



Fergal McGoldrick

Associate



Areas of Law: Media and Defamation, Privacy, Commercial Litigation and Dispute Resolution, Administrative & Public Law, Inquiries.

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Background

Fergal is an Associate in the Media/Commercial Litigation Team specialising in media, defamation and privacy, commercial litigation, and public and administrative law.

He regularly acts for leading national, regional, and local news groups in the defence of libel claims, privacy and data actions, and pre-publication injunction applications. He also acts for various corporates, business figures and professionals in protecting reputations and effecting reputational rights.

Outside defamation and privacy, he maintains a significant public law practice, acting for, amongst others, a large non-departmental public body charged with producing numerous sensitive decisions annually. He has also assisted in the preparation of various CEOs, senior civil servants, academics, and lawyers for appearances before statutory hearings and inquiries.

Fergal has been ranked in the Chambers UK Legal Guide for the past four years as an “Associate to Watch”, with the 2017 version commenting that he is “an experienced media and defamation lawyer, much relied upon by national and regional publications. Clients say: “His advice always proves invaluable.”

In addition to his litigation experience, he regularly delivers guest lectures in Media Law to students on the MA in Journalism at Ulster University, was consulted on the Northern Ireland chapter of *McNae’s Essential Law for Journalists*, (24th Ed., June 2018) and has provided commentary to the media on media law matters.

Fergal graduated with an LL.B. (Hons.) Degree in Law and Marketing in 2007 where he was awarded the Sweet and Maxwell University Law Prize, before completing an LL.M in International Human Rights Law and a Master’s Degree in Business Studies. He subsequently qualified as a solicitor from the Institute of Professional Legal Studies (Queen’s University) with commendation, and was awarded the Mills Selig Prize on qualification.



Experience

(i) Media, Defamation, Privacy

- Acting for a number of national publications in the successful challenge of reporting restrictions; *Aaron Sterritt v Telegraph Media Group, News Group Newspapers & Others*;
- Successfully defending, with costs to the publication, five libel actions taken against a local news group; *Newry Mourne & Down District Council v Newry Reporter*;
- Successfully resisting an application for an emergency interim privacy injunction on behalf of a large national publisher; *Aaron Hyland v Independent News and Media*;
- Acting for a journalist arrested in the course of his duties;
- Advising Belfast Telegraph in respect of multiple Press Complaints Commission/ Independent Press Standards Organisation complaints taken by Gerry Adams T.D.;

(ii) Corporate & Professional Reputation

- Acting for a prominent medical practitioner following a slander of him at public meeting of professionals;
- Acting for a local business subjected to the publication of false allegations by anonymous letters;
- Acting for a large home improvement business in protecting its reputation under sustained multi-channel attack by users of an internet chat room;
- Advising a major multinational company on defending emergency injunction proceedings concerning the publication of confidential information;
- Acting for a large local pharmacy chain in repudiating multiple attempted slander claims;

(iii) Administrative Law, Public Law & Inquiries

- Acting for a non-departmental public body in resisting a judicial review application concerning the powers of a tribunal to call its own witnesses; *In the matter of an application by CK*;
- Acting for a non-departmental public body in resisting a Judicial review application on the lawful exercise of the power to recall persons to custody; *Edgar's (Conor) Application*;
- Assisting in the preparation of various individuals and bodies for appearances before the independent public inquiry into the Non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI Inquiry);

(iv) Commercial Litigation

- Acting for a large multinational in the defence of various competition claims;
- Acting for a large utility provider defending a challenge to a procurement process;