

Clara M. Virden

Associate

Seattle
+1.206.370.5861

Clara.Virden@klgates.com

OVERVIEW

Clara Virden is an associate in the firm's Commercial Disputes practice group, recognized for her experience in high-stakes commercial litigation. Her litigation portfolio includes representing Fortune 500 companies, developers, investors, creditors, and public entities in complex commercial and development-related disputes. She has played a key role in litigation arising from utility-scale renewable energy developments, including complex disputes related to project development, financing, and commercial relationships where the financial and operational stakes are substantial. She also has experience in bankruptcy litigation involving alleged Ponzi schemes, creditor recoveries, and trust administration matters. Prior to practicing law, Clara worked as an accountant in both the private and public sectors, providing her with a strong foundation in financial analysis and business operations that informs her approach to complex commercial disputes. Trusted by both public and private sector clients, Clara delivers strategic counsel and practical solutions in fast-moving, high-stakes matters where the outcome can have substantial business implications.

Clara maintains an active pro bono practice focused on expanding access to justice for underserved communities. Fluent in Spanish, Clara is able to effectively serve and communicate with Spanish-speaking clients and communities. She has represented asylum seekers in immigration proceedings, contributed to impact litigation advancing Native American rights, and supported the firm's Survivor Reentry Program, helping survivors overcome legal barriers to stability and self-sufficiency. She also provides civil legal aid to Washington tribal communities, assisting individuals with a range of legal issues and improving access to critical legal services. Through her pro bono work, Clara is committed to advancing meaningful outcomes for vulnerable populations and strengthening access to justice.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

During law school, Clara was a summer associate with the firm and a legal intern with a Seattle-based sustainable timberland company. She also represented clients through the University of Washington School of Law's Race and Justice Clinic, advocating on behalf of incarcerated youth and assisting with clemency petitions. Additionally, she served as a judicial extern to Chief Justice Steven González of the Washington Supreme Court.

Before joining the firm, Clara clerked for Justice Mary Yu of the Washington Supreme Court and Judge Erik Price of the Washington Court of Appeals, Division II, where she gained extensive experience in appellate practice, legal research, and judicial decision-making.

ACHIEVEMENTS

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

Clara was a board member for the Northwest Community Bail Fund between 2022 to 2025.

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Washington School of Law, 2022 *with honors (Gregoire Fellow; Washington International Law Journal; Larson Health Advocates Mock Trial Finalist and Best Speaker; Legal Writing Fellow)*
- B.B.A., Gonzaga University, 2015

ADMISSIONS

- Bar of Washington
- United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington
- United States District Court for the Western District of Washington

NEWS & EVENTS

- 15 May 2026, K&L Gates Recognized at 2026 Turnaround Atlas Awards
- 17 September 2025, K&L Gates Secures Trial Victory for Creditors in Bankruptcy Court
- 16 December 2024, K&L Gates Secures US$10.5 Million Jury Verdict for Innovative Solutions
- 25 October 2024, K&L Gates Secures Victory for Creditors in Bankruptcy Trial

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Commercial Disputes