

## Fifteen Vorys Attorneys Named 2017 Lawyers of the Year by Best Lawyers

### Related Attorneys

Nelson D. Cary  
 Philip F. Downey  
 Herbert A. Hedden  
 John J. Kulewicz  
 James J. McMonagle  
 Victor A. Walton, Jr.  
 Mark A. Watkins  
 Kristin L. Watt  
 John B. Weimer  
 James A. Wilson

### Related Services

Corporate and Business Organizations  
 Environmental  
 Finance  
 Franchising and Distribution  
 Intellectual Property  
 Labor and Employment  
 Litigation  
 Real Estate

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Fifteen Vorys attorneys have been named 2017 Lawyers of the Year by Best Lawyers. Each year, only a single lawyer in each specialty in each community is honored as the “Lawyer of the Year.” According to Best Lawyers, lawyers being honored as “Lawyer of the Year” have earned a high level of respect among other lawyers in the same communities and the same practice areas for their abilities, professionalism and integrity. The Vorys lawyers and their selections are listed below.

### Columbus

**Nelson D. Cary** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers’ Columbus Employment Law Management Lawyer of the Year. Cary is a partner and member of the labor and employment group. He represents management in a broad range of labor and employment matters, including counseling employers on compliance and defending employers in litigation.

**Russell M. Gertmenian** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers’ Columbus Corporate Compliance Lawyer of the Year. He serves as the firm’s managing partner. Gertmenian engages in the practice of general corporate and contract law, including mergers, acquisitions, divestitures and initial public offerings and acts as general counsel to a variety of public and private corporations.

**Herbert A. Hedden** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers’ Columbus Franchise Lawyer of the Year. Hedden is a partner and practices in the area of commercial law with a strong emphasis on franchising and distribution law. He represents franchisors, subfranchisors and master franchisees in planning the structure of franchise relationships and the initiation of new franchise programs.

**John J. Kulewicz** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers’ Columbus Appellate Lawyer of the Year. He is a partner and member of the litigation group as well as head of the firm’s appellate subgroup. Kulewicz focuses his practice on civil litigation and appeals including constitution, statutory, regulatory and common law issues.

**Kristin L. Watt** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers' Columbus Environmental Lawyer of the Year. Watt, a partner and chair of the environmental group, focuses her practice on environmental compliance and counseling, enforcement defense, environmental audits and permitting issues.

**John B. Weimer** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers' Columbus Equipment Finance Lawyer of the Year. Weimer is a partner and leader of the firm's finance group. He represents borrowers and lenders in all types of commercial finance transactions ranging from syndicated secured credit facilities, public notes offerings, securitization facilities and receivables purchase transactions.

**John P. Wellner** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers' Columbus Real Estate Lawyer of the Year. Wellner, partner and member of the finance, energy and real estate group focuses his practice in general real estate and real estate development. He has represented developers, ventures, owners, operators, borrowers and lenders on projects in Ohio and across the country.

**James A. Wilson** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers' Columbus Antitrust Lawyer of the Year. Wilson is a partner and member of the litigation group. He has litigated and tried a wide variety of antitrust and complex business matters over nearly thirty years, including class, injunctive and multidistrict actions, involving issues of price-fixing, tying arrangements, vertical restraints, and alleged monopolization.

#### Akron

**Philip F. Downey** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers' Akron Bet-the-Company Litigation Lawyer of the Year. Downey is a partner and member of the litigation group. His practice focuses on oil and gas litigation, toxic tort litigation and litigation in a variety of areas including financial institutions, bankruptcy, probate, product liability and general commercial liability.

**Mark A. Watkins** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers' Akron Patent Lawyer of the Year. He is a partner and member of the technology and intellectual property group. Watkins focuses on all facets of intellectual property protection, including patent, trademark, copyright, trade secrets and intellectual property litigation.

#### Cincinnati

**Victor A. Walton, Jr.** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers' Cincinnati Banking and Finance Litigation Lawyer of the Year. Walton, a partner and member of the litigation group, focuses on commercial litigation. He has experience defending government contractors and health care entities in proceedings brought under the False Claims Act as well as defending financial institutions.

#### Cleveland

**James M. McMonagle** has been named the 2017 Best Lawyers' Cleveland Mediation Lawyer of the Year. McMonagle is a partner and member of the corporate and litigation practice groups. He has been involved with the mediation and arbitration of complex cases throughout the United States, including tort business, securities and employment litigation.

**John Keller, Thomas Tarp**y and **Don Shuller**, retired partners in the Vorys Columbus and Cincinnati offices, were named as 2017 Best Lawyers Lawyer of the Year. Keller was named Best Lawyers' Columbus Oil and Gas Lawyer of the Year, Tarp was named Best Lawyers' Columbus Labor Law Management Lawyer of the Year and Shuller was named Best Lawyers' Cincinnati Real Estate Lawyer of the Year.

More than 100 Vorys attorneys were included on the 2017 *Best Lawyers in America*® List. [Click here](#) to see a full list of the firm's 2017 Best Lawyers.