

First Amendment Rights

We actively protect the rights of print, broadcast and online journalists, and we have built on that foundation to help our clients undertake proactive review of controversial materials, respond to subpoenas and seek open records access. Although we provide effective advocacy in court, much of our work involves helping clients understand potential problems before taking content public. We are able to take an editor's viewpoint to help clients weigh legal risks against the public interest and reach the right decision — particularly in time-sensitive situations.

In addition to proactive counseling, Lathrop GPM has successfully represented media clients in litigation involving defamation and privacy; copyright and trademark; access to state and federal information; and government retaliation and other restraints on speech. In forums nationwide, we have litigated a number of First Amendment, libel, defamation and invasion of privacy suits and have a solid record of successful defense. Often we negotiate with potential defamation plaintiffs and uncooperative public officials to avoid libel and access litigation. As part of our activities in this vital area, we:

- Protect the rights of broadcasters and publishers who are the recipients of subpoenas for information and/or testimony by successfully asserting rights under applicable shield laws, the reporter's privilege and other available legal theories
- Defend media clients against allegations of invasion of privacy in cases frequently aimed at appealing to jury sympathies
- Obtain access to agency and judicial meetings and records under the state and federal Sunshine Laws