



James F. Kuhne, Jr.

PARTNER

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RELATED SERVICES

- Maritime
- Real Estate
- Casualty
- Product Liability
- Securities

OFFICES

- Walnut Creek
- Los Angeles

OVERVIEW

James F. Kuhne, Jr. is a Partner in the Los Angeles office of GRSM. His practice focuses on delivering civil litigation, emergency casualty response and corporate advisory services to clients in the maritime and transportation industries. He has over a decade of success in all aspects of litigation and pre-litigation matters for industry-leading shipowners, tug and barge operators, marine terminal operators, vessel charterers and their underwriters, with particular emphasis on personal injury defense, emergency casualty response, pollution response, and business litigation.

Twice selected as a *Super Lawyers* “Rising Star” in transportation/maritime and civil litigation defense, James provides national and international leaders in the maritime industry with onboard and shoreside emergency and casualty claim response, including investigation and strategic management of personal injury incidents, fatalities, marine oil spills and cargo claims, as well as the defense of various personal

injury, wrongful death and casualty-related claims brought under the Jones Act, the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, OPA '90, the Supplemental Rules for Admiralty, and the general maritime law.

James also has extensive real estate transactional and litigation experience. Before attending law school, James worked as a commercial real estate agent for a large multinational real estate firm, where he and his team negotiated and marketed commercial real estate transactions on behalf of institutional owners, users and developers of industrial property throughout Orange and Los Angeles Counties. As an attorney, he uses his experience in real estate development, acquisition and underwriting, property management, sales (both user and investor) and leasing to assist owners, users, managers and brokers of commercial real estate to successfully bring their "deals" to conclusion and to navigate the day-to-day complexities of their real estate business. James has also used his litigation and real estate experience to successfully defend numerous securities broker-dealers, their officers, and registered representatives in both state court and FINRA arbitration against claims involving TICs, REITs, and other securitized real estate investments.

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of major domestic shipping line in maritime personal injury claim brought by Jones Act seaman
- Successfully defend multi-national shipowner, equipment owners, and marine terminal operator against wrongful death and survival claims brought by surviving wife and daughters of freeway trucking fatality
- Emergency response to and investigation of marine oil spill during bunkering operations on behalf of leading national tug and barge company
- Defend client, interview vessel's officers and crew, and liaise with United States Coast Guard investigators on behalf of shipowner and Club in connection with incident and subsequent litigation involving crewmember lost at sea in the North Pacific
- Negotiate "six figure" settlement for shipowner at less than 50% of client's anticipated liability reserve
- Manage pre-litigation investigation and subsequent discovery during litigation to develop clear evidence of injured crew member's malingering, resulting in favorable settlement for vessel owner and its Club
- Advise Charterer and Club with respect to vessel attachment arising from charter party dispute
- Defend marine terminal operators and shipowners against mesothelioma claim brought by terminally ill longshoreman
- Represent property ownership in \$7 million sale of prestigious bayfront commercial real estate to prominent regional developer
- Form Special Purpose Entity and negotiate lease terms for successful Los Angeles restaurant's expansion into new Class A development

PRESENTATIONS

- *The Cruise Passenger Protection Act, Sea Venture*, Issue No. 28, Steamship Insurance Management Services Limited, November 2017, at 64
- *Maintaining Privilege During a Casualty Investigation*, Marine Underwriters of Southern California, (Mar. 23, 2017)

CREDENTIALS

Admissions

- California
- 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals
- U.S. District Court, Central, Northern, Eastern and Southern districts of California

Memberships

- Maritime Law Association

Community Involvement

- Downtown Long Beach Alliance, Board of Directors and Past Chair – Economic Development Committee

Education

- J.D., *with distinction*, University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, 2007
 - Dean's List for three years
 - Member, Roger J. Traynor Honor Society
 - Voted Best Advocate at the 2006 National Ethics Mock Trial Competition
 - Associate Comment Editor, *Pacific McGeorge Global Business & Development Law Journal*
- B.A., Political Science, University of Connecticut, 1994

Honors

- Selected as a *Super Lawyers* "Rising Star" for transportation/maritime and civil litigation defense
- *Best Lawyers in America*® distinction in Admiralty and Maritime Law (2023-2025)