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About Dentons
Davis Brown

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Dentons Davis Brown Law Firm (“Dentons Davis Brown”) is a progressive, full-service Iowa law firm committed to helping clients - from individuals to Fortune 500 Companies - with practical legal advice and representation. Dentons Davis Brown is one of the largest law firms in Iowa, with over 75 lawyers across three offices. The main office is located in the 13-story Dentons Davis Brown Tower in Des Moines, the economic and political capital of Iowa. Dentons Davis Brown maintains offices in West Des Moines and Ames, the home of Iowa State University.

The firm emphasizes diverse skills, ideas, and perspectives. There are no cookie-cutter practices at Dentons Davis Brown. This approach has led to over 50 areas of law and a wide range of sector expertise that continues to expand. The breadth of services and depth in core practice areas and sectors make Dentons Davis Brown the leading firm in the Iowa market.

Dentons Davis Brown’s History

Davis, Brown, Koehn, Shors & Roberts, P.C. was founded in 1929, grew despite the Great Depression and has continued its growth through other periods of significant economic disruption and social and generational change.

A full-service law firm from the beginning, Dentons Davis Brown has always focused on providing quality legal services and exceptional client service, hiring the best people regardless of race or gender, and serving the communities in which we live and work.

Founders Joseph Brody and former District Judge George Brammer were lawyers other law firms wouldn’t hire because they were Jewish. The two decided to create their own law firm and by the end of the 1930s, the firm expanded to eight lawyers - a large law firm for that time.

Over the next 40 years, the firm’s work expanded to the representation of major companies in the automobile, rail, manufacturing, communications, and healthcare industries. Clients knew they could rely on their Dentons Davis Brown lawyer for excellent quality legal work whether in the boardroom or courtroom.

In the late 70s and early 80s, when the legal community was only beginning to hire women lawyers, and many firms hired only a single female lawyer, one of our named partners, A. Arthur Davis (1929-1997), believed in hiring the most talented person, regardless of gender.

This commitment continues today as a cornerstone of our firm culture. Among major law firms in Iowa, Dentons Davis Brown ranks highest of female lawyers, with an almost 50-50 balance and similar representation in firm leadership and key firm committees.

Dentons Davis Brown at a Glance

Dentons Davis Brown is one of the largest law firms in Iowa with close to 80 lawyers and three offices in West Des Moines, Ames, and the largest in the Dentons Davis Brown Tower in downtown Des Moines.

The firm operates in a wide range of established and emerging practice areas and lawyers work collaboratively, priding themselves on being members of the client's team, knowing the client's organization, and providing seamless service to meet the client's unique needs.

Practices and Sectors

Dentons Davis Brown lawyers work with businesses and high net worth individuals across several practice areas and sectors including agriculture, construction, banks and financial institutions, telecommunications, energy, government, healthcare, hospitality, insurance, manufacturing, non-profits, real estate, and technology. Key practice and sectors include:

- **Agribusiness** - Representing entities ranging from small farms to multinational companies including grain and supply cooperatives, seed companies, food processing plants, agrichemical companies, animal and plant producers, ag lenders, and equity funds. Frequently collaborating with the tax, capital markets and securities, intellectual property, employment, litigation, and real estate departments to meet the broad needs of these clients.
- **Emerging Businesses** - The Start-up Launchpad is an innovative online delivery platform for legal services providing online access to educational materials, checklists, and automated delivery of legal documents, available for entrepreneurs 24/7. The department is involved in the start-up community and several accelerators.
- **Health Law** - Dentons Davis Brown has always represented hospitals, physicians, clinics, and other healthcare facilities across Iowa. Over time, the client base and industry expertise has grown. The team helps clients with compliance, health care privacy and confidentiality, Certificates of Need, third-party payments, alternative health care delivery systems, licensing and accreditation, institutional review, medical ethics, policy and procedure development and implementation, physician contracts and compensation, and Medicare and Medicaid compliance. In the area of healthcare litigation, we represent clients on issues such as Qui tam and whistleblower defense, government and internal investigations, fraud and abuse, and patient rights.
- **Immigration** - Advising both businesses and individuals in immigration processes, acting as advisors and advocates with the various U.S. government agencies that touch immigration. Lawyers guide I-9 procedures, conduct internal audits, and defend in government audits and negotiate proposed penalties. Strong practice in the healthcare sector, assisting healthcare facilities in underserved areas sponsor foreign physicians, RNs, and other healthcare providers. Similarly, significant work with religious entities including the Catholic Diocese, Methodist Church, and Buddhist temples to recruit and retain religious leaders in underserved areas.
- **Intellectual Property** - Advising clients on developing comprehensive strategies to understand, manage, protect, and leverage IP assets. Specific experience in agricultural technology; biofuels, chemistry, and materials; biotechnology; food technology; and medical device technology. Frequent guidance on tech transfer and university spinoffs in addition to assets developed and maintained by higher education institutions, and work with established companies. Lawyers frequently work with organizations outside the U.S.

