

Partridge Snow & Hahn Prevails for Tufts University Faculty in Landmark Tenure Rights Case

Description

BOSTON, MA, April 22 2026 – [Partridge Snow & Hahn](#) (PSH), a full-service business law and litigation firm, successfully secured a decisive victory on behalf of tenured faculty members at Tufts University, with the Massachusetts Superior Court ruling that the university violated their tenure contracts and state wage law.

Following a 12-day bench trial in December 2025, the Court held that Tufts' compensation policies requiring faculty to fund a significant portion of their salaries through external research and penalizing faculty through salary reductions and/or reductions to part-time status if they failed to meet this funding requirement breached the professors' tenure contracts and violated the implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing. The Court also found that the university's actions violated the Massachusetts Wage Act, as faculty were expected to continue working full-time despite being reclassified as part-time. The Court issued a declaratory judgment barring Tufts from applying these compensation plans to the affected faculty members, all of whom were granted tenure prior to the policies' implementation.

PSH attorney [Jennifer A. Henricks](#) represented eight tenured professors at Tufts University School of Medicine, who argued that the university's policies undermined the core tenure protections of economic security and academic freedom. Kevin T. Peters and Thomas Brown of Fox Rothschild LLP served as co-counsel.

Henricks is Counsel in PSH's [Litigation & Disputes](#) Practice Group and is based in the firm's Boston office. A seasoned trial lawyer, she represents individuals, companies, nonprofits, and institutions in complex commercial disputes in state and federal courts. Known for her strategic precision and strong courtroom advocacy, she has achieved successful outcomes across all stages of litigation, including trial and appeal. Henricks is an Associate Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America and has been recognized as a Massachusetts Super Lawyers Rising Star annually since 2017.

This ruling follows a 2024 decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, which vacated a prior summary judgment in favor of Tufts and remanded the case for trial to examine the customs, practices, and reasonable expectations governing compensation and full-time status for tenured faculty. The Superior Court's decision reinforces the contractual and statutory protections afforded to tenured professors and clarifies limits on institutional changes to longstanding compensation structures.

About Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP

Partridge Snow & Hahn is a full-service business law and litigation firm committed to working collaboratively with clients to develop a deep understanding of their various industries, objectives, and unique ways of working to help advance business goals and solve legal challenges. With offices in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, the firm focuses on key areas of law: corporate & business, including M&A, employment, tax, and nonprofit; real estate, including commercial financing, environmental, and land use; and complex commercial litigation & disputes.

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