DTO LAW

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Alison D. Kehner

PARTNER

646.827.9536
New York
akehner@dtolaw.com

AREAS OF FOCUS

Appellate Practice

Complex Commercial Litigation and Arbitration

Governmental Investigations and White Collar Litigation

Alison Donahue Kehner is a seasoned federal prosecutor, tactical thinker, and tenacious advocate who positions her clients for success.

Alison represents companies, attorneys, and members of the C-suite caught in the crosshairs of a government investigation, enforcement action, or criminal prosecution. Alison also represents clients in a broad range of commercial litigation involving contract disputes, fraud, data privacy, financial transactions, and consumer litigation.

Alison is an experienced trial and appellate lawyer recognized for her courtroom advocacy skills and legal judgment. While an Assistant U.S. Attorney, Alison prosecuted cases involving international money laundering schemes; all manner of financial crimes; computer hacking and data breach crimes; and crimes involving public corruption, embezzlement, and bribery of federal employees. She has tried several cases to verdict in federal court and successfully handled appeals before federal courts of appeals in civil and criminal matters. While at DOJ, she also served as Counsel to the United States Attorney and was selected for a special appointment to the District of New Jersey to lead the high-profile prosecution of an individual who threatened to murder a United States District Judge in the district.

Despite her trial experience, Alison often achieves favorable results for clients in the earlier stages of litigation, including helping attorneys and other professionals navigate their internal and external reporting obligations after uncovering corporate wrongdoing, convincing prosecutors not to bring charges, and negotiating favorable outcomes once a case is underway. Alison has been on both sides of internal investigations, having conducted investigations on behalf of company leadership and represented individual employees, officers, or directors. Drawing on her prior experience in higher education, Alison also regularly helps students and their families navigate university misconduct proceedings.

Alison understands how agents and prosecutors think, how they build a case and evaluate relative culpability of those involved, and how they weigh the myriad factors that come into play in making charging decisions. Alison leverages that experience, those law enforcement relationships, and her problem-solving skills to advise her clients on the best course of action to minimize their liability and potential criminal exposure.

Alison is a member of the Penn Carey Law Inn of Court and a Lecturer in Law at Penn Carey Law School. She also is a volunteer attorney in the Supervision to Aid Re-entry ("STAR") Program in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania—a leading federal re-entry program that provides job training, housing assistance, emotional and social support, and pro bono legal services to individuals returning to society after years in federal prison.

In her free time, Alison enjoys golfing (driving, not putting) and spending time with her husband and three teenage daughters.

Experience

- Lead counsel representing large biotech company in connection with years-long SEC insider trading investigation involving former employee.
- Represented private equity investor in SEC enforcement action brought against him in connection with alleged Ponzi scheme.
- Represented former General Counsel in SEC/DOJ investigation and subsequent civil litigation in Delaware Chancery Court arising out of fund manager's embezzlement of investor funds. No charges were brought against the client.
- Represented national franchiser in New York Attorney General investigation involving alleged consumer fraud violations. Successfully negotiated Assurance of Discontinuance.
- Represented Director of Finance of technology company during its internal investigation of CEO and CFO for alleged misappropriation of funds. Client was cleared of any wrongdoing and remained employed with the company.
- Represented Registered Investment Adviser in civil litigation and arbitrations stemming from alleged misappropriation of client funds.
- Represented high-level employee involved in federal bribery investigation. No criminal charges were brought against the client.
- Represented start-up tech company in an SEC enforcement action involving allegations of fraud involving an initial coin offering (ICO).
- Led government investigation into cyber intrusion and data privacy breach committed by former employee and obtained conviction at trial against employee and co-conspirator.

- Led government investigation and prosecution of nine-defendant, multi-million securities fraud investment scam. Obtained guilty pleas from all defendants and worked with Interpol to capture and extradite lead defendant who fled to China.

Credentials

Education

- Villanova University School of Law, J.D., *summa cum laude*, Class Valedictorian
- University of Delaware, B.A., History, *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa

Prior Affiliations

- United States Department of Justice, Counsel to the U.S. Attorney and Assistant U.S. Attorney, Criminal Division (2018-2022)
- University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School Senior Lecturer (2012-2018)
- Widener Law, Delaware Campus (2003-2012)

Admissions

- Admitted in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania

Federal Courts

- United States Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York
- U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern and Middle Districts of Pennsylvania

Clerkships

- Hon. Marjorie O. Rendell
  U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit (2000-2001)
- Hon. Morton I. Greenberg
  U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit (1999-2000)
- Hon. Mary L. Cooper
  U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey (1997-1999)

Awards

- Irish Legal 100 (2024)
- The Legal Intelligencer, “Professional Excellence: Unsung Heroes” (2023)

Professional Affiliations

- Litigation Counsel of America, Fellow
- Federal Bar Council Second Circuit, Member
- Third Circuit Bar Association, Member
- Camden County Bar Association, Member
- Penn Law Inn of Court, *Master*
- Women’s White Collar Defense Association, *Member*
- Lawyers’ Advisory Council, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, *Former Member*

Civic Involvement

- University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School, *Adjunct Lecture*
- Supervision to Aid Re-entry (“STAR”) Program, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, *Pro Bono Volunteer Attorney*

Speaking Engagements

- Co-Presenter, “A Refresher on Important Aspects of Attorney-Client Privilege for In-House Counsel,” virtual CLE (February 6, 2025)
- Panelist, National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms’ Annual Meeting, “When Government Gets Involved (Ethics) CLE” (September 16, 2024)
- Moderator, National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms’ Driving Diversity Leadership Conference, “Compliance & Investigations PAC CLE: A Refresher on Important Aspects” (March 13, 2023)
- Co-Presenter, “What In-House Attorneys Need to Know about the Attorney-Client Privilege and Dual Purpose Communications,” ACC Southwest Ohio-“Just In Time CLE” virtual program (December 2, 2022)