



Dennis C. Vacco | Partner | Team Co-Leader - Government & Corporate Investigations

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Former New York State Attorney General, Dennis C. Vacco, is a Partner with Lippes Mathias and serves as the [Government & Corporate Investigations Practice](#) Team Co-Leader. Mr. Vacco was elected New York State Attorney General in 1994 and served until 1999. In 1988, he was appointed United States Attorney for the Western District of New York by President Ronald Reagan after serving 10 years as an Assistant District Attorney in Erie County.

He focuses much of his legal practice on government investigations and regulatory compliance matters. Mr. Vacco works with clients to ensure that their business practices are in compliance with the complex and ever-changing laws and regulations of both the state and federal governments. Much of his practice involves State Attorney General investigations as well as investigations by the United States Department of Justice, Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Securities and Exchange Commission, Commodity Futures Trading Commission and the Department of Homeland Security. Mr. Vacco also leads Lippes Mathias' [Israel-U.S. Cross Border Practice](#) which has developed a strategic partnership with a leading Israeli law firm. Mr. Vacco, who has traveled frequently to Israel, has represented Israeli businesses that conduct business in the United States. Mr. Vacco has also presented at seminars and makes media appearances to discuss the regulatory environment for Israeli businesses in the United States. Mr. Vacco from time to time serves as a consultant to clients with matters before State Attorneys General. Notably in this regard, he advised a major international corporation that was a Defendant in a lawsuit brought by the New York Attorney General claiming the company failed to properly disclose risks to investors.

As New York Attorney General, Mr. Vacco expanded the traditional role of the Attorney General by resurrecting the long dormant criminal

CAPABILITIES

Government & Corporate Investigations

- Corporate Ethics & Compliance
- Corporate Monitorships
- International
- State Attorneys General Investigations

Litigation

- Appellate
- Business & Commercial Litigation
- Consumer Financial Services
- Cybersecurity & Privacy

Indian Law

Lobbying & Public Policy

Israel-U.S. Cross Border

Canada-U.S. Cross Border

Asset Receivable Management

Health Care

Blockchain Technology,

Cryptocurrency & Digital

Assets

Municipal Law

General Counsel Services

Agriculture

prosecution powers of the office. He then used the expanded purview of his office to form the nation's first Internet Child Pornography unit targeting online predators. His distinguished career has seen him before the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Vacco v. Quill* where he successfully argued that Physician Assisted Suicide was not a constitutionally protected right. Also in his role as Attorney General, he served as lead negotiator in the multi-state litigation against the tobacco industry and was a principal signatory to the Master Settlement Agreement ("MSA"), and directed other multi-state investigations, including an anti-trust case against Microsoft.

Prior to joining Lippes Mathias, Mr. Vacco honed his entrepreneurial skills as president of Waste Management of New York, LLC, a subsidiary of Houston-based Waste Management Inc. ("WMI").

EDUCATION

- University at Buffalo School of Law, J.D., 1978
- Colgate University, B.A., 1974

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Business Council of New York State, Board of Directors

HONORS & AWARDS

- Jack Kemp Leadership Award, Erie County Republican Committee
- *City & State New York*, Law Power 100, 2022-2025
- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 2021-2026
 - "Lawyer of the Year," Corporate Compliance Law, 2024
- Lincoln Leadership Award
- *Business First of Buffalo* and *Buffalo Law Journal*, Legal Elite of WNY, 2014-2019
- *Upstate New York Super Lawyers*®, 2022-2025

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- "The Weinstein Retrial: A Discussion with Dennis C. Vacco former Attorney General of New York," NYCLA Amicus Curiae Podcast, November 15, 2024
- "WireVault Presents: Preventing Wire Fraud," Panelist, Webinar, August 7, 2024
- "Break Glass Only in an Emergency!" Co-presenter, AI Webinar, November 17, 2023
- "The People of the State of New York v. Donald J. Trump et. al.: Legal Analysis," NYCLA Amicus Curiae Podcast, October 23, 2023
- "In Trump's Fraud Who's the Victim," The Gist Podcast, October 11, 2023

- "Rise of Political Investigations in the Last Decade," Speaker, Business Council of New York State Annual Meeting, September 29, 2023
- "ESG; Emerging Compliance Requirements and Avoiding Investigations & Enforcement Action," Panelist, Webinar, May 24, 2022
- "An Insider's View from the Outside," Presenter, Business Council of New York State Annual Meeting, September 2021
- "Philanthropy and Social Impact: The Future of Sustainable Employment," Presenter, CC Forum Sixth Edition, July 2021
- "Examining Medical Aid in Dying in New York State," Panelist, New York State Bar Association Health Law Section, November 8, 2019
- Cybersecurity 2.0 Seminar, Co-presenter, Buffalo Niagara Partnership, March 15, 2017
- "Article 10: A plan to bring large industrial renewable energy to your town, without your town's approval," Co-presenter, NYS Association of Towns Annual Meeting, January 12, 2017
- "Trust, Fraud and Cyber-security: Internal and External Threats to Your Business," Speaker, Families Business Conference, October 17, 2016
- "Leasing Your Land for Solar Energy," Guest Speaker, New York Farm Bureau, August 3, 2016

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

- New York
- U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Western District of New York
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Western District of New York