

Ian (KT) Van Dusen

Partner

San Francisco

Details

[T 415.772.5712](tel:415.772.5712)

[F 415.989.1663](tel:415.989.1663)

ivandusen@coblentzlaw.com



Ian (KT) Van Dusen represents companies and public entities facing high-stakes litigation in state and federal courts. His representations include complex commercial cases, land use and real estate disputes, and employment matters. Ian focuses on solving client problems, having tried multiple matters to verdict and successfully defended trial court decisions on appeal. He represents clients across a variety of industries, tailoring litigation strategies to the scope of each dispute and the client's specific needs.

Ian is co-chair of the firm's Litigation practice and has an active pro bono practice.

Prior to joining the firm, he clerked for the Honorable Vaughn R. Walker of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California.

Ian earned an A.B. with high distinction from the University of Michigan and a J.D. cum laude from Northwestern University School of Law, where he was an editor of the Northwestern University Law Review.

Notable Representations

Lead trial counsel for the City of Oakland in high-profile whistleblower retaliation litigation; matter settled on favorable terms following jury verdict. (*Gantt v. City of Oakland* (RG1780153 (Alameda Sup. Ct.), affirmed on appeal at A161268).)

Obtained dismissal of a First Amendment retaliation claim by former Police Chief. (*Armstrong v. City of Oakland*, 3:24-cv-01953-TLT (N.D. Cal. Nov. 8, 2024).)

Represented the City of Oakland in the wrongful termination case brought by the former police chief, who alleged retaliation and sought over \$3 million in damages; after two years of litigation, the jury awarded her only the severance originally offered by the City at the time of her termination. (*Kirkpatrick v. City of Oakland* (3:20-cv-05843-JSC (N.D. Cal.).)

Lead counsel for the City of Lafayette in CEQA challenge to approved housing development, resulting in published opinion at *Save Lafayette v. City of Lafayette*, 85 Cal.App.5th 842 (2022) (argued).

Represented the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) in CEQA litigation involving the Santa Susana Field Laboratory cleanup; successfully defended against a *Save Tara* challenge to a settlement agreement through trial, securing final judgment in DTSC's favor.

Advised and defended companies facing arbitration demands from single and multiple claimants.

Successfully defended developer of landmark mixed-use project approved under SB 35.

Prevailed in an appeal of a jurisdictional order under the Class Action Fairness Act, resulting in published opinion. See *Ehrman v. Cox Communications Inc.*, 932 F.3d 1223 (9th Cir. 2019) (argued).

Secured a complete defense verdict in an eight-day trial concerning enforceability of buyout agreement for the minority owner of a privately held company, affirmed on appeal at *Another Planet Entertainment LLC v. Giraud* (Cal. Ct. App., May 4, 2021, No. A158544).

Achieved a seven-figure verdict in a five-day breach-of-contract trial on behalf of former CEO of a major construction firm.

Obtained a favorable defense verdict in a federal jury trial in a class action against a video satellite broadcaster related to an interruption in services.

Successfully defended Rule 12(b)(6) dismissal of consumer class action complaint before the Second Circuit. See *Heskiaoff v. Sling Media, Inc.*, No. 17-1094-cv, 2017 WL 5632078 (2d Cir. Nov. 22, 2017).

Obtained complete victory in interlocutory appeal before the Eighth Circuit, resulting in published opinion. See *Stokes v. DISH Network, L.L.C.*, 838 F.3d 948 (8th Cir. 2016).

Honors & Awards

Benchmark Litigation recognized Ian as a Future Star in 2025 and included him on its 40 & Under List in 2018, 2019, and 2023 for general commercial practice. The Justice and Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco has frequently recognized Ian for outstanding pro bono service.

Professional Activities

Ian is a member of the State Bars of California and Illinois and the Bar Association of San Francisco. From 2015-2018, he was a member of the Edward J. McFetridge American Inn of Court.

Publications & Speaking Engagements

- Ian's recent publications include:
 - ["Supreme Court Impact Fee Decision Creates Opportunities for Developers and Property Owners"](#) (June 2024)
 - ["City of Lafayette, Represented by Coblenz Patch Duffy & Bass, Prevails in Litigation Clarifying Relationship Between Housing Accountability Act and Permit Streamlining Act"](#) (May 2023)
 - ["Calif. Housing Approval Law Is A Strong Tool For Developers,"](#) Law360 (July 2020)
 - ["Court Rulings Demonstrate SB 35's Potential To Obtain Swift, Certain Approval Of Housing Developments"](#) (May 2020)

Education

- J.D., Northwestern University School of Law (2008)
- B.A., University of Michigan (2004)
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