Cho, Woong Kyu 구성원변호사

BARUN LAW
법무법인(유한) 바른



TEL.
82-2-3479-2663

MAIL.
woongkyu.cho@barunlaw.com

구성원 소개

Attorney Cho Woong-kyu is a specialist in inheritance and business succession, focusing on estate planning using wills and will substitutes (including testamentary trusts), inheritance disputes such as reserved portion and division of estate, and corporate succession strategies incorporating management control and tax optimization. He has advised major Korean conglomerates as well as small and mid-sized enterprises and high-net-worth individuals on estate planning, inheritance procedures, disputes, and business succession.

He has developed differentiated strategies and delivered outstanding results in matters involving leading conglomerates (e.g., Group L, Group H1, Group H2), as well as mid-sized companies such as an automotive parts manufacturer (with market capitalization of KRW 1.3 trillion), a chemical manufacturer (with market capitalization of KRW 300 billion), and an electronics components manufacturer (with market capitalization of KRW 20 billion), along with numerous individual high-net-worth clients.

He also led the creation of Korea's first dedicated "Estate Planning Center" specializing in pre-structured inheritance and business succession planning. As President of the firm's Inheritance Trust Research Group, he leads monthly academic seminars. In recognition of his achievements, he was named a "Rising Star 2023" in Private Wealth Law by Legal Times and received the 6th Korea Legal Awards. He has delivered dozens of lectures on inheritance and business succession at major conglomerates, life insurers, securities firms, banks, universities, law schools, executive programs, economic organizations, and the Korean Bar Association. Since 2022, he has contributed columns to The Law Times and The Korea Economic Daily, and continues to publish scholarly articles in KCI-indexed journals on inheritance, trusts, and business succession. He also serves as an advisor and committee member for business succession policy development at organizations such as the Korea Federation of Middle Market Enterprises and the Korea Federation of SMEs.

학력

2020	University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)
2012	Judicial Research and Training Institute of Supreme Court of Korea (41st)
2009	Passed the Korean Bar Exam (51st)
2007	College of Law, Seoul National University (LL.B.)
2001	Changwonnam High School

경력

2021 ~ Present	Partner, Barun Law LLC
2026 ~ Present	

최근업무사례

부모 소유 아파트 무상 거주 자녀의 취득시효 주장에 맞서 자주점유 전환의 입증책임을 밝혀 1·2심 소유권이전등기 청구를 모두 방어한 사례

상속개시 직후 상속포기 전략으로 유류분 반환 부담을 대폭 줄이고 후속 청구까지 방어한 사례

특경법위반(사기)으로 기소된 피고인을 단순 채무불이행으로 변호해 무죄판결을 이끌어낸 사례

종중 소유 토지를 종손에게 명의신탁해 사정받은 사실 및 재실의 건축 경위를 입증해 토지·재실의 소유권을 침탈한 종중원을 상대로 건물인도 및 소유권보존등기 말소 청구에서 승소한 사례

[가사/상속] 상속재산분할이 확정되지 않은 상황에서 상속인 중 1인이 법정상속분에 따라 상속 등기 및 나머지 상속인 몫의 취득세를 대납한 후 구상금을 청구한 사건에서, 1심 판결을 뒤집고 법정상속분에 따라 구상 가능하다는 판결이 내려진 사례

[가사/상속소송] 상속재산에 관한 소송에서 소송행위를 주목적으로 하는 소송신탁행위임을 밝혀내어 각하 판결을 받아낸 사례

[개인자산관리] 공동상속인 중 일부가 약 140억 원의 부동산에 대하여 상속인들을 상대로 소유권이전등기절차 이행을 구한 사건에서 망인의 진의에 불합치하는 사인증여계약의 진정성립을 부인하고 원고청구를 기각시켜 전부 승소한 사례

