

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company

(In-House Defense Counsel through Lawson & Shelton, PLLC)

Location: Oklahoma | Experience: 10+ years preferred

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company is seeking an experienced Insurance Defense Attorney to join its in-house legal team, practicing through Lawson & Shelton, PLLC. This position offers a rare opportunity to handle meaningful defense work in a stable, supportive environment with a strong emphasis on work-life balance and family priorities. The ideal candidate is a seasoned litigator who thrives working independently, exercises sound professional judgment without the need for close supervision, and is capable of managing a full caseload of insurance defense matters from inception through resolution.

Why This Position Stands Out

1. No billable hour requirements
2. Salary-based compensation
3. Typical 40–45 hour workweek
4. Strong emphasis on family balance and quality of life
5. Comprehensive corporate benefits package, including health insurance and access to an on-site physician for employees and their families
6. Collegial, professional work environment
7. Exceptional employee retention — many Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company employees have been with the company for more than 20 years

Position Overview

The Insurance Defense Attorney will be responsible for independently managing all phases of civil litigation on behalf of Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company (“OFBMIC”) and its insureds. This is a hands-on litigation role requiring an attorney who can take ownership of a file from the moment it is assigned through final resolution — whether by settlement, dispositive motion, or trial verdict — with minimal oversight and maximum professional accountability.

The attorney will work closely with OFBMIC claims professionals, adjusters, and internal stakeholders, providing proactive legal guidance while maintaining a practical, resolution-focused approach tailored to the facts and exposure of each matter. Strong communication, organizational skills, and the ability to manage a diverse and active docket are essential.

Detailed Duties — File Handling from Start to Finish

A. File Opening and Initial Case Assessment

8. Review all incoming file materials upon assignment, including the complaint, policy documents, claims file, accident reports, photographs, witness statements, and any prior correspondence.

9. Evaluate the nature and value of the plaintiff's claims, assess potential exposure, and establish a preliminary litigation strategy in consultation with the assigned claims professional.
10. Prepare and transmit a detailed initial case evaluation letter to the claims handler within required timeframes, identifying key facts, legal issues, litigation risks, and preliminary recommendations.
11. Identify and calendar all applicable deadlines, including the answer deadline, discovery cutoffs, dispositive motion deadlines, pretrial conference dates, and trial settings.

B. Pleadings and Early Litigation

12. Draft, review, and file responsive pleadings, including answers, affirmative defenses, counterclaims, and crossclaims as warranted by the facts and applicable law.
13. Evaluate the complaint for facial deficiencies and file appropriate motions to dismiss or motions for more definite statement where supported.
14. Identify and assert all applicable affirmative defenses, including comparative fault, statute of limitations, failure to mitigate, lack of causation, and policy exclusions.
15. Remove cases to federal court when diversity jurisdiction and strategic considerations support removal.
16. Coordinate early investigative efforts, including retention of necessary experts, scene inspections, vehicle inspections, and preservation of relevant evidence.

C. Discovery — Written and Oral

17. Independently develop and execute a comprehensive discovery plan tailored to the specific facts and legal theories at issue in each case.
18. Draft and serve interrogatories, requests for production, and requests for admission directed to plaintiffs and, where appropriate, third parties and co-defendants.
19. Review, analyze, and respond to all discovery propounded by opposing counsel, asserting appropriate objections and ensuring responses are complete, accurate, and timely.
20. Conduct and defend depositions of plaintiffs, defendants, eyewitnesses, treating physicians, first responders, corporate representatives, and expert witnesses.
21. Manage electronic discovery obligations, including the identification, collection, and production of relevant documents and electronically stored information (ESI) in compliance with applicable rules and court orders.
22. Pursue and respond to discovery disputes, including filing and defending motions to compel, motions for protective orders, and motions to quash subpoenas as necessary.
23. Subpoena and obtain relevant records, including medical records, employment records, prior claims history, and other documentation necessary to evaluate damages and liability.

D. Expert Witnesses and Case Development

24. Identify, retain, and coordinate with defense experts including accident reconstructionists, biomechanical engineers, medical experts, vocational rehabilitation specialists, economists, and other technical consultants as required by the case.

25. Work collaboratively with retained experts to develop opinions that support the defense theory, providing relevant case materials, coordinating site visits, and ensuring experts are properly prepared for deposition and trial testimony.
26. Evaluate plaintiff's expert disclosures and retained opinions; identify weaknesses and develop strategies to challenge or exclude opposing experts through Daubert or Kumho motions.
27. Maintain ongoing case evaluations and update reserve recommendations to the claims team as discovery develops and new information becomes available.

