



Todd & Weld LLP



Civil Rights Litigation

Todd & Weld has an unwavering commitment to helping clients protect their constitutional and civil rights.

Todd & Weld regularly represents individuals and entities who have been the victim of harassment, coercion, intimidation, physical violence, or discrimination based on age, disability, medical condition, national origin, sex, race, ethnicity, or religion. Equally as important, our attorneys represent individuals whose constitutional rights have been violated by the government, the police, and others.

We pride ourselves on providing the highest quality legal services to our civil rights clients, while at the same time promoting social justice through the vigorous enforcement of our federal and state constitution and civil rights laws.

In addition to the firm's Employment Law and Litigation practice, we represent clients in cases involving:

- Discrimination, harassment and hate crimes
- First Amendment freedom of speech, expression, and religion
- Fair housing
- Public accommodations
- Prisoner rights
- Police misconduct and brutality
- Prosecutorial misconduct
- Due process and equal protection violations and other constitutional claims

- Unlawful arrest, detention, entry, search and seizure
- Racial profiling

Together with lawyers in the firm's Criminal Defense practice group, our commitment to constitutional and civil rights also includes representing wrongfully convicted individuals in post-conviction litigation, including motions for new trial, federal habeas corpus proceedings, and death penalty cases. [David Meier](#), formerly the Chief of Homicide in the Suffolk County (Boston) District Attorney's Office, has been nationally recognized for his work in the area of wrongful convictions and his commitment to the rights of crime victims and their families. Mr. Meier serves on the Board of Trustees of the New England Innocence Project, a litigation and public policy organization dedicated to the exoneration of wrongfully convicted defendants and the reformation of the criminal justice system.

[Howard M. Cooper](#), a Founding Partner of the firm, serves on the ACLU of Massachusetts Board of Directors, and was named 2019 Civil Rights Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Boston by *Best Lawyers in America*.

[Nick Carter](#), a partner at the firm, has secured multiple seven-figure recoveries on behalf of clients in various race and gender discrimination lawsuits against municipalities and other organizations.

Todd & Weld lawyers regularly participate on panels and speak in the area of civil rights, and have been recognized consistently by various organizations for their commitment to and success in civil rights work.

Attorneys

- Joseph M. Cacace
- Nicholas B. Carter
- Howard M. Cooper
- Maria T. Davis
- Megan C. Deluhery
- David H. Rich
- Max D. Stern
- Benjamin J. Wish
- Josh L. Launer

Representative Results

- Persuaded a federal judge to deny a town's request to dismiss the fair housing and constitutional claims brought by owners of historic property against town officials based on alleged race discrimination underpinning the denial of a proposed condominium project.
- Represented migrant children separated from their families at the U.S.-Mexico border seeking monetary damages for their long-term trauma and harm as well as a fund for their mental health care and services.
- Filed an amicus brief in support of a school committee and other school officials and teachers who sought the dismissal of a complaint seeking to censor high school curriculum in comparative religion and world

history courses.

- On behalf of two mothers of former students in a public school system, successfully challenged on free speech grounds a school committee's policy restricting remarks in the Public Speak portion of its meetings. A state court judge ruled that the policy violated constitutional free speech rights and that the school committee had applied it illegally to suppress the rights of the mothers to express views critical of the school system.
- Successfully represented a Boston area Islamic group post 9-11 to combat highly organized and well-financed, community-based discrimination aimed at preventing area Muslims from building a Mosque and Cultural Center in Roxbury. The Mosque, now completed, operates as a center for inter-faith dialogue and is the largest Islamic Center in New England Todd & Weld's representation of the Boston area Muslim community has been widely described as courageous, and Todd & Weld partner, [Howard M. Cooper](#), received an award presented by Boston area Muslims thanking him for his commitment to civil rights and religious freedom.
- Brought successful constitutional challenge on behalf of a judge of the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands that resulted in striking down legislation that had authorized members of the legislative and executive branches of government to discipline and remove judges.
- Achieved \$1 Million settlement on behalf of South Middlesex Opportunity Council, an anti-poverty agency, in its landmark civil rights case against the Town of Framingham and Town officials to secure fair housing rights for people with disabilities in the community.
- Represented victim of violent hate crime based on sexual orientation.
- Represented judge in First Amendment defense to contempt proceedings arising from judge's published criticism of appellate court.
- Handled federal and civil rights claims on behalf of victim of police brutality.
- Represented homeowners whose neighbor violated their civil rights by continued acts of harassment and obstruction of access to their property.
- Handled inmates' rights cases related to medical and dental care.

News & Insights

- Great Barrington school teacher files civil rights lawsuit following alleged unlawful targeting and search of classroom
- Joseph Cacace quoted in Boston Globe column on border separation court ruling
- Joe Cacace quoted in Boston Globe article on potential compensation for immigrant families separated at border
- Firm representing couple in civil rights lawsuit against town over rejection of condo development
- Joseph Cacace quoted in Boston Globe on potential payments to immigrant families separated at border
- Joe Cacace quoted in news article detailing FTCA lawsuit filed on behalf of migrant children separated from families at border

- Maria Davis quoted in news article on amicus brief filed to support school officials, teachers in curriculum dispute
- Howard Cooper, Maria Davis file amicus brief in support of school officials and teachers in legal dispute over curriculum
- Howard Cooper, Joseph Cacace argue in federal court against dismissal of case seeking damages for migrant children separated from families at border
- Joe Cacace quoted in news article on border separation lawsuit
- Children sue Trump Administration officials for damages in class action over trauma caused by unlawful detention and separation from their parents

Results

- Alycia Kennedy obtains federal civil rights jury verdict for false arrest, including punitive damages award
- Judge rejects government's request to dismiss suit seeking compensation, mental health care payments for children forcibly separated from families at border
- Federal judge rejects Town of Natick's request to dismiss race bias suit of property owners