

# Douglas H. Wigdor

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It is difficult to imagine another employment lawyer with a comparable record both in the courtroom and at the negotiating table. Ranked one of the Top 100 attorneys in New York Metro by Super Lawyers, Mr. Wigdor routinely tries cases to verdict, has won numerous verdicts in the millions of dollars and has received the *New York Law Journal's* 2020 Distinguished Leader Award. A tireless advocate for victims of sexual harassment, sexual assault and other forms of unlawful workplace misconduct, Mr. Wigdor is a Forbes Diversity & Inclusion Contributor and can often be seen standing up for his clients' rights in television and radio interviews; he has even appeared in a Netflix documentary and testified before the UK Parliament. His "pursuit of decency, justice and high-dollar settlements in the #MeToo era has landed Mr. Wigdor on the list of *Law360's* Titans of the Plaintiffs Bar," according to a recent profile recognizing Mr. Wigdor as one of the 10 most influential plaintiffs' lawyers in the U.S. Mr. Wigdor's trial verdicts, arbitration awards and settlements exceed \$1 Billion.

From Dominique Strauss-Kahn to Harvey Weinstein, Mr. Wigdor has been at the forefront of some of the most closely watched sexual harassment and sexual assault cases of the last decade. Named a Top 100 Hollywood Power Lawyer by *The Hollywood Reporter* and a Top Music Lawyer by *Billboard*, Mr. Wigdor's employment trial verdicts and high-profile cases have resulted in several feature profiles about his career, including articles in *The New York Times*, *Bloomberg Businessweek* and the *London Independent*. He has been referred to in these and other major news publications as one of New York's most high-profile litigators. In a recent study, Mr. Wigdor was the only plaintiffs' employment lawyer to be recognized as one of the most fearsome lawyers in the Country. A former U.S. Senator for New York said of Mr. Wigdor, "it's much better to have him on our side than risk sitting across from him."

Mr. Wigdor is known for taking on some of the most powerful people in the business and political worlds. Some of his notable representations include six alleged victims of sexual abuse by Harvey Weinstein (including one woman who testified at Weinstein's criminal rape trial in New York), the hotel maid in the Dominique Strauss-Kahn sexual assault case, the rape victim in the Delhi Uber case that led to numerous executive resignations, NBA All-Star Charles Oakley in a defamation lawsuit against James Dolan and Madison Square Garden, former Recording Academy President and CEO Deborah Dugan in a sexual harassment, gender discrimination and retaliation case in connection with the Grammy Awards, the former chief of staff to ousted WeWork CEO Adam Neumann in a pregnancy discrimination case, multiple clients in the seminal "shop and frisk" cases, five award-winning female journalists at NY1 in an age and gender discrimination lawsuit against Charter Communications, countless women in their gender discrimination and sexual harassment claims against their powerful employers, and over 20 employees at Fox News in their claims of sexual harassment, gender and race discrimination and retaliation against the network.

## Publicity

Mr. Wigdor's successful handling of numerous high-profile cases has resulted in frequent television and radio appearances including Nightline, Good Morning America, The Today Show, CBS This Morning, The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, The Situation Room with Wolf Blitzer, Neil Cavuto as well as regular spots on MSNBC, CNBC, CNN, ABC News, CBS News, NY1, the BBC and NBC News. He is regularly quoted as a legal expert in newspapers and magazines including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Law Journal*, *New York Magazine*, *London Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *London Independent*, *USA Today*, *New York Post*, *New York Daily News* and many others. In 2020, Mr. Wigdor appeared as the victim's lawyer in *Room 2806: The Accusation*, a Netflix original documentary series about the 2011 sexual assault case against Dominique Strauss-Kahn.

