



# Karen D. Williams

## Member

## Washington, D.C.

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Karen focuses her practice on a variety of litigation matters, particularly those involving allegations of white-collar crime and fraud. She defends individual and corporate clients in state and federal trial courts and arbitration proceedings across the United States, as well as in connection with internal and government investigations.

Karen has experience in various phases of criminal matters – from conducting internal investigations and responding to federal grand jury subpoenas to litigating a case to jury verdict. She has represented clients in a broad range of industries, including government contracting, mortgage services, alcohol distribution, and professional services.

Internal investigations that Karen has conducted include allegations of harassment and hostile workplace environment in the entertainment and technology industries and allegations of fraud and anti-kickback violations in the health care industry. She also advises clients in matters arising under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and U.S. export controls and sanctions and anti-money laundering regulations.

Before joining Cozen O'Connor, Karen served as counsel in the litigation section of the Washington, D.C., office of a large, international law firm and as a law clerk to the Honorable Thomas D. Schroeder of the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina.

Karen is also active in providing pro bono legal representation, including representing one of over two hundred defendants arrested in D.C. while protesting during the 2017 Inauguration. She has also represented two individuals facing the death penalty at the trial level.

While attending law school, she was the editor-in-chief of the *American University Law Review* and was named a member of the Order of the Coif. She also served as an extern at the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Appellate Staff and as an intern to the Honorable Reggie B. Walton of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Prior to law school, Karen worked in journalism.

## Experience

### *Criminal Defense*

- Represented a professional services firm in responding to a federal grand jury subpoena.
- Defends clients regarding charged violations of the Federal Election Campaign Act and related offenses.
- Conducted an internal investigation of potential fraud and potential violation of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act regarding a Fortune 500 company's overseas operations.
- Served as second chair in a two-week trial in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, and secured a jury verdict of acquittal on all counts of conspiracy, bribery, and honest services fraud for an owner of a government contracting company.
- Represented a large liquor distributor charged with conspiracy, wire fraud, and money laundering in

## Practice Areas

- Commercial Litigation
- Environmental, Social & Governance
- White Collar Defense & Investigations

## Education

- American University, Washington College of Law, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 2009
- University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, B.A., 2002

## Bar Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Virginia

## Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court -- Eastern District of Virginia
- U.S. District Court -- District of Columbia

## Affiliations

American Bar Association

D.C. Chapter of the Women's White Collar Defense Association

## Awards & Honors

- DC Super Lawyers' *Rising Stars* (White Collar Defense & Investigations), 2021

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the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland, in pre-trial discovery and motions practice. The defense team secured dismissal of all charges.

- Defended a former CIA agent charged with disclosing classified information in violation of the Espionage Act and Intelligence Identities Protection Act.

### ***Regulatory Enforcement and Civil Matters***

- Won a motion to dismiss in a case brought under the Illinois False Claims Act in which plaintiffs alleged that the client violated the law by causing authorized retailers of certain phone devices to fail to collect and pay to the State Department of Revenue an Illinois-specific sales tax on a charge for setting up the devices at the time of purchase.
- Represented a former employee of a technology company in False Claims Act litigation.
- Litigated a property dispute action, from the discovery phase through a bench trial, for a Native American tribal client.
- Represented an individual under investigation regarding conflict of interest allegations pertaining to the client's employment by a defense contractor after government service.
- Represented executives in connection with an investigation by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.
- Represented a telecommunications company in breach of contract litigation.
- Defended and obtained a favorable ruling in a contentious arbitration proceeding against a high-profile individual regarding multiple allegations of breach of contract and fraud, as well as tort claims.
- Represent former employee in SEC investigation regarding procurement practices and internal controls.
- Represented a client in designing and implementing a new compliance program compliant with World Bank Group Integrity Guidelines, resulting in the release of sanctions and reinstated good standing with the World Bank Group in an expedited timeframe.