



Boating accidents, plane crashes and other transportation accidents

Whether on vacation, having fun on the weekend, or traveling for business, there are serious risks involved in every mode of transportation — on land, on the water and in the air. From motorcycle wrecks to jet ski accidents to plane crashes, you or a loved one could be the victim of a catastrophic personal injury.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI), paralysis, other head injury or wrongful death can occur due to negligence, not following safety procedures, inadequate vehicle maintenance, faulty vehicle design and other causes.

As a result, you or a loved one may be left dealing with serious medical problems, missed work and even long-term disability. Necessary treatment and care can result in huge medical bills, lost wages and overwhelming emotional stress. Even the strongest family bonds can be put under immense pressure.

You shouldn't face this by yourself. An experienced personal injury attorney can help you understand your options and will fight for what you're owed.

Ward and Smith has a team of personal injury lawyers who have deep experience seeking financial compensation for the victims of many different kinds of transportation accidents. Some of the cases they've handled include:

- All-terrain vehicle (ATV) and utility task vehicle (UTV) accidents
- Bicycle accidents
- Motorcycle accidents
- Accidents and injuries at rail crossings
- Boating and jet ski accidents, including those involving accidental drownings
- Plane crashes and airplane injuries, including small aircraft accidents

Because of the types of vehicles involved and where some of these accidents take place (in the ocean, for example), legal liability can be a more complicated question than in other types of personal injury cases.

Boating and jet ski accidents, for example, could involve admiralty law, which governs vessels on the ocean. Air transportation is regulated by the federal government, bringing in additional considerations for any legal action. And these industries are often served by specialty insurers who may be headquartered across the country.

Knowledge and resources to support complex cases

The Ward and Smith team has resources that not all North Carolina personal injury lawyers can claim. Ward and Smith attorneys are backed by the resources of one of the state's large multi-disciplinary law firms, including the ability to call on attorneys who focus on a variety of other practice areas.

Ward and Smith lawyers take a team approach to all clients, which means there's always an attorney

available, even when the firm is handling multiple cases at once. Attorneys are supported by licensed paralegals, certified litigation technology specialists and other staff.

Because of these resources, our attorneys will take the time that's needed to investigate and understand what really happened. And they'll make sure they understand what the impact has been — and will be — for you and your family.

Our attorneys serve clients across North Carolina. They'll come to you to ensure they fully understand your story.

Stress and confusion are normal in the first few hours or days after an accident, severe injury or loss of a loved one. Nothing can prepare you for what's happened. Typically, that's the worst time to sign legal waivers and other documents that could limit your future options.

You need an experienced guide to help you.

Ward and Smith's personal injury attorneys have been there for victims and their families in hundreds of cases involving personal injury or wrongful death. They'll listen to you, help you understand your choices and serve as fierce advocates who'll put your interests first.

The insurance companies, vehicle manufacturers and other businesses involved all have lawyers. You should, too.

Water-Related and Other Transportation Accident Representative Experience

Past results are no guarantee of future results. The summaries are not intended to indicate or guarantee that any of the same or similar results can be achieved in future matters; the outcome of a matter depends upon a number of factors. These summaries are intended only to provide general information about the experience of our attorneys. Summaries are drawn from 1992 through the present.

\$700,000 Settlement for Tour Bus Collision Passenger's Family

An 82-year-old man who was a passenger on a tour bus was killed in a collision in Washington, D.C., dying instantly. He was survived by his 81-year-old wife and two adult children. He had been retired from the family business for several years. There were no economic losses, only noneconomic losses such as loss of society and the loss of relationship with his family. After a lawsuit was filed, the case settled for the sum of \$700,000.

\$860,000 Settlement for Tour Bus Collision Passenger's Family

An 81-year-old man died due to injuries suffered in a collision while a passenger on a tour bus. He was survived by his spouse and two adult children. At the time of his death, he was retired from a family business. After the collision, the victim lived for about two months, experiencing pain and suffering during the first month. Since he was retired, there was no economic loss, and the only damages were for noneconomic loss such as loss of society and the loss of relationship with family. After a lawsuit was filed, the case was settled for \$860,000.

\$3.52 Million Settlement for Driver Struck by Ambulance

A 44-year old mother was killed when the car she was a passenger in was struck at a Lenoir County

intersection by an ambulance. The ambulance was on an emergency run with lights and siren activated and ran a red light. The woman was survived by three children. After mediation, the case settled for \$3.52 million.

\$9.9 Million Wrongful Death Settlement for Negligence of Military

Plaintiffs brought wrongful death claims under the Federal Tort Claims Act for negligence of military officials in the United States, challenging the exclusivity of a NATO Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) as the only way to file claims relating to the death of five Belgian tourists. They were killed when a U.S. Marine Corps jet collided with a cable car system above a ski resort in the Italian Dolomite Mountains. Four of the five victims were unmarried, without children and were survived by their parents. A claim was also filed pursuant to SOFA. The Eastern District of North Carolina granted summary judgment for the government. However, all five wrongful death claims were settled while the case was on appeal. The survivors of each victim were awarded \$1.98 million, totaling \$9.9 million for all five claims.