Mr. Wigdor's extensive litigation experience is frequently distinguished in the media. Notably, in a profile on Mr. Wigdor's career, *The New York Times* concluded that Mr. Wigdor is "one of New York City's most aggressive employment lawyers." A sitting U.S. District Judge commented in another profile in the *London Independent* that "Mr. Wigdor is a winner." And *Bloomberg Businessweek*, in yet another profile of Mr. Wigdor, described him as among the "top tier of telegenic anti-discrimination lawyers." Another well-known media outlet noted that "although U.S. lawyers are known to actively seek out victims to encourage them to sue for damages, Mr. Wigdor doesn't need to chase clients." In recognition of his work fighting sexual harassment and discrimination at the highest levels of the Media and Entertainment industry, *The Hollywood Reporter* named Mr. Wigdor to the Top 100 Hollywood Power Lawyers 2020 list, and *Billboard* recognized him as one of the Top Music Lawyers in 2020.

In both 2019 and 2020, Mr. Wigdor was one of only three plaintiffs' employment attorneys selected to the list of Top 100 attorneys in the New York Metro area by Super Lawyers. The *New York Law Journal* has featured Mr. Wigdor and Wigdor LLP's clients in the top New York State verdicts six times, including the number one and two employment verdicts and the number one disability discrimination verdict. Mr. Wigdor has also received a Band 1 ranking in Chambers and Partners, one of the most prestigious legal directories in the world. Wigdor LLP is routinely recognized for extraordinary achievement in the categories of employee discrimination, wrongful termination, civil rights, whistle-blower and wage and hour law. The Firm has won *The National Law Journal's* Elite Trial Lawyers Awards in the categories of Age Discrimination, Civil Rights, Employment Rights, Racial Discrimination, Sexual Orientation Discrimination and Elite Women of the Plaintiffs' Bar.

Mr. Wigdor is also a lecturer, editor and author of articles on employment and criminal-related subjects. He is a Forbes Diversity & Inclusion Contributor and is regularly invited to appear and participate in leading legal forums regarding topical employment issues. Mr.

Wigdor has appeared multiple times as part of an employment mediation panel at JAMS (Judicial Arbitration & Mediation) continuing legal education events, and has also appeared as a speaker at the American Arbitration Association forum, the National Employment Lawyers Association, Columbia University, Cornell University, the University of Pennsylvania and Fordham Law Schools, as well as Oxford and Cambridge Universities. In 2019, Mr. Wigdor launched “Professionals in Residence,” a week-long student engagement program at Oxford University’s St Cross College in which Mr. Wigdor led a series of lectures, workshops and other educational events about the rapidly evolving U.S. legal and employment landscapes. Mr. Wigdor also frequently speaks and moderates other continuing legal education seminars for the American Conference Institute and Practising Legal Institute. He is also quoted frequently in the *New York Law Journal*, presents lectures to various Bar Associations, and has published articles in numerous journals.

## **Notable Outcomes**

The vast majority of cases handled by Mr. Wigdor result in confidential, out-of-court settlements before a complaint is ever filed. Nonetheless, Mr. Wigdor has a reputation for obtaining multi-million-dollar verdicts and settlements on behalf of his clients. Some of Mr. Wigdor’s most notable public outcomes include:

- \$23.72 million arbitration award on behalf of the former Chief Financial Officer of Six Flags, one of the largest single-plaintiff employment arbitration verdicts;
- \$7.5 million verdict in a disability discrimination case against Walmart, one of the largest single-plaintiff verdicts ever under the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- \$8 million (approx.) verdict on behalf of the former Editor-in-Chief of *The Source Magazine*, who was retaliated against after she complained of gender discrimination;
- \$3.35 million verdict on behalf of a former employee of Nassau County whose due process rights were violated;
- \$1.35 million verdict in a disability case where the client was terminated by his employer after disclosing that he was HIV positive;
- \$1.126 million jury verdict in a Sarbanes-Oxley whistleblower retaliation case on behalf of a former Vice President and Wealth Manager at JPMorgan Chase; and
- Arbitration award of over \$700,000 on behalf of former Managing Director at a Manhattan-based consulting group who was terminated without basis for “Cause.”

