

## **BEASLEY ALLEN'S JOSEPH VANZANDT APPOINTED AS CO-LEAD COUNSEL FOR SOCIAL MEDIA LITIGATION**

On Feb. 28, Judge Carolyn Kuhl, who is overseeing social media lawsuits in California state court, appointed Joseph VanZandt of Beasley Allen Law Firm, Brian Panish of Panish | Shea | Boyle | Ravipudi LLP, and Emily Jeffcott of Morgan & Morgan as co-lead counsel of the Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding (JCCP) for the plaintiffs. The JCCP is similar to a multidistrict litigation (MDL) in that similar cases are combined under the management of one court – in this case, a California state court.

Joseph has previously helped lead complex mass litigations, including the JUUL e-cigarette litigation where he served on the Plaintiffs' Steering Committee for the national multidistrict litigation (MDL). Additionally, Judge Yvonne Gonzalez-Rogers appointed Joseph to the Plaintiffs Steering Committee Leadership for the federal Social Media MDL consolidated in the Northern District of California, Oakland.

Users of social media products like Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Snapchat and YouTube/Google began filing lawsuits against social media companies last summer because social media addiction has caused a mental health crisis among our youth. These social media lawsuits accuse the companies of knowingly taking advantage of young people to increase the companies' profits. The lawsuits also allege that the defendant companies failed to protect young users who are more likely to develop unhealthy behaviors and mental illness due to the content and marketing tactics used on social media.

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