



Joan P. Sullivan | Partner

Albany | New York City | Long Island
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Joan represents and advises businesses, individuals, and not-for-profits in a variety of federal and state criminal and civil litigation matters, regulatory proceedings, government investigations, and corporate internal investigations, with particular emphasis on defending clients against claims of fraud. She represents executives and corporations in a wide range of industries, including healthcare, retail, construction, energy, IT, and higher education.

Joan also counsels clients on compliance issues, focusing on government ethics, lobbying compliance, and government procurement processes. Keeping current on all relevant changes in the legal landscape, she regularly reviews policies and procedures, including any filings submitted to federal, state, and NYC agencies, from a compliance perspective. She provides analysis related to procurement issues, unregistered lobbying, conflicts of interest, including gifts and entertainment, to ensure organizations meet their legal and ethical obligations. She regularly conducts training to make employees aware of their responsibilities. Joan has represented clients in matters involving the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the New York State Attorney General, New York State Gaming Commission, New York Public Service Commission, New York Office of General Services, and the Joint Commission on Ethics and Lobbying, to name a few.

Joan's significant experience representing companies with large scale internal investigations includes her engagement as counsel in both of former Governor Andrew Cuomo's Moreland Commission Investigations. She has conducted internal corporate probes for Fortune 50 and large privately-held companies, involving allegations of potential violations of federal and state laws.

Joan has previously served as a counsel to the New York State Commission on Public Integrity, now known as the Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government ("the Commission"). In this capacity, she

CAPABILITIES

Government & Corporate
Investigations

- Corporate Ethics & Compliance
- State Attorneys General Investigations

Litigation

- Appellate

Cannabis

assisted in high-level investigations of statewide elected leaders into potential violations of the ethics law and authored formal and informal advisory opinions on a range of ethical issues relative to executive branch public officials and employees interpreting the New York State Public Officers Law.

Prior to her service with the Commission, Joan served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Office of the New York County District Attorney, Robert Morgenthau, in the Special Prosecutions Bureau, where she supervised investigations of white-collar criminals and presented cases to the grand jury. She also served in the Appeals Bureau, where she prepared briefs and presented oral arguments to the New York State Appellate Division and the New York State Court of Appeals. Joan began her legal career with a New York City law firm, where she focused on medical malpractice defense and accountants' liability litigation on behalf of Lloyd's of London, the international insurance syndicate.

Prior to joining Lippes Mathias, Joan was a partner with Harris Beach PLLC.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Conducted an internal investigation involving allegations of sexual misconduct between two students and whether sufficient supportive measures were implemented on behalf of the students.
- Conducted an internal investigation involving allegations of sexual harassment and retaliation involving the head of the organization.
- Defended energy companies under investigation by the NYS Office of the Attorney General's consumer fraud bureau involving allegations of violations of GBL §§349, 349-d and 350 concerning deceptive sales practices, which were resolved through negotiation and the execution of an Assurance of Discontinuance.
- Engaged as counsel in high profile matters such as both of Governor Cuomo's Moreland Commission investigations. The first Commission scrutinized the failures of electrical utilities after Hurricane Sandy. The second Commission was tasked with probing corruption in New York politics, including conflicts of interests, such as outside employment of legislators. In both matters, a thorough understanding of the inner workings of NYS government was essential to the representation.
- Served as counsel to a Fortune 50 company who was subject to a multi-year corporate monitor which resulted in no charges being filed.
- Served as independent counsel to an international client in connection with a corporate financial investigation that involved multi-state investigations.

- Defended a major internet-based media platform in a dispute against a national entertainment corporation. The entertainment corporation sought to force the media platform to reveal privacy information purportedly related to a leak of copyrighted material. The entertainment corporation ultimately filed a notice of discontinuance withdrawing its subpoena request. This high profile case was covered in leading legal and entertainment media including the NewYorkLawJournal.com.
- Defended a utility company before the Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE) alleging multiple violations of the gift ban under New York's lobbying law; reviewed and revised the company's policies and procedures regarding entertainment of public officials and trained company employees on the new policies.
- Prepared written advisory opinions regarding ethical issues facing corporate boards, firms, and government public officials considering entering the private sector. Issues range from conflicts of interest, disclosure and recusal mechanisms and post-employment restrictions.
- Provided advice on lobbying compliance to organizations required to file reports disclosing lobbying-related activities and conducted training to company employees and executives which include real-world examples so that compliance with the regulations are fully understood.
- Successfully appealed a decision to expel a student who was found responsible for sexual misconduct under Title IX on the grounds that the school did not substantially comply with its own policies and procedures. The student was fully reinstated.
- Defended an IT company before the NYS Office of General Services to resolve government inquiries related to a large government contract.

EDUCATION

- St. John's University School of Law, J.D., 1987
- State University of New York at Oswego, B.A., 1984

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics
- New York County Trial Advocacy Program
- Suffolk County Bar Association
- St. John's University, Aspire Mentor Program

HONORS & AWARDS

- *The Best Lawyers in America*©, Corporate Compliance Law

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- "Break Glass Only in an Emergency!" Co-presenter, AI Webinar, November 17, 2023

- “Lifting the Fog Over Lobbying Compliance,” Podcast, April 2020
- “New Lobbying Regulations: What Businesses in NYS and NYC Need to Know,” Webinar, January 2019
- “Ethics and Lobbying Compliance in NY — Navigating the Minefield,” CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity (CEO), May 2019

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

- New York
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York