E. Dispositive Motions and Pretrial Practice

28. Identify opportunities for early case resolution through motions to dismiss, motions for summary judgment, or motions for partial summary judgment, and pursue those avenues aggressively where the facts and law support them.
29. Draft and argue dispositive motions independently, including the preparation of supporting briefs, affidavits, exhibits, and statement of undisputed material facts.
30. Respond to motions for summary judgment filed by co-parties or plaintiff's counsel with well-researched and persuasive opposition briefs.
31. Prepare and file pretrial motions in limine to exclude improper evidence, inflammatory testimony, undisclosed opinions, and other prejudicial material.
32. Prepare and submit pretrial orders, witness lists, exhibit lists, proposed jury instructions, and trial briefs in compliance with court requirements and deadlines.

F. Settlement Evaluation and Negotiation

33. Provide well-reasoned and objective settlement recommendations to the claims team, grounded in a thorough analysis of liability exposure, damages, venue, comparative fault, and litigation risk.
34. Actively participate in mediation, settlement conferences, and informal settlement negotiations, advocating effectively for OFBMIC and its insureds while working toward practical and cost-effective resolutions.
35. Advise the claims team on the implications of settlement demands, policy limits considerations, bad faith exposure, and excess exposure scenarios.
36. Update case evaluations and settlement recommendations at regular intervals throughout the life of the file as new information and developments arise.

G. Trial Preparation and Trial

37. Independently prepare cases for trial, including organizing the complete trial file, preparing direct and cross-examination outlines, developing opening statements and closing arguments, and finalizing exhibit notebooks.
38. Prepare and conduct witness preparation sessions with lay witnesses, corporate representatives, and expert witnesses to ensure compelling and credible trial testimony.
39. Select juries through voir dire, employing effective questioning techniques to identify and eliminate jurors with adverse biases or tendencies.

40. Try cases to verdict before juries and judges in both state and federal courts throughout Oklahoma, serving as the primary advocate for OFBMIC's insureds throughout all phases of trial.
41. Handle all post-trial matters, including motions for new trial, motions for judgment notwithstanding the verdict, and coordination of appellate counsel as needed.

H. File Closure and Post-Litigation Duties

42. Prepare and transmit closing reports to the claims team upon resolution of each matter, summarizing the outcome, key developments, and any lessons learned.
43. Assist with the preparation and execution of settlement agreements, releases, and consent judgments, ensuring all documents properly protect OFBMIC's interests and those of its insureds.
44. Coordinate the satisfaction and payment of judgments and liens, including hospital liens, Medicare/Medicaid subrogation interests, and workers' compensation liens.
45. Identify and communicate potential subrogation opportunities to the claims team upon case closure.

I. Claims Collaboration and Reporting

46. Communicate proactively and regularly with assigned claims professionals, providing timely status reports, litigation updates, and strategic recommendations throughout the life of each file.
47. Respond promptly to inquiries from claims handlers, supervisors, and OFBMIC management regarding case status, strategy, and developments.
48. Identify and flag coverage questions, bad faith risks, excess exposure scenarios, and other sensitive issues requiring elevated attention in a timely manner.
49. Participate in periodic file reviews and litigation audits conducted by OFBMIC to evaluate case strategy, status, and reserve adequacy.

Independent Practice Expectations

This position is designed for a self-directed legal professional who does not require close supervision or daily guidance. The successful candidate will be expected to:

50. Independently manage a full and active litigation docket across multiple courts and venues throughout Oklahoma with minimal administrative support.
51. Exercise sound professional judgment in making day-to-day litigation decisions, including strategy choices, deposition scheduling, motion practice, and settlement recommendations.
52. Proactively identify issues, develop solutions, and communicate with the claims team — initiating contact when circumstances warrant rather than waiting to be prompted.
53. Maintain impeccable organization and docket control to ensure no deadlines are missed and all files are managed efficiently and in compliance with court rules.

54. Demonstrate a high degree of professional accountability, following through on commitments to clients, courts, and colleagues without the need for reminders or follow-up.

Qualifications

55. Juris Doctor (JD) from an accredited law school
56. Licensed and in good standing with the Oklahoma Bar Association
57. 10+ years of insurance defense and/or civil litigation experience, with substantial first-chair trial experience preferred
58. Demonstrated ability to manage a large, diverse caseload independently from file opening through final resolution
59. Experience handling automobile liability, premises liability, general liability, uninsured/underinsured motorist, and related insurance defense matters
60. Proficiency in Oklahoma state court practice and familiarity with federal court practice in the Western, Northern, and Eastern Districts of Oklahoma
61. Strong legal research, writing, and oral advocacy skills
62. Excellent organizational and time management abilities
63. Commitment to the highest ethical and professional standards
64. Ability to work collaboratively with claims professionals and internal stakeholders while maintaining independent judgment and initiative

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or protected veteran status.