[Estate Planning] 자산승계 컨설팅 과정에서 비상장 주식 보유로 인한 과세부담을 인지하여 처분을 제안하고 성사시킨 사례

	Adjunct Professor, Real Estate & Finance Academy, Sogang University
2025 ~ Present	Lecturer, Business Law Training Program (Inheritance/Business Succession), Seoul Bar Association
2025 ~ Present	Chair, Special Committee on Self-Declaration Trusts, Korean Bar Association
2025 ~ Present	Vice President, Korean Self-Declaration Trust Research Association
2024 ~ Present	Columnist, "Inheritance Insights by Cho Woong-kyu," The Korea Economic Daily
2024 ~ Present	Vice President, Trust Bar Association, Korean Bar Association
2023 ~ Present	Advisory Member and Committee Member, Business Succession Activation Committee, Korea Federation of SMEs
2022 ~ Present	Standing Director, Korean Academic Society of Trust Law
2022 ~ Present	Head of Asset Succession Division, Estate Planning Center
2023 ~ 2024	Director, Trust Bar Association, Korean Bar Association
2023	6th Korea Legal Awards – Advisory Award (first testamentary trust via self-declaration structure in Korea)
2023	Selected as "Rising Star 2023" (Private Wealth Law), Legal Times
2022 ~ 2024	Member, International Committee, Seoul Bar Association
2022 ~ 2023	Columnist, "Refined Inheritance by Attorney Cho Woong-kyu," The Korea Economic Daily
2022	Columnist, "Legal Prism," The Law Times
2021 ~ Present	Business Succession Counsel, Korea Federation of Middle Market Enterprises
2021 ~ Present	President, Inheritance Trust Research Group, Barun Law LLC
2019	Completed Financial Law Program (Trust Law), Seoul National University
2015 ~ 2020	Associate, Barun Law LLC
2018	Completed Tax Training Institute, Korean Bar Association
2015 ~ 2017	Secretary General, Inheritance Trust Research Group
2013 ~ 2015	Public Interest Legal Officer, Prosecution Bureau, Ministry of Justice
2012 ~ 2013	Public Interest Legal Officer, Korea Legal Aid Corporation

[Estate Planning] 기업 후계자를 대리해 유류분 반환 대상인 주식 가치를 증여 당시의 가치(상속 개시시 가치의 14%)로 한정시킨 사례

[Estate Planning] 신탁선언 방식의 유언대용신탁 설정 사례

[가사상속] 유언대용신탁재산은 유류분반환대상이 아니라는 우리나라 최초의 판결을 이끌어 내고 전부 승소

주요업무분야

Estate Planning
개인자산관리 및 승계
기업승계
이혼/상속 소송
신탁
국제거래/투자
경영권 분쟁

주요 업무 및 활동

1. Core Practice Areas and Representative Matters

Estate Planning / Private Wealth Management

- Structuring and execution of asset succession strategies incorporating tax optimization and prevention of inheritance disputes (e.g., testamentary trusts, wills, lifetime gifts, corporatization of personal assets)
- Advisory on overseas migration and investment for Korean residents
- Structuring and execution of asset succession strategies for overseas residents (e.g., U.S., Singapore) with Korean assets
- Asset succession strategies for owner families of large, midsized, and small enterprises
- Asset management and succession planning for commercial real estate owners
- Advisory on startup M&A and founder exits
- Advisory on sale of minority stakes in unlisted companies
- [Representative matters include inheritance division for Group L, inheritance planning for Group H1, inheritance disputes for Group H2, estate planning for a KRW 200 billionscale company, and estate planning for a founder of one of Korea's largest startups]

Business Succession

- Advisory on taxefficient succession strategies (e.g., family business inheritance deductions, special gift tax provisions)
- Structuring succession frameworks to mitigate inheritance disputes (e.g., reserved portion claims)
- Corporate governance restructuring and M&A review
- [Representative matters include D Group (automotive parts manufacturer with market capitalization of KRW 1.3 trillion), A Company (children's products manufacturer with market capitalization of KRW 400 billion), I Chemical (with market capitalization of KRW 300 billion), A Publishing (with market capitalization of KRW 120 billion), Y Company (electronics components manufacturer with market capitalization of KRW 20 billion)]

