

James Atkinson "Chip" Bruorton IV

Managing Member

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Key Practices

Employment and Labor Law

Business and Commercial Litigation

Administrative and Government Law

Construction Law and Litigation

Probate, Trust, and Estate Litigation

Admissions

State Bar Admissions
SC

United States District Court
District of South Carolina

Education

Clemson University (B.S., Financial Management, 2000)

University of Tennessee College of Law (J.D., 2003)

James Atkinson "Chip" Bruorton IV is an equity member of Rosen Hagood where he has practiced law for more than twenty years. Chip has extensive litigation experience in construction, employment, and administrative government matters. In 2015, he obtained the largest verdict in firm history in representing a group of employees against their employer for breach of fiduciary duty related to an employee equity incentive plan. The verdict of $53,508,288 was one of the top verdicts in South Carolina in 2015 and one of the top 50 verdicts in the United States in 2015.

His construction litigation experience includes mechanics liens, payment and performance bond claims, construction defect claims and surety indemnification claims. He has represented private and public owners, architects, general contractors, construction managers, subcontractors, and bonding companies, on both the plaintiff and defense side of construction matters. Chip also provides outside general counsel services to multiple residential and commercial contractors as well as local government municipalities.

Chip has successfully litigated claims on behalf of individuals and families of those who have suffered catastrophic injuries or wrongful death, including claims arising out of construction site injuries, pedestrian vehicle collisions, auto accidents, trucking accidents, and premises liability.

His experience, dedication to his clients, and professionalism has led him to be named to ***Best Lawyers in South Carolina*** for five consecutive years. Prior to that, he was named to the ***South Carolina Rising Stars*** list six times. Chip is also recognized as a ***Super Lawyer*** in ***South Carolina's Super Lawyer*** publication based on his high-degree of professional achievement. Chip was born in Greenville, South Carolina and remained in the Upstate for college, receiving his Bachelor of

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Science degree in Financial Management from Clemson University in 2000. He then obtained his juris doctorate from the University of Tennessee in 2003. Outside of his law practice, he volunteers his time coaching youth sports, leading and participating in mission trips, and teaching High School Sunday School. He is an active member of Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church where he serves as a Deacon and serves on the International Missions Team Committee and Youth Ministry Committee.

Experience

Disclaimer: Results may vary depending on the facts involved in any particular case as the facts of every case are different. The results reported throughout this website should not be construed as a predictor of future results or as a guarantee as to the outcome of any particular case.

- Serves as general counsel to multiple general contractors, developers and subcontractors.
- Represented a group of former and current employees of South Carolina based ArborGen, Inc. in a breach of fiduciary duty case where clients were awarded damages of $53,508,288. This verdict was included as one of the Top Verdicts in South Carolina in 2015 and one of the Top 50 Verdicts in the U.S. in 2015. Foutz, et al. v. Arborgen, Inc., et al., 2015 WL 10435042 (S.C.Com.Pl.)(Trial Order). Claim was later settled for a confidential undisclosed amount.
- Obtained $457,540.00 judgment on behalf of an Architect against homeowner in mechanic's lien case where Architect did not receive payment for work performed during the design and construction phase of a plantation home. The ruling, which was upheld by the South Carolina Court of Appeals, acknowledged that construction administrative services performed by an Architect are considered labor and lienable under the mechanic's lien statute.
- Represented a commercial framing contractor that was named as a defendant in a construction defect lawsuit arising out of the construction of a Myrtle Beach condominium project. The framer should have been covered under its subcontractors' insurance policies as an additional insured, but when one carrier failed to defend the framer—its additional insured—the framer sued for bad faith. The ruling in favor of the commercial framing contractor recognized that an additional insured under an insurance policy has standing to bring a bad faith claim against the carrier if it is not meeting its obligations under the policy, even though they are not a named insured.
- Negotiated $2.125MM settlement on behalf of local municipality in construction defect claim against contractor, architect, stucco manufacturer and subcontractors related to water intrusion and structural deficiencies at its operations center.
- Negotiated residential home buyback on behalf of two separate homeowners against two different large residential homebuilders as a result of construction deficiencies in the original construction of the home.
- Settled more than $10MM worth of condemnation matters on behalf of local municipalities.
- Obtained $400,000.00 judgment on behalf of homeowner against builder for breach of contract during construction of custom residential home.
- Negotiated $600,000.00 settlement on behalf of homeowner in construction defect and breach of contract claim against design professional and homebuilder.
- Received summary judgment on behalf of general contractor against subcontractor for contribution

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resulting from subcontractor's failure to participate at mediation in good faith.

Publications & Speaking Engagements

- Co-author, Mechanic's Liens (SC) Practice Note, LexisNexis Practical Guidance
- Guest Speaker, Labor and Environmental Law, Engineering/Commercial Law, Ethics, Safety, and Contracts (CONE 302) at The Citadel (Fall 2025)
- Guest Speaker, Labor and Environmental Law, Engineering/Commercial Law, Ethics, Safety, and Contracts (CONE 302) at The Citadel (Fall 2024)

Awards & Honors

- Fellow, Construction Lawyers Society of America
- ***AV Preeminent***® rating, Martindale-Hubbell
- Selected to the ***South Carolina Super Lawyers*** list, 2020 – 2025 (Construction Litigation)
- Selected to the ***South Carolina Rising Stars*** list, 2012 – 2019 (Construction Litigation)*
- Selected for inclusion in ***The Best Lawyers in America***®, 2023-2026 (Construction Law and Litigation-Construction)
- ***Legal Elite of the Low Country*** (Charleston Business Magazine) – Construction, 2019
- Graduate, Leadership South Carolina, 2012
- Graduate, Leadership Charleston, 2007

Involvement

South Carolina Bar

- Construction Law Section
- Fee Dispute Resolution Committee

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American Bar Association

- Forum on the Construction Industry

Charleston County Bar Association

Charleston Contractors Association

Carolinas Associated General Contractors (CAGC)

- Former Member, Supplier Council

Leadership South Carolina

- Alumni Committee

Community Involvement

- Youth Sports Coach, Town of Mt. Pleasant
- Deacon, Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church

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