UNRUH TURNER BURKE & FREES

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

# Orphans' Court & Estate Litigation

The Orphans' Court & Estate Litigation practice at Unruh Turner Burke & Frees represents both corporate and individual clients in a wide array of disputes before the Register of Wills and Orphans' Court throughout Pennsylvania. Our clients regularly include executors, trustees, guardians, beneficiaries, and agents under powers of attorney, each requiring careful legal representation in sensitive and complex matters.

Our experienced Orphans' Court litigators assist with matters involving the interpretation and modification of trusts and wills, the management and distribution of estate and trust assets, surcharge claims, trust modification and *cy pres* proceedings, guardianships, will contests, breach of fiduciary duty actions, and disputes over fees and commissions. We routinely represent individuals and corporate clients, such as health care facilities, hospitals, and other providers, in petitioning for guardianship of incapacitated adults, and are regularly appointed by the Chester County Orphans' Court to represent alleged incapacitated people in guardianship proceedings. In addition, our capable Orphans' Court litigators routinely handle a wide variety of complex and varied estate matters, such as accounting actions and fiduciary disagreements.

## Understanding Orphans' Court

Orphans' Court is a specialized division of each county's Court of Common Pleas. As a court of equity, the Orphans' Court handles a variety of matters related to decedent estates, trusts, wills, and guardianships. Orphans' Court gets its name as it was historically tasked with protecting widows and orphans, but its modern role today focuses primarily on matters involving trusts, estates, guardianships, and ensuring that fiduciaries fulfill their legal responsibilities.

## Types of Orphans' Court Matters We Handle

- Will and Trust Contests
- Estate Administration Disputes
- Fiduciary Litigation
- Trustee or Executor Removal
- Guardianships of Incapacitated Adults
- Disputes involving Powers of Attorney
- Ejectment Actions to Remove Individuals from Estate Property

- Fee and Commission Disputes
- Creditor Claims Against Estates

## Meet Our Orphans' Court Litigation Team

James C. Dalton
Lauren A. Nehra

## Why Work with Unruh Turner Burke & Frees?

At Unruh Turner Burke & Frees, we leverage our significant experience to skillfully handle intricate and often emotional Orphans' Court and estate litigation matters, whether representing petitioners seeking relief or respondents defending their actions against claims. Our comprehensive team is compassionate, responsive, and well-versed in all aspects of estate and trust litigation, including actions for accountings, guardianships, will contests, and fiduciary litigation. When appropriate, we strive to resolve estate and trust disputes through informal settlements or agreements, allowing for a more cost-effective solution and for all involved to move on. When that is not possible however, we work hard to represent our clients' interests and advocate for our clients before the Register of Wills or the Orphans' Court.

In cases requiring broader legal experience, we collaborate with other practice areas within the firm, including our Elder Law Solutions ®, Trust and Estate Administration, and Trust, Estate & Wealth Preservation teams to deliver a tailored, multidisciplinary approach that aligns with your specific needs. This integrated strategy allows us to offer clients the highest quality legal representation, ensuring the best possible outcome even in the most complicated situations.

## Schedule a Consultation

The skilled Orphans' Court litigators at Unruh Turner Burke & Frees are experienced in representing trustees, beneficiaries, personal representatives, guardians, and other parties in complex trust, estate, and guardianship matters. With a strategic and informed approach, we work to protect your rights and interests throughout every step of the process, while working to find an effective and efficient solution to your case.

Contact us today to schedule a consultation and discover how we can help you navigate the intricacies of your Orphans' Court or estate matter.