harman claytor corrigan wellman
THE CIVIL LITIGATION FIRM

Leslie A. Winneberger

Partner | Richmond

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Leslie A. Winneberger is a seasoned civil-defense litigator, specializing in representing law enforcement agencies, local governments, correctional facilities, and faith-based institutions in sensitive, high-stakes matters. With extensive experience in defending complex litigation involving sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse claims, Leslie provides strategic counsel and effective defense while safeguarding the rights of her clients.

In addition to her litigation practice, Leslie regularly advises faith-based institutions and private religious schools on day-to-day operational challenges. Her practice also covers constitutional rights, internal investigations, and administrative matters, with a proven record of securing favorable outcomes across a range of industries.

Assistant: Renee Hausenflock
804.762.8019, rhausenflock@hccw.com

Paralegal: Morgan Shervington
804.762.8033, mshervington@hccw.com

Professional Activities & Honors

- Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys
- Defense Research Institute
- Richmond Bar Association
- Virginia Bar Association
- Virginia Business Legal Elite (2019 – 2025)
    - Administrative/Government/Legislative
    - Civil Litigation
- Best Lawyers in America (2024 – 2026)
    - Litigation – Municipal
- Local Government Attorneys of Virginia

Representative Experience

- Secured a landmark Virginia Supreme Court ruling protecting a church client's statutory time-bar rights under the First Amendment and state law.
- Successfully defended religious entities under the ministerial-exception and church-autonomy doctrines.
- Represented correctional facilities and their staff in various litigation and administrative matters, including inmate constitutional claims, in-custody deaths, and other serious incidents.
- Defended clients in sensitive sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse cases, achieving favorable outcomes while minimizing reputational risk and ensuring compliance with regulatory and legal standards.

The cases referenced above do not represent the lawyer's entire record. Each case must be evaluated on its own facts. The outcome of a particular case cannot be based on past results.

Education

- University of Virginia, B.A. (1996)
- College of William & Mary School of Law, J.D. (1999)

Bar & Court Admissions

- Virginia State Bar
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia
- United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia
- United States Supreme Court