



# CHRISTIAN M. ORME

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HUTCHISON & STEFFEN  
ATTORNEYS

Christian M. Orme is partner of the Firm and an AV-rated attorney by Martindale-Hubbell®. Chris practices primarily in the areas of business and commercial litigation, tort litigation, product liability, and premises liability.

Originally from Idaho Falls, Idaho, Chris received his Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from Brigham Young University and his Juris Doctorate from the William S. Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. During law school, Chris was the Managing Editor of the Law Review and his student note, *Kelo v. New London: An Opportunity Lost to Rehabilitate the Takings Clause*, 6 NEV. L.J. 272 (Fall 2005), was published in the Nevada Law Journal. He was the President of the Federalist Society and also clerked for the office of the Nevada Attorney General in Las Vegas, the Office of the General Counsel for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the Office of the General Counsel for Brigham Young University. Chris was admitted as a member of the Nevada Bar in 2006.

When Chris can break away from the office, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Lindsay, and four daughters. Chris stays involved in his daughter's active lives by coaching their soccer teams. Chris is heavily involved in the Boy Scouts of America. Chris enjoys playing basketball, running, and reading.

In *Pelayo v. Ahern Rentals, Inc.* (State Court Case Number A542130). Isidro Pelayo was killed in a construction related accident at the Trump International Hotel & Tower in Las Vegas, Nevada. The estate of Pelayo filed a lawsuit against Ahern Rentals and other companies for negligence, strict product liability, breach of warranties, and punitive damages. Chris aggressively began to file motions for summary judgment and otherwise on the individual causes of action. To date, he has obtained orders on the following issues.

- Chris secured summary judgment on the negligence claim despite significant opposition from opposing parties.
- Chris obtained a crucial order allowing Ahern Rentals, Inc. to point the finger of blame at parties that were not in the lawsuit by either settlement or workers compensation.
- Chris secured summary judgment on behalf of Ahern Rentals, Inc. on the issue of punitive damages by arguing under the new punitive damages standard outlined in *Countrywide Home Loans, Inc. v. Thitchener*.
- Chris secured summary judgment on the cause of action of breach of warranty pursuant to NRS 104.2318, i.e. that plaintiff did not have horizontal privity as a matter of law, which is required to bring a breach of warranty action.

In *Gresham v. Ahern Rentals, Inc.* (State Court Case Number A603695), Chris successfully defeated a motion to dismiss by arguing that the third-party contractor was still obligated to defend Ahern even without a signature in on the contract pursuant to NRS 104A.2201.

In *Bardzik v. Paris Las Vegas Operating Company, LLC* (State Court Case Number A595047), Chris secured a dismissal of Plaintiffs cause of action for strict products liability. The Court agreed with Chris that an "in-ground, non-mass produced swimming pool" is not a product under Nevada law. The Court also agreed that

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Paris, as the owner and operator of pool, cannot be liable for strict product liability under Nevada law because it is not engaged in the business of manufacturing or selling such products. This decision, and others in this case, led to a complete dismissal of the lawsuit by Plaintiff. Plaintiff had been seeking resolution of the case for hundreds of thousands of dollars due to a fractured vertebrae in his neck.

In *Jones v. Ahern Rentals, Inc.* (State Court Case Number A620134), Chris secured summary judgment on behalf of Ahern Rentals, Inc. on the issue of punitive damages by arguing under the new punitive damages standard outlined in *Countrywide Home Loans, Inc. v. Thitchener*. The issue was of particular importance to the client as it protected the company's confidential, proprietary, and sensitive financial records in the litigation.

In *JD2, Inc. v. Ahern Rentals, Inc.* (California State Court Case Number FCS031679), Kumen Taylor and Chris Orme defeated Plaintiff's motion for summary judgment on the issue that Plaintiff fully indemnified and defended Ahern in an underlying wrongful death lawsuit and that the Court did not have jurisdiction of the matter as it was an issue of insurance. The Court further rebuffed Plaintiff's attempts to have the Court stripped of jurisdiction by finding that the Plaintiff "ignored" the fact that Ahern's claims for indemnity and defense were based on the terms of the rental contract and not related to any insurance contract.

In *Picataggio v. Harrah's Las Vegas, LLC* (State Court Case Number A644790), Chris successfully defended the firm's client in a claim relating to significant shoulder injuries caused when the Plaintiff tripped over a poker chip rack at a local casino. After a hotly contested arbitration, the arbitrator returned a defense verdict in favor of Chris and his client. Plaintiff claimed that Defendant failed to exercise the requisite ordinary care and prudence to render the premises reasonably safe for the visit of a person invited on his premises for business purposes. Chris successfully argued that the Plaintiff's own actions were the main cause and contributing factor in the accident.

In *Kori Wiggins v. Apple Nevada, LLC, Case No. A-10-609760-C* (Eighth Judicial District, NV 2012), Kumen Taylor and Chris Orme successfully defended the firm's client in a recent personal injury matter. After a hotly contested trial, the judge returned a defense verdict in favor of Mr. Taylor and Mr. Orme's client on all counts. The plaintiff sued the defendant asking for \$3.2 million dollars in damages. The plaintiff claimed defendant failed to exercise due care in maintaining the restaurant in a reasonably safe condition and that this failure led to her back injuries. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Orme successfully argued over the period of two weeks that the plaintiff was not credible in her description of the accident, cause of the accident, injuries, or claims for damages. The Court further found that Mr. Taylor and Mr. Orme's client made every effort to keep its premises reasonably safe, and to warn its patrons. This victory is one of many for Mr. Taylor and Mr. Orme who both have an outstanding record in civil trials.

In *Callway v. Skyjack, Inc.* (State Court Case Number A602229), Chris Orme Secured dismissal of Plaintiff's cause of action for strict products liability for the firm's commercial lessor client. Chris argued, and the district court agreed, that the Nevada Supreme Court has never extended the doctrine of strict products liability to apply to commercial lessors. Further, the district court held that the decision on whether to expand the doctrine of strict products liability to commercial lessors is a decision best made by the Nevada Supreme Court. Consequently, the cause of action for strict products liability against the firm's commercial lessor client was dismissed. This is a critical decision for the firm's commercial lessor client in not only this case, but could potentially have an impact in all future cases involving strict products liability and commercial lessors. *Callaway v. Skyjack, Inc., Case No. A602229* (Dept. 5, Las Vegas, Nev. 2012).

In *Callaway v. Skyjack, Inc. and Ahern Rentals, Inc.* (Department 5, State Court Case Number A602229), Chris secured summary judgment on behalf of Ahern Rentals, Inc. on the issue of punitive damages by arguing under the new punitive damages standard outlined in *Countrywide Home Loans, Inc. v. Thitchener*. This ruling protected the client from not only punitive damages at trial, but protected the company's confidential, proprietary, and sensitive financial records in the litigation. *Callaway v. Skyjack, Inc., Case No. A602229* (Dept. 5, Las Vegas, Nev. 2012).