Inheritance Litigation

- Strategy and execution for securing rightful inheritance shares (including predeath and postdeath strategies such as reserved portion claims)
- Defense strategies against reserved portion claims
- Advisory on estate division agreements and related disputes
- Representation in various inheritance disputes
- [Representative matters include defense in reserved portion claims for D Group, inheritance disputes for A Group heirs, securing inheritance shares and monetizing minority stakes for A Construction (KRW 120 billion), defense for I Chemical, estate division of approximately KRW 100 billion assets for a real estate company, and reserved portion claims involving estates of approximately KRW 30 billion]

Trusts

- FirstinKorea structuring and implementation of testamentary trust substitutes using selfdeclared trust structures
- Establishment of testamentary trusts and will substitute trusts
- Trust structuring for domestic assets of foreign nationals and overseas residents
- Litigation involving trusts, including will substitute trusts
- [Representative matters include advisory for H Bank, H Securities, S Securities on testamentary trusts; advisory on foreign and hybrid trusts; and litigation involving testamentary trusts and reserved portion claims]

Marital Disputes

- Asset management and succession strategies in contemplation of divorce and property division
- Representation in negotiations to secure clients' property rights
- Litigation and dispute resolution relating to divorce and property division
- [Representative matters include property division litigation involving assets of KRW 200 billion, divorce/property division cases involving a listed company CEO (KRW 50 billion), a unlisted company CEO (KRW 20 billion), and a startup founder (KRW 20 billion)]

Other Civil Matters

- Advisory and litigation in management control disputes
- Disputes involving nominee shareholding arrangements
- Commercial lease and key money disputes
- [Representative matters include management control disputes of major

Korean conglomerates and listed companies, advisory to Seoul National University, Small Enterprise and Market Service, advisory and litigation involving the U.S. Department of Justice, building ownership disputes exceeding KRW 1 trillion, and clan land disputes of KRW 15 billion]

2. Publications and Articles

- "Comparative Guides 2026, Private Client: South Korea," Legal 500 (Jan. 2026)
- Legal Guide to Family Business Succession for SMEs, Ministry of SMEs and Startups / Korea Federation of SMEs (Dec. 2025)
- "Key Legal Issues in a SuperAged Society and the Role of Lawyers," Human Rights and Justice No. 527 (Feb. 2025)
- "Legal Restrictions and Solutions for Business Succession," Business Law Review Vol. 37 No. 4 (Dec. 2023)
- "Current Status and Challenges of Will Substitute Trusts," BFL No. 119 (May 2023)
- "Feasibility of Business Succession Using Foundations," Korea Federation of Middle Market Enterprises Report (Sept. 2022)
- "Business Succession Using Corporate Foundations," Korea Federation of Middle Market Enterprises Report (May 2022)
- "Business Succession through Trust Structures – Resolving Reserved Portion Issues via Separation of Beneficial Interests," Trust Law Review, Vol. 4 No. 1 (2022)
- "Activation of Will Substitute Trusts, Trust Declaration Method," Family Law Review No. 73 (2022)
- "Business Succession Strategies Using Trusts," LL.M. Thesis, Seoul National University (Feb. 2022)
- "Legal Issues in the Digitalization of Beneficial Interests Using Blockchain," Commercial Law Review, Vol. 40 No. 3 (2021)
- "Review of the Enforceability of Share Pledge Execution through Trust Structures," Inheritance Trust Research Vol. 2 (2016)
- "Review of Property Tax Liability of Trust Property," Inheritance Trust Research Vol. 2 (2016)