- **Employment Law and Labor Relations** - Strong practice with employment advice and litigation of employment matters. The team handles the day-to-day to complex employment matters including accommodations; discrimination/harassment; policies/manuals; hiring, termination, and discipline; investigations; wage and hour; retaliation; COVID-19 and pandemic-related laws, regulations, and proclamations; and collective bargaining and labor contracts. Employment issues often impact multiple laws, agencies, and areas of a business. The team is known to help businesses see the big picture, understand their potential compliance issues, and then forewarn, update, and/or train with educational presentations, resources, and blog posts.
- **Litigation** - With a wide range of clients across several sectors, the Dentons Davis Brown Litigation team handles everything from small claims to highly complex commercial litigation. Litigators handle disputes of all kinds including contracts, securities, white collar crime, business torts, fiduciary trust and estate litigation, appeals, and premises liability related to COVID. The team is well-versed in working with insurance companies and often handles high risk, high profile cases relating to professional liability/negligence, EPLI, and construction. Dentons Davis Brown litigators are well known for their superb preparation and legal arguments and the ability to keep their clients' goals in mind, which occasionally means settling. Lawyers are currently litigating the largest construction litigation case in Iowa's history.
- **Mergers & Acquisitions** - Deep expertise across sectors including healthcare/senior care, energy/alternative energy, telecommunications, banking/finance, start-ups/emerging companies, cooperatives, agribusinesses, manufacturing, and technology. The team handles joint ventures, mergers, acquisitions, sales, capital markets/securities, corporate formations, debt-equity financing, and tax credit financing. The practice mix, experience, and structure promote the cooperation of all subject matter experts on a project, giving clients a 360-review of their project or potential project.
- **Real Estate** - Lawyers advise on all phases of commercial real estate projects and transactions. They're not just putting forms together; they're helping put the actual deals together. Dentons Davis Brown can cover any real estate issue, opportunity, or project. Clients are wide-ranging and include developers, energy companies, banks, insurance companies, mortgage companies, title companies, individual and commercial borrowers, landowners, and tenants. We also represent developers and operators of multi-family housing projects, life care communities, and hotels. The team represents one of the biggest apartment owners and managers in the country, one of the largest banks in the country, and multiple Midwest real estate companies.
- **Renewable Energy** - Dentons Davis Brown is a Midwest leader in renewable energy. Lawyers currently work with two national companies on multiple wind and solar projects in several states: Iowa, Nebraska, Michigan, Oklahoma, and Virginia. Multiple Dentons Davis Brown lawyers are assisting with a \$4 billion wind project that will result in 1,000 wind turbines across multiple Iowa counties generating 2,000 megawatts of power in the state by the end of 2020, enough to power 840,000 homes and other wind and solar projects valued at a combined \$3 billion.
- **Tax** - One of Dentons Davis Brown's oldest and biggest practice areas, lawyers offer both business and personal tax services, with expertise and depth to assist with any type of tax or business transaction. Helping private individuals to Fortune 500 Companies, assisting with local, state, federal, and international tax matters from tax returns to tax controversies to 1031 like-kind exchange transactions. The team also has experience working with the IRS to negotiate decreased penalties and voluntary corrections.
- **Wills, Trusts & Probate** - Lawyers advise families, entrepreneurs, small business owners, farmers, executives, professionals, high net worth individuals, and businesses of all sizes, including family-owned businesses, on the entire estate planning spectrum. The team also handles fiduciary litigation, as Iowa's landowner population

ages, they are leaving millions of dollars' worth of real estate, there is also an increase in second and subsequent marriages, resulting in blended families. As a result, contentious situations amongst heirs and family members requiring litigation is growing.

