

Plaintiffs Bar Perspective: Ricardo Martinez-Cid



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Law360, New York -- [Ricardo M. Martinez-Cid](#) is a partner at [Podhurst Orseck PA](#), in Miami. Much of his practice involves personal injury, wrongful death and product liability cases with a focus on catastrophic injuries, mass torts and aviation litigation. He is experienced in multi-district litigation and serves on the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee for the [NFL Concussion Litigation](#).

Martinez-Cid is an accomplished trial lawyer, having obtained multimillion-dollar verdicts on behalf of his clients in both federal and state courts. He joined Podhurst Orseck in 2002 and was named partner in 2005.

Martinez-Cid was appointed by the Florida Supreme Court to serve on the Standing Committee on Fairness and Diversity and by the Chief Justice to serve on his Pro Bono Advisory Committee. He is a past president of the Cuban [American Bar Association](#) and serves on the Board of Governors of the American Association of Justice and of the [Florida Justice Association](#).

Q: What's the most rewarding aspect of working as a plaintiffs attorney?

A: The most rewarding aspect of practicing plaintiff-side work is helping families and individuals. Often clients come to us when they are at their most vulnerable following a devastating injury or the loss of a loved one. They want to make sure no one has to suffer a similar fate and hope their case will promote change in the safety practices of defendants. They are also facing emotional distress and are concerned for their family's financial future. It is gratifying to represent these clients and help bring them some closure. And few professions allow one to effect changes that make it safer for all of us, like plaintiff-side work does.

Q: What skill do you feel is most important for achieving success as a plaintiffs attorney?

A: The most important skill a plaintiffs attorney can have is dedication or "stick-to-itiveness." Your clients come to you needing help, and you must be their champion and voice. They place their trust in you and deserve your unwavering commitment and hard work. You must thoroughly investigate and prepare your cases. One small fact or single document can be the difference in bringing them justice. The best plaintiffs attorneys care deeply for their clients. They work hard, are always prepared, and push to get the best results promptly.

Q: When it comes to trial strategy, what's the biggest difference between representing a plaintiff and representing a defendant?

A: When representing a plaintiff, you must make sure the jury understands how their decision can have broader impact beyond your case. Regularly, a plaintiff's case represents a larger community concern and danger from the defendant. Your job as a plaintiffs attorney is to make sure the jury sees the larger implications of the case. The jury must hold the defendant accountable for putting the community at risk

and damaging your client.

It is also important to move your case quickly. The old adage of "justice delayed is justice denied" is never truer than when describing plaintiff-side work. There is a financial and emotional cost to protracted litigation. While defendants and insurers sometimes want to delay a case, that is rarely, if ever, in the plaintiff's interest.

Q: What advice would you offer to young lawyers interested in practicing as a plaintiffs' attorney?

A: Be selective about the cases you take. It is better to turn down a good case you are too busy for, than to take one and not dedicate enough time to it. Your stress levels will increase, your good case will become a bad one, and your client will rightfully be upset. Make sure when you take on a case that you can devote yourself to it. You can make a good case better with attention and hard work.

Q: What's one trend currently impacting your practice?

A: Sadly, there are many trends making it increasingly challenging to hold corporate wrongdoers responsible for the harms they inflict. The proliferation and enforcement of unconscionable arbitration agreements, the radical changes in corporate personal jurisdiction principles, and the rampant use of the forum non-conveniens doctrine to avoid accountability, are just three that quickly come to mind. And those are just from the judicial branch.

Our elected officials in Tallahassee, Florida, and Washington, D.C., are constantly lobbied by corporate anti-civil justice groups to close the courthouse doors. For example, although medical errors are the third leading cause of death in the United States, legislatures are focused on medical malpractice reforms that protect repeat offenders from suffering any consequences for the deaths they cause. Most of the public do not understand the repercussions of tort reform and a plaintiffs attorney certainly needs to be cognizant of that when selecting a jury.