3. Presentations and Lectures

- Dec. 2025, Presentation on "Utilization of SelfTrusts and Related Issues for the Popularization of Trusts" at the Winter Academic Conference of the Korean Academic Society of Trust Law
- Dec. 2025, Participated as a discussant at the 2nd Corporate Succession Activation Committee Meeting (Korea Federation of SMEs)
- Nov. 2025, Lecture on "Testamentary Substituted Trusts by Declaration of Trust" at the Korean Bar Association Trust Academy 2025
- Oct. 2025, Lecture on "Asset Management and Estate Planning for Seniors" at Maeil Business Newspaper Senior Festa
- Oct. 2025, Lecture on "Asset Management and Estate Succession Strategies in Korea for Korean Americans" at the KASCPA Annual Conference
- Oct. 2025, Lecture on "Successful Estate Planning Strategies" at Korea Investment & Securities GWM Wealth Conference
- Sep. 2025, Presentation on "Activation Measures for Trusts through Declaration of Trust" at the National Forum for the Promotion of SelfTrust Declarations (National Assembly Members' Office Building)
- Sep. 2025, Lecture on "Estate Succession Strategies for Business Owners" at Korea Investment & Securities Owners Forum
- Sep. 2025, Lecture on "Asset Management and Estate Succession Strategies" at Sookmyung Women's University AMP
- Aug. 2025, Presentation on "Activation of Testamentary Substituted Trusts by Declaration of Trust" at the 19th IndustryAcademia Trust Colloquium (Korean Academic Society of Trust Law)
- Aug. 2025, Lecture on Contract Law and Inheritance Law for the Comprehensive Asset Management (FP) Program at Kyobo Life Insurance
- Aug. 2025, Lecture on "Practical Estate Planning/Business Succession for InHouse Counsel" at the 1st Corporate Law Training Program (Seoul Bar Association)
- Jun. 2025, Lecture on "Inheritance and Business Succession" at Kyobo Life Insurance
- May 2025, Participated as a discussant at the Spring International Conference of the Korean Academic Society of MediumSized Enterprises ("Current Status and Issues of Business Succession Tax Systems in Japan")
- May 2025, Participated as a discussant at the Family Business Association ("Legislative Directions for Transforming the Business Succession Paradigm")
- May 2025, Attended as a member of the Corporate Succession Activation

