Hollingsworth LLP
Litigation Matters.®

William J. Cople

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A fierce trial lawyer who serves as lead counsel for major U.S. and international clients in critical trials involving complex litigation nationwide in federal and state courts, as well as in government investigations and corporate internal investigations, Bill Cople is known for his intense focus and "all business all the time" approach. Clients and their cases command his full attention as a relentless litigator and aggressive trial lawyer. He is prepared to deal with every issue, expected or unexpected, working with an experienced strike team in the firm. Bill served on active duty as an Army officer and as a military and federal prosecutor, and spent decades as a lacrosse player and coach, as well as an NCAA Division III football player. This all contributes to his fine-tuned attention to every detail while remaining focused on what matters most for the client and the case. Those who know Bill, appreciate the unique aspects he brings to the client relationship. He quickly understands clients' issues and challenges, getting to the heart of the matter to secure their goals. Bill places paramount importance on leadership and every trial team member working together to obtain successful jury verdicts and judgments for the firm's clients.

With more than three decades of experience, Bill represents government contractors, construction and engineering companies, pharmaceutical and medical device firms, manufacturers and financial institutions in complex litigation involving commercial and government contracts, product liability, fraud, toxic torts and class actions. As lead counsel he has obtained jury verdicts and judgments in trials for clients in many industries.

In litigation and international arbitration, Bill handles contract disputes and claims concerning engineering and construction, logistics, environmental remediation, and defense contracting. This includes bid protests, defective pricing, equitable adjustment and contract claims, and suspension and debarment. Bill handles False Claims Act and Anti-Kickback litigation and investigations as well as Congressional investigations. He likewise defends companies in grand jury matters and federal criminal investigations and prosecutions.

Bill represents construction and engineering firms in all industry sectors including general contractors, architect-engineers and engineering, procurement and construction contractors. He handles every aspect of major projects including contract negotiation, disputes and claims involving chemical plants, industrial process facilities, transportation infrastructure and U.S. Embassy projects abroad. He has represented clients on projects in the U.S., South America, Middle East, Europe and Southeast Asia and served as lead counsel in successful trials and litigation involving complex large scale projects.

In conducting internal investigations, Bill advises clients' senior management and Boards of Directors on corporate governance and compliance, the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, antitrust and securities law, economic sanctions and financial asset controls. He also represents U.S. and international companies in corporate acquisitions requiring national security review by the Committee for Foreign Investment in the U.S., military export licenses under the International Traffic in Arms Regulation and security clearances for classified contracts and Defense Security and Counterintelligence Agency approvals.

With a background as a U.S. Army officer serving on active duty in assignments that included service as special counsel in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and Chief Trial Counsel for the Headquarters, Army Engineer Center and Engineer Battalion at Fort Belvoir, Bill does not mince his words. Rather, he gets to the point quickly and speaks truth even when it is hard to say or for the client to hear but always in the best interest of the client and case. He brought this approach in serving pro bono for more than a decade as General Counsel and Board Member for the Boy Scouts of America in the National Capital Area. With a strong passion for leadership, Bill also lectures industry and government officials on government procurement, construction and international contracting, and speaks on False Claims Act litigation and government investigations and prosecutions.

Services

Aerospace Defense
Amicus
Business Interruption & Commercial Disputes
Class Action Defense
Complex Litigation
Defense & Government Contracting
Engineering & Construction
Federal Claims
Financial Institutions
Government Investigations, White Collar & Civil Defense
Pharmaceutical & Medical Device
Products Liability & Toxic Torts
Risk Mitigation & Management

Education

Washington and Lee University (B.A., 1977)

St. John's University, School of Law (J.D., 1980)
U.S. Naval War College (M.A., 1985, National Security & Strategic Studies)
Georgetown Law (LL.M., 1986, International & Comparative Law)

Admissions

District of Columbia
New York
Virginia
United States Supreme Court
United States Courts of Appeals for the Fourth, Sixth, and Eleventh Circuits
United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit
United States District Courts for the District of Columbia, District of Maryland, Eastern and Southern Districts of New York, Northern District of Texas, and Eastern District of Virginia
United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces
United States Court of Federal Claims
United States Court of International Trade

Accolades

- *Chambers USA*
  - "William Cople is a lead partner. It was an extremely complex case. He's super thorough and on top of the details in a massive complex case. He really runs a complex litigation well. He's a dogged cross-examiner too." — Client
  - "Bill Cople and Steve Klein are stunningly smart. They are true litigation experts. In addition, they are strategic and help the client manage risk effectively." — Client
  - "William Cople's client service, general level of service, level of sophistication, and commercial vision [are] very strong. William is an excellent lawyer with a comprehensive understanding of commercial litigation." — Client
  - "Bill and the team do a great job." — Client
  - "William Cople is strategic and a very strong leader for the team." — Third Party
  - "He is strategically very, very good and good to work with. He is willing to receive feedback from others. He is always looking to determine what the [other] party thinks." — Third Party

- *Best Lawyers in America,* Litigation-Construction, 2019-2026
- *Super Lawyers*, Government Contracts, 2014, 2017-2026
- 2023 Annual M&A Advisor Awards Winner "Professional Services Deal of the Year", Deal Team Co-Lead Counsel

Memberships

- National Defense Industrial Association, Legal Committee
- ABA Litigation Section, Class Actions and Derivative Suits Committee, Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Subcommittee, Co-Chairman

- Defense Research Institute, Government Enforcement & Compliance Committee
- ABA Forum on Construction Law
- *St. John's Law Review*, Editor