## **Experience and Types of Cases**

Mr. Wigdor’s practice focuses on litigation and counseling of individuals and companies in connection with a wide array of employment issues, criminal matters and international issues. He has represented numerous clients who have been victimized by unlawful workplace misconduct, including discrimination or harassment based on race, gender,

pregnancy, age, religion, disability and/or LGBTQ+ status.

Some of Mr. Wigdor's most notable representations include:

- Six alleged victims of sexual misconduct by disgraced film mogul Harvey Weinstein, including Rowena Chiu, Wedil David, Dominique Huett, Zelda Perkins, Kaja Sokola and Tarale Wulff;
- Former Fox News employee Jennifer Eckhart in a lawsuit asserting claims of sexual harassment, sexual assault and retaliation against Fox News and former "America's Newsroom" host Ed Henry;
- Deborah Dugan, the former President and CEO of The Recording Academy (the "Academy"), who alleged that the Academy unlawfully retaliated against Ms. Dugan by placing her on administrative leave after she complained to HR about a broad pattern of sexism, corruption, voting irregularities with respect to Grammy Award nominations and other misconduct stemming from the Academy's longstanding "boys' club" culture;
- Journalist Megyn Kelly in connection with a reported investigation by the Office of the New York State Attorney General into allegations of sexual harassment, retaliation and gender discrimination at NBC News;
- Marla Crawford, a former in-house lawyer at Goldman Sachs who alleged she was unlawfully fired as part of a cover-up of sexual misconduct by the bank's Head of Litigation;
- The former chief of staff to Adam Neumann, the embattled former CEO of WeWork, in a complaint alleging claims of pregnancy discrimination, gender discrimination, unequal pay and retaliation;
- Five award-winning female journalists at NY1 in an age and gender discrimination lawsuit against Charter Communications that appeared on the front page of the *New York Post*;
- Two former TV journalists at NY1 who allege that they were unlawfully terminated either while pregnant or shortly after returning from maternity leave;
- Six highly accomplished and well-respected female doctors in a sexual harassment lawsuit against Yale University and Yale New Haven Hospital;
- Multiple alleged victims of sexual assault by professors at John Jay College of Criminal Justice;
- The former Head of Marketing and Investor Relations at private equity firm Wellspring Capital Management in a rape lawsuit asserting claims under New York's Gender Motivated Violence Act against Christopher Dawson;
- A former Vice President at Goldman Sachs in connection with claims of sexual orientation discrimination and retaliation against Goldman Sachs;
- A putative class of consumers in a class action lawsuit against Starbucks alleging the use of dangerous pesticides inside coffee shops throughout Manhattan;

- Multiple female former Partners at Ernst & Young (“EY”) in connection with claims of sexual harassment, sexual assault, gender discrimination and/or retaliation against EY;
- The former Executive Vice President of Content at MLB Advanced Media (“BAM”) in a lawsuit alleging breach of contract and unjust enrichment against BAM and BAMTech, a technology subsidiary of Disney;
- Former ESPN anchor Adrienne Lawrence in her claims of sexual harassment and gender discrimination against the network;
- Finance executive Lauren Bonner, named “The Face of #MeToo on Wall Street” by *The New Yorker*, in her claims of gender discrimination and unequal pay against hedge fund Point72 Asset Management and its founder Steven Cohen;
- Numerous victims of alleged sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape by their Uber drivers in a putative class action against Uber;
- Thirteen former and current employees of Fox News, including former News Anchor Kelly Wright, who alleged race discrimination against Fox News Network LLC, Judith Slater, former Controller and Senior Vice President of Accounting at Fox, and Dianne Brandi, Fox’s General Counsel;
- Fox5 reporter Lidia Curanaj in a lawsuit alleging gender and pregnancy discrimination against Twenty-First Century Fox, Inc., Fox Entertainment Group LLC, Fox Television Stations, LLC, and Bryon Harmon, Fox5 News Director;
- Former New York Knicks player and NBA All-Star Charles Oakley in a defamation lawsuit against The Madison Square Garden Company and its Executive Chairman, James Dolan;
- A VP in the Wealth Management Division at the large investment bank Goldman Sachs in a lawsuit alleging systematic racial discrimination against Goldman Sachs;
- Multiple individual plaintiffs in a racial profiling lawsuit against Macy’s;
- Television personalities, news anchors, and other media employees and executives in discrimination, harassment and contract claims against their employers and others individually responsible;
- Employees of The New York Times Company in a class action lawsuit alleging age, race and gender discrimination;
- A former executive in a sexual harassment and retaliation claim against a top hedge fund that appeared on the front page of *The New York Times*;
- A nationwide class action against Sephora on behalf of over seven hundred and thirty Asian customers who were the victims of racial profiling and discrimination;
- A former senior VP at renowned T.V. channel Al Jazeera America, in a lawsuit alleging retaliation and discrimination against her former employer;
- The courageous victim of a heinous sex crime at the hands of an Uber cab driver in India whose case led to numerous executive resignations;
- Numerous attorneys against their former employees, including prominent international law firms. The attorneys were subjected to various forms of discrimination by their

