



## Edward R. Benjamin, Jr. Attorney

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### Bio

Edward Benjamin is an experienced trial attorney who focuses on civil rights litigation, with substantial experience representing municipal employees and police officers sued under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Ed also represents schools and municipalities in employment, sexual harassment, and violence cases. For three decades, Ed has served as defense counsel to a municipal self-insured risk pool comprising more than 400 Maine towns and cities.

Ed is also renowned for his constitutional rights experience. He defended the first case in the United States in which a plaintiff sought to apply the newly-enacted Americans with Disabilities Act to the mistaken arrest of a disabled person as a suspected drunk driver. He has successfully defended federal suits alleging the unconstitutional use of deadly force by police, including a case tried in May 2019 that was the first police deadly force case to be tried to a jury verdict in Maine in more than 30 years. Ed has helped to shape Maine's §1983 law and the Maine Tort Claims Act. He also is an experienced appellate lawyer, having defended dozens of appeals before the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court.

In recognition of his professionalism and expertise in municipal and civil rights law, Ed has spoken at conferences and events, has received numerous awards, and has frequently taught these topics at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.

Ed served for six years, including four overseas deployments, in the US Navy maintaining shipboard guided missile systems and was a First Class Petty Officer (E-6), the lead petty officer in charge of an 85-man

### Practice Areas

Employment & Labor  
Litigation  
Civil Rights Litigation  
Municipal Law

### Admissions

Maine  
Passamaquoddy Tribal Court  
U.S. Supreme Court  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the  
First Circuit  
U.S. District Court for the  
District of Maine

division on a guided missile cruiser.

In his free time, Ed studies the American Civil War – sparked by a visit to Gettysburg with his grandfather when Ed was seven – collecting artifacts and helping to preserve historic battlefields. He recently donated several hundred Civil War books to USM’s library. Ed is also a longtime beekeeper and enjoys gardening and woodworking.

## **Education**

University of Maine School of Law, J.D.

University of New Hampshire, B.A., *cum laude*

## **Recognition**

New England Super Lawyers, Civil Rights, State, Local & Municipal, Civil Litigation (2010, 2014-2021)

Martindale Hubbell, AV Preeminent

Maine Association of Police – President’s Recognition Award

Maine Association of Police – Civilian Recognition Award

Best Lawyers in America, Civil Rights Law 2016-2022

Best Lawyers in America, Municipal Law 2017-2022

## **Memberships**

Defense Research Institute

Cumberland County Bar Association  
*Member*

Maine State Bar Association  
*Member*

Maine Bar Foundation  
*Fellow*