

## PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY

Lawsuits against lawyers, accountants, officers and directors, brokers, trustees and other professionals are filed with increasing frequency in the courts of California. Expanding theories of liability, new duties to persons and entities only remotely associated with the professional and increases in the time to file suit all present challenges to professionals who conduct their activities in this state. Even more troubling is that this litigation occurs in an environment where jurors start most trials with an attitude of hostility toward, and suspicion of, professionals.

Whether in the context of a failed business, a stockholder dispute, a legal malpractice claim or a securities fraud case, today's professionals need comprehensive and experienced legal advice. While lawsuits may be of great concern, professionals today should realize that broader and more serious problems can arise, such as insurance coverage disputes, disciplinary proceedings, bankruptcy and even "white collar" criminal charges.

Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP has the lawyers, the experience and the comprehensive resources necessary to counsel and defend professionals in such lawsuits, as well as advise them on the broader responsibilities, duties and problems arising from their professional disputes. Over the years we have successfully resolved matters before litigation was commenced, during the course of litigation and as the result of trials and appeals. We have also provided counseling and formal opinions to assist professionals in understanding and complying with their legal and ethical obligations.

Our representative clients range from sole practitioners to the largest international law and accounting firms, among others. We have excellent continuing relationships with several errors and omission insurers and also handle uninsured matters.