



## Shelly A. DeRousse

Partner | Chicago

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### Areas of Practice

Bankruptcy/Creditors Rights | Insurance and Reinsurance | Private Equity and Venture Capital | Transportation | Food and Beverage

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Shelly A. DeRousse is a Partner in the Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring Practice of Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP. Ms. DeRousse was a Partner at Freeborn & Peters, which combined with SGR in 2023.

Ms. DeRousse has extensive experience in the areas of bankruptcy, reorganization, litigation, and asset sales. As lead counsel, she has represented official creditors' committees throughout the country in chapter 11 bankruptcy cases. Additionally, she represents companies and high earning individuals in their restructurings or workout negotiations with their lenders and other creditors. Additionally, she is known among banks and other financial institutions as a leading attorney for lenders in bankruptcy cases, out-of-court workouts of borrowers' loans, and assignments for the benefit of creditors, using creative solutions to maximize the lenders' recovery from collateral and other assets.

In addition to her profound and comprehensive working knowledge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, the Uniform Commercial Code, assignments for the benefit of creditors, and receiverships, Ms. DeRousse offers clients years of practical experience and knowledge of how to best solve very complex debtor-creditor issues. She has worked on every side of bankruptcies and workouts, including the representation of debtors, secured creditors, unsecured creditors, lessors, lessees, guarantors, trustees, and creditors' committees. She has represented clients ranging from large publicly traded companies in mega-bankruptcy cases to smaller privately held middle market companies in chapter 11 filings or large international banks to small community banks.

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Ms. DeRousse is a very successful and accomplished commercial litigator and trial attorney. As lead attorney, she has litigated to judgment many trials and hearings on issues including mismanagement and fraud, fraudulent transfers, relief from the automatic stay, use of cash collateral, commercial contract disputes, assessment of lease value, benefit to a bankruptcy estate, and breach of fiduciary duty.

Ms. DeRousse is the President of the Women's Bar Foundation of Illinois and serves as the Co-Chair of the Turnaround Management Association's Committee for Networking of Women for the Midwest Region. In 2018, she was elected as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and was one of six women in the nation named as finalist for the distinguished Chambers award for "Inspiring Role Model in Promoting Gender Diversity in the Legal Profession." In 2010, she was named as one of the most Influential Women in Business by the Business Ledger and the National Association of Women Business Owners of Chicago. She has also served on the Executive Board of Directors of the Women's Bar Foundation for many years and is an expert in food allergy law and regularly advocates for families and children who have food allergies.

While at Freeborn (now SGR), Ms. DeRousse served as the Leader of the Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring Practice Group. Prior to joining Freeborn (now SGR), Ms. DeRousse was a Partner in the Bankruptcy and Commercial Litigation Groups at Stahl Cowen Crowley Addis LLC and an Associate in the Commercial Restructuring Group at Sidley Austin LLP. Ms. DeRousse was also an Adjunct Professor at DePaul University College of Law.

Ms. DeRousse earned her J.D. from DePaul University's College of Law, graduating with honors and as a Member of the Order of the Coif. She received the CALI Excellence for the Future Award and served as Associate Editor of the DePaul Law Review. Ms. DeRousse earned her B.S. from Illinois State University.

## Admissions

Illinois

Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals

United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

United States District Court for the Northern and Southern Districts of Indiana

United States District Court for the District of Colorado

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin

United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin

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## Memberships

President, Women's Bar Foundation  
Women's Bar Association of Illinois  
American Bankruptcy Institute (ABI)  
Turnaround Management Association (TMA)  
Chicago Bar Association, Bankruptcy Committee  
Chicago Bar Association, Professional Fees Committee  
International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation  
Professional Women's Club of Chicago

## Recognitions

*Illinois Super Lawyers* - 2021, Bankruptcy: Business  
*Lawdragon* - 500 Leading U.S. Bankruptcy and Restructuring Lawyers (2020)  
*Chambers-USA Guide to America's Leading Lawyers for Business* - Bankruptcy/Restructuring - 2023 (cited in multiple years)  
*Crain's Chicago Business* GenX Leaders in Law – 2019  
Finalist, *Chambers* Women in Law Awards: USA 2018  
Influential Women in Business 2010, *Business Ledger*  
*Illinois Leading Lawyers* - 2020 (cited in multiple years)

## Publications

- Panelist, "What Is (and Isn't) Projected Disposable Income in a Subchapter V," The 2021 Bankruptcy Institute (October 12, 2021).
- Debater, "Even the Circuits Can't Agree," 2021 National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges (October 8, 2021).
- Panelist, "What Is (and Isn't) Projected Disposable Income," 2021 National Association of Bankruptcy Trustee's Conference (August 26, 2021).
- Co-Author, "*Client Alert: Legal Issues in Times of Distress*," Freeborn & Peters LLP (March 2020).
- "Mandatory Arbitration Clauses in Consumer Contracts: Consumer Protection and the Circumvention of the Judicial System," 50 DePaul L. Rev. 1191 (2001).