Committee (Korea Federation of SMEs)
- May 2025, Lecture on "Current Status and Utilization of Testamentary Substituted Trusts" at the Korean Bar Association Special Training (Trust Law, Daegu)
- Apr. 2025, Presentation on "SuperAged Society and Activation of Testamentary Substituted Trusts" at the 100th Anniversary Seminar of the Trust & Estate Planning Research Society
- Mar. 2025, Lecture on "Business Succession and Legal Issues" at the 2025 NextGeneration CEO School (Korea Federation of SMEs)
- Mar. 2025, Lecture on "Key Legal Issues in Korea's Inheritance, Gift, and Forced Heirship Systems" at a joint seminar with the LA Korean Chamber of Commerce
- Mar. 2025, Lecture on "Key Systems of Asset Management and Estate Succession in Korea" for members of the LA Chapter of the World Korean Traders Association
- Mar. 2025, Lecture on "Business Succession and Legal Issues" at the 2025 NextGeneration CEO School (Korea Federation of SMEs)
- Mar. 2025, Lecture on "Trusts and Estate Succession" at Kyobo Life Insurance (WM/WE Professional Program)
- Mar. 2025, Presentation on "Analysis of Recent Case Law and Successful Estate Planning Strategies" at an Estate Planning Center Seminar
- Feb. 2025, Lecture on "Key Legal Issues in Estate Succession and Asset Management" at Kyobo Life Insurance (WM/WE Professional Program)
- Jan. 2025, Lecture on "Gifts and Inheritance" at CHANGBAL (Korean Tech Professionals in the Pacific Northwest, Seattle)
- Jan. 2025, Participated as an expert panelist at the SME Tax Reform Expert Meeting (Korea Federation of SMEs)
- Dec. 2024, Presentation on "Necessity and Practical Measures for Estate Planning, Understanding Forced Heirship, and Key Issues in Inheritance and Business Succession" at an Estate Planning Center Seminar
- Nov. 2024, Participated as a member of the Corporate Succession Activation Committee at a meeting on "Business Succession Support Systems in Japan and Germany: Status and Implications"
- Nov. 2024, Participated as a discussant at the Autumn Academic Conference of the Korean Academic Society of MediumSized Enterprises ("Legal Challenges for the Growth of MediumSized Enterprises")
- Oct. 2024, Participated in the inheritance session at Herald Economy MONEY FESTA 2024
- Sep. 2024, Lecture on "Inheritance Systems of Korea for Overseas Koreans" at the KASCPA 2024 Academic Conference
- Aug. 2024, Lecture on "Inheritance Planning after the Constitutional Decision on Forced Heirship" at the 6th Hankyung Money Inheritance Forum
- Aug. 2024, Participated as a discussant on "Diversification of Trust Business Operators, Delegation of Trustee Duties" at the 2024 Summer Academic Conference of the Korean Academic Society of Trust Law
- Aug. 2024, Presentation on "Legal Constraints and Improvement Measures for Business Succession" at an expert advisory meeting hosted by the Korea SMEs and Startups Institute
- May 2024, Participated in a Chatham House Roundtable hosted by Asia Economy ("Business Succession Strategies for SMEs toward 100Year Enterprises")
- May 2024, Participated as a discussant at the Policy Debate on SME Legislative Agendas for the 22nd National Assembly
- May 2024, Participated as a discussant at the 2024 Business Succession Hope Forum
- Nov. 2023, Participated as a discussant at the forum on "Policy Directions for Fostering LongStanding Enterprises"
- Oct. 2023, Presentation on "Legal Constraints and Solutions for Business Succession" at the Korean Bar Association Academic Conference
- Sep. 2023, Lecture on "Inheritance and Tax Planning" at Busan University of Foreign Studies AMP
- Sep. 2023, Lecture on "Overview of Business Succession and Legal Issues" at Samsung Electronics Advanced Executive Program
- Jul. 2023, Participated as a discussant at the 2023 Business Succession Hope Forum (Korea Federation of SMEs)
- Jun. 2023, Lecture on "Testamentary Substituted Trusts" at Seoul National University School of Law
- May 2023, Lecture on "Estate Succession Costs and Business Succession" at Samsung Life Insurance GFC Program
- May 2023, Presentation on "Legal Constraints and Solutions for Business Succession" at the Korean Commercial Law Association

- Apr. 2023, Lecture on "Costs and Reduction Strategies in Estate Succession" at the Korea Federation of SMEs Young CEO Network Seminar
- Nov. 2022, Special lecture on "Legal Norms of Business" at Sungkyunkwan University, School of Global Leadership
- Sep. 2022, Lecture on "Business Succession Strategies and Key Legal Issues" at Samsung Electronics Executive Program
- Sep. 2022, Presentation on "Activation Measures for Business Succession Systems" at the 2nd Innovation Growth Policy Forum for MediumSized Enterprises
- Jul. 2022, Presentation on "Issues in Real Estate STOs, From the Perspective of Trusts and Financial Regulation" at a Digital Asset Regulation Webinar
- Apr. 2022, Lecture on "Understanding Business Succession in Mold Manufacturing Companies" at the NextGeneration CEO Seminar (Korea Mold Industry Cooperative)
- Apr. 2022, Presentation on "Business Succession Using Trusts, Overcoming Forced Heirship Issues through Beneficial Interest Structuring" at the Korean Academic Society of Trust Law
- Dec. 2021, Lecture on "Inheritance and Trusts" at the Korea Federation of SMEs CEO Seminar for LongStanding Enterprises
- Oct. 2021, Presentation on "Legal Issues in the Digitalization of Beneficial Interests" at the Korean Commercial Law Association
- Jun. 2020, Presentation on "Inheritance Law in the United States and Korea" at ACTS Coworking
- Jan. 2020, Presentation on "Comparative Research on the United States and Korea's Trust Law" at UCLA International Institute, Center for Korean Studies Colloquium
- Oct. 2017, Presentation on "Requirements for Wills by Notarial Deed" at the Trust & Estate Planning Research Society