

Kathryn M. West

Professional Experience

Milwaukee County Office of Corporation Counsel, 2014 – 2025

Assistant Corporation Counsel

Employment Law

- Ensure County compliance with responsibilities under the Family Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act and other federal and state regulations.
- Investigate, respond to and, as necessary, negotiate resolution of all forms of complaints filed by employees with the Wisconsin Equal Rights Division, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Division, and the Department of Labor, managing associated site visits.
- In collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, counsel department leaders on disciplinary issues, and assist them in bringing serious suspension/termination matters to hearing before the Personnel Review Board and Civil Service Commission.
- Advise the Department of Human Resources and other County leaders implementing current and proposed internal County employment practices to ensure compliance with state statutes, County ordinances and Civil Service Rules, and other internal County policies.

COVID-19 Response Team

- Member of the County's COVID-19 response team providing legal advice and drafting policies to address urgent and continuing employment and re-opening issues for County-wide services.
- Project manager and County point-person addressing ongoing re-opening issues associated with the Milwaukee County Court System and its related service providers, collaborating closely with Court personnel and with County facilities management and IMSD representatives.

Litigation

- Manage every aspect of claims defense for a wide variety of claims, in particular, federal civil rights, personal injury and employment discrimination claims and claims about the accessibility of County facilities such as the airport and the jail.

General Municipal Law

- Collaborate with County officials, including the Sheriff's Office and the Department of Human Resources, to evaluate, revise and implement policies to better manage and balance issues of risk and justice.
- Draft legal opinions on varied topics.

Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek S.C.

Attorney

Litigation

1993 – 2002

- Employed the essential skills of lawyering in a high caliber practice: analyzing, strategizing, negotiating, counseling, advocating, writing, researching, investigating, appearing in court, retaining consultants and expert witnesses, budgeting for legal expenses, managing staff.
- Extensive federal court experience litigating civil rights matters for municipal clients all over the state, including arguing and briefing appeals to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.
- Practice included counseling clients and handling litigation associated with consumer, commercial and products liability claims.
- Multiple continuing legal education presentations in areas of expertise.

Environmental Law

2010 – 2014

- Counseled clients in the purchase, remediation and redevelopment of previously contaminated commercial and industrial property.
- Assisted clients with strategies to reduce environmental risk, including due diligence reviews of environmental compliance information, and planning and evaluation of Phase I and Phase II site investigations.
- Advised clients needing emergency strategies in response to hazardous substance releases, including remediation and site closure strategies.
- Assisted clients in responding to government inquiries and strategically managing potential environmental claims, including claims under CERCLA, RCRA and the Clean Water Act.
- Assisted with annual reporting for a Fortune 500 company participating in Wisconsin's Green Tier program (developing innovative approaches to superior regulatory compliance).

Technology Law

Guided fiber optics client deploying fiber communications network throughout the Midwest through state and local regulatory compliance, including negotiations with municipal entities regarding real estate access issues.

Pro Bono

WHD Guardianship Clinic – Helped families with special needs children, including long-time patients of Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, seamlessly transition into legal guardianship of their children as they age into adulthood, so the families can continue to manage their health care decisions.

City Attorney's Office, City of Milwaukee, 1989-1993
Assistant City Attorney

Handled all aspects of civil municipal litigation, trying multiple cases to verdict, and arguing in the Wisconsin Supreme Court; counseled managers, directors and other heads of City departments, researched and authored formal legal opinions and provided open records/meetings advice and contract and other drafting services to, among others, the Department of Administration, the Community Development Block Grant Administration, the Assessor's Office, and the Comptroller's Office.

United States District Court, Southern District of Georgia, 1988-89
Judicial Law Clerk for Chief Judge Anthony A. Alaimo

Education

J.D., Cornell Law School
B.A. (Honors), University of Wisconsin – Madison
Journalism and Political Science
Graduated with Distinction
University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2008 – 2009
Helen Bader School of Nonprofit Management
Coursework in advocacy and accounting for nonprofit organizations

Community Leadership

- **Redevelopment Authority, City of Milwaukee;** commissioner 1997 – present; chair 2006 – 2008; reviewing and approving brownfield redevelopments such as the Menomonee Valley, Century City, and Beer Line B, as well as additional high-impact projects around the City of Milwaukee
- **Rufus King High School;** member of development board raising funds for student advancement and facility improvements
- **Golda Meir Elementary School;** Chaired multiple silent auction/raffle events to raise funds for 4th Grade class trip to Denmark
- **Catholic East Elementary School;** Chaired multiple fundraising events welcoming more than 200 guests for event featuring dinner, silent auction and entertainment by alumnus John McGivern
- **Maryland Avenue Montessori School;** evaluated grant opportunities and prepared grant applications to raise funds for Green Playground Project
- **Lake Park Friends**
 - 2010 – 2015; board member, actively involved in board's supervision of capital projects including construction of the Park's performance structure and renovated waterfall, as well as marketing and membership campaigns
 - 2007 – 2013; coordinated and booked entertainment for Wonderful Wednesdays, a family-oriented summer music series in Lake Park; recruited successor and effectively managed hand-off of program
 - 2013 – 2015, vice-president for recreation
- **East Side Senior Services, 2006 – 2009;** board member