



Michelle Nelles

COUNSEL

A highly experienced intellectual property lawyer with a focus on strategic trademark counsel, Michelle works with Canadian and multinational companies to manage large domestic and foreign trademark portfolios.

CONTACT

Toronto: [416.865.7979](tel:416.865.7979)

mnelles@torys.com

Overview

Michelle offers comprehensive management of trademark portfolios of large international and domestic clients, guiding in-house counsel to develop and execute cost-effective prosecution, enforcement and opposition strategies. She regularly provides clearance opinions, oppositions and enforcement advice, and her work on trademark, patent, industrial design and copyright matters extends across industries, including consumer goods, food, clothing, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and financial services.

Michelle also provides strategic advice to clients on a wide variety of domain name issues, as well as initiating and responding to domain name dispute proceedings, including ICANN's Uniform Domain-Name Dispute-Resolution Policy (UDRP), the CIRA Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (CDRP) and the Rapid Evaluation Service (RES).

Michelle is a registered Canadian patent and trademark agent and is routinely involved in reviewing marketing and advertising materials to advise on compliance with trademark laws and regulatory regimes. She frequently gives guidance on best practices and develops training materials to support clients' intellectual property and business priorities.



Her guidance is always spot on.'

—CHAMBERS CANADA, 2023

Featured Work

Michelle has acted as counsel in numerous trademark opposition matters, preparing evidence and conducting cross-examinations and oral hearings, and providing strategic enforcement advice on trademark and patent portfolios,

including developing cease and desist strategies and negotiating desirable settlements with third parties. She has also acted for plaintiffs and defendants in various patent, trademark and copyright disputes, some of which have involved consumer products, fabrics, fashion designs, medicated animal feeds, pharmaceutical tablets, food-related process patents and the estate rights of a famous artist.

Recognition and Awards

2020-2025 *Chambers Canada*—Leading lawyer in intellectual property

2020-2024 *Chambers Global*—Leading lawyer in intellectual property

2024 *World Trademark Review 1000*—Recommended lawyer in trademarks

2024 Managing IP's *IP Stars*—Notable practitioner, Trademark star

2021-2025 *Best Lawyers in Canada*—Leading lawyer in intellectual property law

2021 *The Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory*—Leading lawyer in intellectual property

Insights

Ask an IP litigator: Someone is using my trademark—how can I make them stop?

What happens if someone is using an identical or similar trademark to yours? We share the next steps to take.

[Publication of the final amendments to Québec's Regulation respecting the language of commerce and business](#)

[Proposed amendments signal upcoming changes for contentious Canadian trademark proceedings and official marks](#)

[New draft regulation clarifies certain provisions of the Charter of the French Language for businesses](#)

[Medical device domain names, brands and patents](#)

[Updated changes to packaging, signage and advertising under Québec's Bill 96](#)

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News

81% of Torys' Canadian partners ranked by *Chambers Canada*

We are pleased to share that 130 Torys partners and 38 of our practice areas have been recognized in this year's guide, including 15 Band 1 rankings.

[179 Torys lawyers recognized in the 2025 Best Lawyers guide](#)

[161 Torys lawyers named in the 2024 Best Lawyers guide](#)

[More than three quarters of Torys partners recognized in the 2023 Chambers Canada guide](#)

[Best Lawyers recognizes 121 of Torys' leading lawyers](#)

[Torys' leading lawyers recognized at the 2021 Chambers Canada Awards and in the 2022 Chambers Canada guide](#)

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Professional Involvement

Michelle is currently the Canadian Chair of the Non-Traditional Marks Committee for the International Trademark Association (INTA). She has served on numerous INTA committees over the past two decades. She has also been active on Intellectual Property Institute of Canada (IPIC) committees. For example, she presented the Year in Review (Trademarks) at the 2020 IPIC Annual Meeting. In 2021, she presented at the 25th Intellectual Property Year in Review for The Law Society of Ontario.

Michelle has also lectured on aspects of IP law at the Faculty of Law and Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering at the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall Law School, and at York University in Toronto for their LLM Course.

Education and Bar Admissions

Education

LLB/MBA, 1993

Osgoode Hall Law School and Schulich School of Business, York University

BSc (Chemistry and Zoology), 1989

University of Manitoba

Bar Admissions

