotiate contracts that reduce the likelihood of disputes by allocating risks before project commencement. When challenges arise, Neale helps clients navigate them with a laser focus on preserving relationships and resolving disagreements at the business level. When disputes are unavoidable, Neale zealously represents clients in court and arbitration. He also works with construction clients facing regulatory issues, such as licensing and disciplinary matters.

In addition to extensive experience prosecuting and defending claims in court and arbitration, Neale is well versed in collaborative practice (a form of lawyer-assisted bilateral negotiation) and mediation. Neale is certified as a Superior Court Mediator by the North Carolina Dispute Resolution Commission and listed as a mediator and arbitrator on the American Arbitration Association's construction industry and commercial arbitration panels.

Neale helps clients resolve disputes involving real estate, title insurance claims and coverage, financial services/banking, collections and general commercial disputes. He represents banks and borrowers in a variety of financial services disputes, including securities disputes, judgment enforcement, enforcement of loan documents, and foreclosures/claim and delivery proceedings to recover collateral. Neale's experience includes both retail and commercial lending.

He regularly teaches continuing education for contractors approved by the North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors through programs sponsored by the Carolinas Chapter of the Associated General Contractors (AGC).

Services

- Construction
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Artificial Intelligence
- Energy & Natural Resources
- Financial Services Industry
- Infrastructure & Development
- Litigation
- Real Estate Litigation
- Renewable Energy & Project Development
- Title Insurance

Before Fox Rothschild

Neale was a partner and Construction Industry Group leader at Smith Moore Leatherwood LLP, which combined with Fox Rothschild in 2018. He served as a commissioned officer in the Marine Corps and Marine Corps Reserves from 1988-2004, and was an Artillery Fire Direction Officer and Platoon Commander during Persian Gulf War (1990-91).

Beyond Fox Rothschild

Neale was an adjunct professor at Elon University School of Law, teaching pretrial, deposition and trial practice courses.

Bar Admissions

- North Carolina

Court Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of North Carolina
- U.S. District Court, Western District of North Carolina
- U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
- U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Middle District of North Carolina
- U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Western District of North Carolina

Education

- University of Virginia School of Law (J.D., 1998)
 - Shannon Award
 - Order of the Coif
 - Law Review
- University of South Carolina (B.A., *magna cum laude*, 1988)
 - Phi Beta Kappa, with honors from South Carolina College

Memberships

- Fellow of the American College of Construction Lawyers
- American Bar Association Forum on Construction Law
 - Governing Committee (2023-2026)
 - Midwinter Meeting Program Co-Chair (2017)
 - Immediate Past Chair of Division 9: Subcontractors & Suppliers (2018-20)
- North Carolina Bar Association
 - Member, Construction Section Council
 - Member, Dispute Resolution Section Council (Arbitration Subcommittee Chair)

Honors & Awards

- Recognized by *Chambers USA* for Construction - North Carolina (2019-2025) and Construction: Alternative Dispute Resolution - North Carolina (2024, 2025)
- Selected to the "Power List" for Construction by *North Carolina Lawyers Weekly* (2024, 2025)
- Selected to the "Super Lawyers" list for Real Estate (2014-2016) and Construction Litigation (2017-2026) in North Carolina
- Selected to the "Top 100: North Carolina Super Lawyers" list (2025, 2026)
- Selected to *Super Lawyers Business Edition* list, Real Estate (2014, 2015)
- Named to the "Lawyer of the Year" list for Litigation - Real Estate in the Triad by *Best Lawyers* (2026)

- Selected to the "Best Lawyers in America" list for Construction Law and Construction Litigation (2018-2026), Litigation - Real Estate (2021-2026), Professional Malpractice Law - Defendants (2023-2026) and Legal Malpractice Law - Defendants (2025-2026) in Greensboro, NC by *Best Lawyers*
- Recognized on *Business North Carolina's* Legal Elite for Litigation (2021), Construction (2010, 2012-2014, 2017-2024) and Construction Hall of Fame (2025-present) lists
- Rated AV Preeminent™ (Judicial Edition) by Martindale-Hubbell®