Return to Work Guide

The Dentons Davis Brown Employment Department created and produced a "Return to Work" instructional package for Iowa employers. The pandemic required quick changes by employers to go remote and virtual with their workforces and they continue to face complexities as they figure out how to safely return to the workplace. The product helps employers start those conversations ensuring balanced legal and practical considerations of keeping workplaces and workers safe and includes the framework on decisions employers needed to make before heading back to their physical workspace, over a dozen sample policies, forms, and guidance on how to avoid claims of discrimination as employees are recalled, required testing/vaccination, ensuring on-site safety, and how to approach situations where employees are concerned or anxious.

Recognition

Renowned for their personal and academic excellence, creativity, integrity, and motivation, Dentons Davis Brown lawyers have a passion for their areas of practice and for the clients they serve. The firm and lawyers are recognized by Best Lawyers, Super Lawyers, and *Chambers USA*. Dentons Davis Brown is ranked Band 1 by Chambers and Partners in all five practice areas available in the Iowa chapter of *Chambers USA*. The firm is also recognized as the [Best Law Firm in Des Moines](#) for 15 consecutive years by the Business Record, the preeminent business journal.

- **Chambers and Partners 2020:** Sixteen lawyers and five practice areas - Corporate/M&A/Banking, Labor & Employment/Immigration, Real Estate, Litigation: General Commercial, Litigation: Insurance - Dentons Davis Brown has the most Band 1 practice area rankings in Iowa. Additionally, three Dentons Davis Brown lawyers and one practice area (the only available in Iowa) are ranked in Chambers High Net Worth Guide.

- **Best Lawyers 2021:** Forty-four lawyers were recognized in the most recent edition of *Best Lawyers in America*, including four "Lawyers of the Year" for labor and employment, trusts and estates, employee benefits/ERISA, and business organizations. In addition, the firm was ranked in 30 categories for Best Law Firm, including 21 Tier 1 rankings for areas such as litigation, employment, immigration, tax, health care, and business organizations.
- **Great Plain Super Lawyers 2021:** Twenty-one lawyers are named to the Great Plains Super Lawyers list, 10 of which are rising stars in litigation, intellectual property, employment, trusts and estates, public finance, real estate, and immigration.

Community

Dentons Davis Brown has a long history of community involvement across the state of Iowa. We believe it is our obligation to promote and support the communities we live and work in through pro bono work, community service, and charitable giving.

Dentons Davis Brown lawyers left lasting legacies in Iowa and the greater legal community. Lawyers served as mayor of Des Moines, president of the Des Moines School Board, founders of Lex Mundi, founder of the local chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters, co-founder of the Iowa State University Research Park, helped establish the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute, and served in prominent leadership roles in both the Republican and Democratic Parties.

Lawyers and staff continue this tradition of commitment to community leadership and are active in numerous organizations, programs, and charitable causes to give back to the community and make Iowa a better place to live.

Many of the firm's lawyers hold leadership positions in local civic, charitable, and political organizations including the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute, Iowa State Bar Association, Iowa Legal Aid Foundation, Des Moines Public Library Foundation, Iowa International Center, Ames Economic Development Commission, Capital City

Pride, Iowa Women Lead Change, and many more. Each year, the firm is involved in over 100 community events and initiatives.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Supporting people, events, programs, and organizations focused on diversity and inclusion is a natural extension of our history and commitment to leadership and community.

- **Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee** - the internal committee focuses on developing strategies to recruit, support, and retain employees from diverse backgrounds, proposing strategies to create an inclusive culture, and engaging in activities that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in our communities.
- **LGBTQ+ Community** - Dentons Davis Brown is proud to advocate on behalf of the LGBTQ+ community, serving as the cooperating lawyer for Lambda Legal Defense Fund and as a member of the Iowa Supreme Court's Task Force on Gender and Racial Bias in the Judicial System.
- **Legal Advocacy** - lawyers serve on multiple legislative and judicial task forces addressing issues such as sentencing reform, guardianship and conservatorship, specialty business and tax courts, and other issues directly affecting Iowans.
- **Pro Bono** - lawyers annually donate more than 1,500 hours of pro bono legal services to those who otherwise couldn't afford representation. Lawyers are also involved with the organizations that offer support to vulnerable Iowans: Volunteer Lawyers Project, Drake Legal Clinic, and the Hola Center.