

Robert A. Zimmerman

Cleveland
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Overview

As a civil trial and appellate lawyer with over 30 years' experience, Rob has litigated cases involving employment discrimination, wrongful discharge, unfair competition, defamation, breach of contract, real estate, landlord-tenant, zoning, land use, eminent domain, constitutional rights, election law, campaign finance, trusts, administrative, business and commercial law.

He has achieved excellent results for his clients in jury and bench trials, motion practice, administrative hearings, arbitrations, mediations and appeals.

He practices in state of Ohio courts and in federal courts in Ohio and around the country.

Rob has been recognized as one of the Top 100 Lawyers in the state of Ohio and Top 50 Lawyers in Cleveland by Ohio Super Lawyers. Rob is listed in Best Lawyers in the area of government relations practice, one of the few Cleveland-area lawyers so recognized.

He is a frequent lecturer on various legal topics and his opinions are often solicited by the print and broadcast media.

Rob has deep expertise as a lawyer on matters of public concern. He has litigated notable cases on behalf of all levels of Ohio government, impacting law and policy in the process.

Rob has worked in and around Ohio politics for 40 years and served on his city council for 16 years. He is deeply knowledgeable about state and local government from a personal and legal perspective and has relationships with public officials from the courthouse to the statehouse and city halls all around the state. Governmental entities, elected leaders, candidates and companies rely upon Rob for his legal advice, advocacy and good judgment.

Representative Matters

- Resolved longstanding criminal proceeding against senior living facility through combination of legal and governmental advocacy.
- Resolved permitting dispute on behalf country's only African American-owned circus so the show could go on.
- Represented manufacturer seeking to build factory in multiple townships as part of mega site type project. Successfully obtained township rezoning through statutory process so project can proceed.
- Advised and raised funds for multiple successful candidates for legislative and judicial office.
- Drafted legislation for Ohio municipality to revise compensation structure for mayor, city council and department directors.
- As special counsel hired by the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor, successfully defended a Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court Judge in disqualification proceedings filed by a convicted double murderer in the Ohio Supreme Court. The Supreme Court dismissed the proceedings and the judge remains on the case.
- Represented Joseph's and Mary's Home, a ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health system in Cleveland, in the Cuyahoga County Council budgeting process. Joseph's and Mary's Home provides housing for those with serious medical conditions who would otherwise not have a place to live after hospital discharge. Cuyahoga County approved a significant appropriation for the 2024-2025 budget period to support Joseph's and Mary's Home, thus helping to protect a most vulnerable population.
- Represented OneOhio Recovery Foundation in cases before the Ohio Supreme Court and the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas concerning the Ohio Public Records Act and Ohio Open Meetings Act ("Acts"). The cases concluded on terms favorable to OneOhio and led to a change in law to clarify that the Acts do not apply to OneOhio. OneOhio is proceeding with its important work in an open and transparent manner to assure the monies are distributed to those who need them most.

Credentials

EDUCATION

- The Ohio State University, Moritz College of Law, 1991, J.D.
  - Chief Justice of University Court
- The Ohio State University, 1988, *cum laude*
  - with University Honors

BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

- Ohio
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan

Memberships

- Executive Committee Member, Eighth District Judicial Conference
- Co-Chair, National Council, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law
- Board Secretary, Friendship Circle (special needs children service organization)
- Charter Class Member, Cleveland Bridge Builders
- Member, City Club of Cleveland
- Member, Board of Trustees of Park Synagogue
- Leadership Cleveland Class of 2023
- Member, Shaker Heights City Council, 2006-2021
- Former Member, Ohio Democratic Party Executive Committee
- Member, Cuyahoga County Democratic Party Central and Executive Committees
- Director of Finance, Cuyahoga County Democratic Party
- Delegate to 2000 Democratic National Convention on behalf of Vice President Al Gore
- Past Board Member of Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Anti-Defamation League (Civil Rights Committee Chair), American Jewish Committee, Cleveland Jewish News and Menorah Park Center for Senior Living
- Member, Ohio State Bar Association
- Member, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association

Awards & Recognition

- Life Member, Eighth District Judicial Conference

- Listed, *The Best Lawyers in America®,* Employment Law - Management; Government Relations Practice; Litigation – Labor and Employment, 2010-2027
- Listed, Ohio Super Lawyers, General Litigation, 2004-2005, 2010-2026
- 2023 Outstanding Faculty Award, National Business Institute (NBI)
- Named, Top 100 Lawyers by Ohio Super Lawyers, 2016
- Listed, "2014 Top 50 Lawyers Cleveland," Ohio Super Lawyers

News & Insights

- 126 Benesch Attorneys Recognized in 2027 Best Lawyers® Rankings
  August 20, 2026 | Press Releases
- 48 Benesch Attorneys Selected to 2026 Ohio Super Lawyers and Rising Stars
  January 27, 2026 | Press Releases
- Why Ohio's Congressional Redistricting is Still in the Headlines
  September 26, 2025 | Client Alerts & Insights
- 129 Benesch Attorneys Recognized in 2026 Best Lawyers® Rankings
  August 21, 2025 | Press Releases
- Trump-Inspired One Big Beautiful Bill Passes U.S. House
  May 27, 2025 | Client Alerts & Insights
- 2024 Government Relations Practice Group Year in Review
  February 28, 2025 | Client Alerts & Insights
- Navigating the Impact of the Trump Administration's Federal Funding Freeze
  January 30, 2025 | Client Alerts & Insights
- Ohio's 2024 Lame Duck Session: Highlights and Missed Opportunities
  January 3, 2025 | Client Alerts & Insights
- 49 Benesch Attorneys Selected to 2025 Ohio Super Lawyers and Rising Stars
  December 17, 2024 | Press Releases
- Ohio General Assembly Tackles Lame Duck Session and Selects New Leaders for the Next
  November 26, 2024 | Client Alerts & Insights

Speaking & Events

PAST EVENTS

- America at the Midpoint - Business, Law & Policy | Robert A. Zimmerman
  October 28, 2026 | Speaking Engagement

- Tales and Tips from the Trenches-Dealing with Ethically Questionable Tactics | Joseph N. Gross, Robert A. Zimmerman
  April 24, 2026 | Speaking Engagement
- Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendments: Proving Necessary Criteria and Ethics in Zoning and Land Use Law | Robert A. Zimmerman
  August 13, 2025 | Speaking Engagement
- Key Tax Changes You Need to Know | Robert A. Zimmerman
  July 11, 2025 | Speaking Engagement
- Public Records: Maintaining and Responding to Requests | Robert A. Zimmerman
  May 30, 2025 | Speaking Engagement