- employers such as gender, age and sexual orientation discrimination;
- Thousands of victims of employment discrimination, harassment, unequal pay, and/or retaliation against virtually every large bank and other hedge funds and financial institutions;
  - The Adler family, on behalf of Sol Adler, in a discrimination and wrongful termination suit against 92nd Street Y;
  - A class action wage and hour lawsuit against CitiGroup;
  - Former Executive Director of the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) in a retaliation action against the police watchdog;
  - Service employees in a collective and class action against Japanese ramen restaurant chain Ippudo for unlawful wage practices;
  - Former service employees in a class action against celebrity chef David Bouley for failure to pay minimum wages and tips;
  - Former Executive in an age discrimination action against MetLife for failure to pay retirement benefits;
  - A group of women in a gender discrimination case against Citigroup;
  - The former CFO of Six Flags;
  - A group of people of color in a race and national origin claim against Bank of America;
  - Individual women in an alleged gender discrimination class action complaint against Dresdner Kleinwort;
  - The former Tour Manager of \*NSYNC in a lawsuit against \*NSYNC;
  - Employees in a large wage and hour case against CitiMortgage; and
  - Several celebrity models, actors, actresses and well-known chefs in various legal disputes.

In addition to representing clients, Mr. Wigdor is an arbitrator, serving on the American Arbitration Association Employment Panel. While arbitration proceedings in employment cases are typically stacked in favor of the employer, Mr. Wigdor uses his extensive experience litigating employment disputes on behalf of both plaintiffs and defendants to bring fairness and impartiality to the arbitration table.

Mr. Wigdor regularly conducts oral arguments in appellate courts, including the Second Circuit, the New York Court of Appeals, and the First Department, arguing some of the most closely watched legal issues in the employment field. Mr. Wigdor was a Federal Law Clerk to United States District Judge Arthur D. Spatt and was appointed as an Assistant District Attorney in Suffolk County, New York where he investigated, prosecuted and tried hundreds of criminal matters ranging from robberies and burglaries to complex schemes to defraud. Prior to founding Wigdor LLP, Mr. Wigdor was a senior lawyer at one of the nation's preeminent management-side labor and employment firms.

## Awards

Mr. Wigdor is one of New York's most highly awarded employment attorneys. He has received the following legal honors and accolades:

- Named "one of New York City's most aggressive employment lawyers" by *The New York Times*
- Winner of the *New York Law Journal's* 2020 Distinguished Leader Award
- Named to the Top 100 Hollywood Power Lawyers 2020 list by *The Hollywood Reporter*
- Named to the Top Music Lawyers 2020 list by *Billboard*
- Ranked Band 1 in New York Labor and Employment: Mainly Plaintiffs Representation by *Chambers and Partners*
- Named one of 10 "Titans of the Plaintiffs Bar" in the U.S. by *Law360*
- Selected to Top 100 list by *New York Metro Super Lawyers*
- Blue Ribbon Panelist, Employment Litigation/Labor and Employment, *Super Lawyers*
- Selected to Super Lawyers list for 11 years by *Super Lawyers*
- Selected to The Best Lawyers in America list for 14 years by *Best Lawyers*
- Litigation – Labor and Employment, *The Best Lawyers in America*
- Employment Law – Individuals, *The Best Lawyers in America*
- Employment Law – Management, *The Best Lawyers in America*
- Most Feared Law Firms Award, *BTI Consulting Group*
- Best Law Firms, *U.S. News & World Report*
- Elite Trial Lawyers Award, *The National Law Journal*
- Top 100 Trial Lawyers in the USA, *National Trial Lawyers*
- Top 100 Labor and Employment Lawyers, *American Society of Legal Advocates*
- Premier 100 Trial Attorney, *American Academy of Trial Attorneys*
- Leading Lawyer in America Award, *Lawdragon*
- Leading Plaintiff Employment Lawyer Award, *Lawdragon*
- Lifetime Membership Award, *Top American Lawyers*
- Top Verdict, *New York Law Journal*
- Litigator Award, *Trial Lawyers Board of Regents*
- Lifetime Achievement Award, *America's Top 100 Attorneys*
- Fellowship, *Litigation Counsel of America*
- A/V Preeminent Rating, *Martindale-Hubbell*
- 10.0 "Superb" Rating, *Avvo*
- Employment Law Editorial Advisory Board Member, *Law360*

## Education

Mr. Wigdor received his undergraduate degree from Washington University in St. Louis, cum laude; a Master's Degree from Oxford University in England; and his Juris Doctor from Catholic University School of Law in Washington, D.C., graduating in the top of his class. Mr. Wigdor was a senior staff member of the *Catholic University Law Review* and an editor of the *Oxford International Review*. While at Oxford, Mr. Wigdor received a coveted "Full-Blue" and was a member of the Vincent's Club.

## Admitted to Practice

- U.S. Supreme Court, 2003
- Her Majesty's Courts of England & Wales, 2001
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, 2000
- Court of Appeals, Second Circuit, 2000
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, 2000
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York, 2003
- District of Columbia, 1995
- Pennsylvania, 1994
- New York, 1994
- New York State Bar Association
- Suffolk County Bar Association
- Federal Bar Council
- Association of the Bar of the City of New York

## Community Involvement

Mr. Wigdor was named Alumnus of the Year in 2007 and 2014 by St Cross College, Oxford. Due to his continued support of Oxford, St Cross College, a library has been named after Mr. Wigdor and his wife — the Douglas and Catherine Wigdor Library Garden Room. Mr. Wigdor is a member of the New York Eliot Society Membership Committee, and a volunteer for the Leading Together Campaign for Washington University. He has also endowed a scholarship for an Arts & Sciences student at Washington University, as well as a cycling studio in the student Recreational Center. Mr. Wigdor is a member of the Advisory Board for the Cornell Center for Innovative Hospitality Labor and Employment Relations (CIHLER), as well as the Board of Advisors for the Scheinman Institute on Conflict Resolution at Cornell University.

Mr. Wigdor is an active and philanthropic member of the Forest Hills community, where he served on the legal committee of the Forest Hills Gardens Association, and is a proud sponsor of the New York Pops summer series at Forest Hills Stadium. Mr. Wigdor had the privilege of managing several basketball teams in the Forest Hills Little League, in addition to

coaching a basketball team at the Forest Hills YMCA and Forest Hills Community House. He is a former member of the Governing Committee of the Oxonian Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing heads of state to address its members, and was also a member of both the Alexander Hamilton and Theodore Roosevelt Inns of Court, wherein he worked together with other selected lawyers and state and federal judges in the analysis of current legal issues. Mr. Wigdor traveled to Kenya with other lawyers from the Firm to educate Kenyan Wildlife Service Officers on evidence preservation and testifying in court. Mr. Wigdor is also an active member of the Westside Tennis Club at Forest Hills and a member of the International Tennis Club of the U.S.A.