SpencerFane®

Joseph M. (Joe) Dworak

Of Counsel

Contact

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Overview

Joseph "Joe" Dworak helps individuals and organizations on a wide range of matters while developing solutions that comply with rapidly evolving legal requirements in litigation, administrative actions, environmental matters, health law, and governmental affairs. Clients seek Joe's advice as a result of his practical experience, creative problem-solving, and tenacity. He is passionate about advancing clients' short- and long-term priorities and developing processes that promote compliance and risk mitigation.

With extensive experience in government administration and public policy, Joe has successfully managed legal and business matters in civil litigation and appeals, administrative proceedings, internal and external investigations, legislative affairs, and operational management. He has trained and led teams of attorneys and is recognized as a leader in administrative law and compliance matters. Joe's previous positions and associated skill set help him view matters from the perspective of government agencies and judges, a valuable lens for better serving his clients' interests.

Joe has held prominent government appointments, most recently as a Deputy Attorney General for the state of New Mexico, where he also previously served as Litigation Division Director and Open Government Division Deputy Director. Between positions at the Office of the Attorney General, he was appointed by the Governor of New Mexico as a Director at the state's Regulation and Licensing Department, where he established a health licensing bureau and oversaw 29 state licensing boards and commissions and their staff. Prior to graduating law school, Joe clerked for Commissioner Mignon Clyburn at the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, D.C., and worked at a law firm in the California Bay Area.

Education

- The University of New Mexico School of Law, 2013 (J.D.)
- The University of New Mexico, 2009 (B.A.)

Bar Admissions

- New Mexico

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico

Community Involvement

- University of New Mexico Alumni Association
  - Board of Directors and Executive Committee, 2017-2024
  - Young Alumni Board, president, 2014-2019
- El Rancho de las Golondrinas, Board of Directors
- Inspire Santa Fe, student mentor
- Scouting America and Order of the Arrow, adult volunteer and advisor
- World Scout Jamboree, past volunteer

Distinctions

- Santa Fe Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, 40 Under 40, Top Business Leaders, 2022
- FBI Citizens Academy, Graduate, 2018
- National Association of Attorneys General, International Fellow, 2017

Memberships

- State Bar of New Mexico
  - First Judicial District Bar Association, current member; president, 2019-2022
  - Public Law Section, Board of Directors, current member; chair, 2018-2021
- American Bar Association
  - Section of Environment Energy and Resources
  - Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice
  - Section of State and Local Government Law
  - Section of Litigation

Related Experience

- Served as general counsel to more than 20 government agencies, boards, and commissions, including the State Board of Nursing, Law Enforcement Academy Board, Construction Industries Commission, Environmental Improvement Board, Educational Retirement Board, State Armory Board, and New Mexico Border Authority.
- Supervised a division of attorneys that provide general counsel to nearly 100 different state agencies, officials, boards, commissions, and public bodies.
- Represented and defended public officials in litigation and arbitration before state and federal courts, including the attorney general, governor, cabinet secretaries, judges, and other public officials and employees.

- Served as an administrative prosecutor and supervised a division of attorneys that provide administrative prosecutors to more than 30 state professional and occupational licensing boards and commissions.
- Drafted New Mexico's Default Procedural Rule for Rulemaking, a uniform regulation governing all administrative rulemaking in the state, and created resources and conducted state-wide trainings since adoption of the default rule.
- Oversaw the implementation of standardized licensing and disciplinary procedures for more than 30 professional and occupational boards and commissions in the state.
- Worked closely with executives, human resources, in-house counsel, and law enforcement in response to sensitive employee matters, public health and safety issues, and other large-scale emergencies.
- Implemented a state-wide compliance program on public records, open meetings, and other government transparency and accountability laws and conducted dozens of trainings for thousands of government employees, officials, media, and members of the public.
- Oversaw multiple government reorganizations that implemented new technologies and improved compliance by integrating legal requirements into streamlined operational processes while also reskilling employees and increasing customer service.
- Performed legal analysis for hundreds of bills introduced in the legislature; authored legislation; proposed changes to bills; provided testimony in legislative committees; and drafted congressional testimony.