

Claims Team



Our staff is a unique group of professionals with over 120 years of combined experience in the fields of medicine, law and insurance. We understand that the unique characteristics of professional liability claims (i.e., more complex facts; more complex laws; more complex insurance coverage issues) require a more experienced, more knowledgeable and a more capable claims examiner. We also have a proven track record in providing litigation and claims management services to risk retention groups, physician purchasing groups, reinsurers and insurers. All team members are licensed adjusters and are skilled negotiators with over \$600 million in resolutions.



Jean Clark Bates, RN, BSN, MPPM
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, CLAIMS

Jean Bates is an experienced medical malpractice claims manager and negotiator, particularly involving behavioral healthcare litigation. She joined PRMS in 1989 and is currently directing and overseeing the Claims Department while still maintaining an active role in adjusting complex malpractice cases. Ms. Bates has over twenty years of experience in healthcare liability insurance, investigating and managing malpractice claims for a broad range of specialties including emergency medicine, internal medicine, orthopedics, obstetrics/gynecology and general surgery. She brought with her clinical experience in the neurosurgery intensive care unit of a university hospital and the emergency department of a large county facility. She is a member of the Professional Liability Underwriting Society. Ms. Bates received her nursing degree from the University of Alabama and her Master of Arts in Public and Private Management from Birmingham Southern College.

Denny Rodriguez, JD
VICE PRESIDENT, CLAIMS

Denny Rodriguez joined PRMS in July 1999. He graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Law School and received his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. His experience includes obstetrical and gynecological malpractice litigation as well as other areas of malpractice and civil litigation. In addition to his extensive malpractice and negotiation experience, Mr. Rodriguez's significant expertise with computer systems allows him to serve as a liaison with the PRMS Systems Department. He is also a member of the Maryland State Bar Association.



Scott E. Alkire, JD, RPLU
SENIOR LITIGATION SPECIALIST

Scott Alkire joined PRMS in October 2005. Prior to joining the company he was a claims specialist for State Farm Insurance Company. He has nearly 20 years of experience in the insurance industry and has also practiced law, representing clients in a variety of general practice matters. Mr. Alkire received his undergraduate degree from the University of Southern California and his law degree from The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law. He is admitted to practice in Maryland. In addition, Mr. Alkire earned his Registered Professional Liability Underwriter (RPLU) designation, the professional designation exclusively for people in the professional liability industry, in 2008.





Christine Gray-Knight, JD, CPCU
SENIOR LITIGATION SPECIALIST

Christine Gray-Knight joined PRMS in February 2005 with more than 20 years of experience in law and insurance. Her background includes adjusting property, casualty, and professional liability claims at Frontier Adjusters, Freestate Adjusters, and State Farm Insurance Company. Ms. Gray-Knight received her undergraduate degree from the University of Maryland and her law degree from Howard University School of Law. She is admitted to practice in the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania.

David Torrans, II
SENIOR LITIGATION SPECIALIST

David Torrans joined PRMS in April 1988 and has more than 35 years of experience in the insurance industry. He began his career as a multi-line adjuster and investigator with Crawford & Company managing claim files and investigations for hundreds of insurance companies and self-insured entities. At PRMS he is responsible for the investigation, evaluation and resolution of professional liability claims nationwide. Mr. Torrans has extensive experience managing defense and coverage counsel and has testified numerous times as a corporate representative in recovery, subrogation, contribution and declaratory judgment litigation. As a Senior Litigation Specialist, Mr. Torrans uses his extensive experience in negotiations to assist other examiners in complex settlement negotiation, particularly involving cases reserved at \$500,000 or more. Mr. Torrans received his undergraduate degree in pre-law from Pennsylvania State University.



Harland Westgate, JD, NREMT
LITIGATION SPECIALIST

Harland Westgate transferred to our Claims Department from our Risk Management Department in August 2010, where he had served as a Risk Manager since May 2008. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Delaware and his law degree from The George Washington University Law School. He is admitted to practice in the District of Columbia. In addition, he has been a licensed Emergency Medical Technician since 2001.

Kathryn E. Heagerty, BSN, JD
LITIGATION SPECIALIST

Kathryn Heagerty transferred to our Claims Department from our Risk Management Department in January 2014, where she had served as a Risk Manager since October 2010. Prior to joining PRMS, Ms. Heagerty assisted in the representation of plaintiffs and health care providers in medical malpractice actions. She graduated, cum laude, from Duke University with a BSN. She has held clinical and administrative nursing positions. Ms. Heagerty received her JD, cum laude, from Stetson University College of Law, also earning a Certificate of Concentration in Health Law. She serves on the American Health Lawyers Association's Behavioral Health Task Force as co-chair of its risk management work group. She is admitted to practice in Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Florida (inactive).



Justin E. Pruett, JD
LITIGATION SPECIALIST

Justin Pruett joined the PRMS claims team in 2015 as a Litigation Specialist where he is responsible for investigating professional and general liability claims nationwide. With eight years of experience working in law, insurance and the federal government, he has provided complex legal analysis of lawsuits and claims related to insurance policies and coverage issues, insurance defense litigation, claims examination, discovery litigation consulting, management of eDiscovery platforms (i.e. Relativity and Concordance), legal evaluation of bodily injury claims, and analysis of corporate insurance business models. Mr. Pruett graduated cum laude from Bridgewater College and received his JD from Roger Williams University.