

Jeanne M. Grasso | Partner
Maritime

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CO-CHAIR, MARITIME PRACTICE GROUP

Jeanne Grasso is a member of our Maritime Emergency Response Team (“MERT”).

Jeanne Grasso focuses her practice on maritime, international, and environmental law for clients worldwide. Jeanne counsels owners and operators of vessels, charterers, cargo owners, and waterfront facilities and terminals. Her practice involves:

- Regulatory compliance counseling related to the U.S. Coast Guard; Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”); U.S. Customs and Border Protection; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and Maritime Administration, among other federal and state agencies, including providing advice regarding ballast water, air emissions, EPA’s Vessel General Permit, port State control, the Jones Act, and maritime security
- Compliance counseling related to International Maritime Organization conventions, including the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (“MARPOL”), the International Ballast Water Convention, and the international Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea
- Internal and grand jury investigations
- Defense of administrative, civil, and criminal enforcement actions
- Counseling on risk mitigation strategies related to pollution incidents around the world
- Maritime environmental compliance and training in connection with federal and state requirements pollution incident response
- Coastwise trade matters, including the Jones Act, towing, passengers,

- dredging, and salvage
- Identifying administrative and legislative solutions in connection with maritime and environmental compliance challenges

Jeanne writes and lectures extensively on criminal enforcement of environmental laws and U.S. Coast Guard regulatory matters. She also conducts training sessions and helps clients establish compliance programs in an effort to avoid enforcement actions.

Before she joined Blank Rome, Jeanne worked in the Office of Congressional Affairs at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (“NOAA”) handling fisheries and oceans matters, and served as Program Manager for the National Fish and Seafood Promotional Council. She also served as staff to the House of Representatives’ Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.

Jeanne is highly ranked by *Chambers USA* for her work on shipping regulatory matters, where a client source stated, “When I think of her, I think of Coast Guard matters, and I think highly of her.” *Chambers* sources also described her as a “one of the most widely respected marine environmental lawyers.” Clients said that she is “very tied into the sector and the regulators, she is efficient, knowledgeable and experienced.”

Outside The Firm

Jeanne’s passion is SCUBA diving. She is also an avid golfer, hiker, and cyclist, and a die-hard Notre Dame fan.

Select Engagements

- Defended vessel owners/operators (cruise ships, cargo vessels, fishing vessels, tug/barges) with respect to allegations of environmental violations in criminal and administrative cases, and with respect to violations of the coastwise laws, including the Jones Act.
- Served as on-site company counsel during pollution incidents and response drills.
- Counseled vessel owners/operators regarding compliance with U.S. Coast Guard and international environmental, safety, security requirements, and coastwise trade.
- Advised cargo owners and charterers on risk mitigation strategies in connection with potential pollution incidents worldwide.
- Conducted internal investigations for vessel owners/operators, terminals, refineries, chemical manufacturing facilities, and pipeline operators related to allegations of non-compliance.
- Sought administrative rules and handled voluntary disclosures for vessel and facility owners/operators in connection with U.S. Coast Guard, EPA, NOAA, and Customs coastwise trade matters.

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Maryland
- U.S. District Court - Maryland
- United States Court of Appeals for Maryland
- United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
- United States Court of International Trade

Memberships

- Maritime Law Association of the United States
- Women's International Shipping & Trading Association
- Propeller Club, Port of Washington, DC

Education

- University of Notre Dame, BS
- University of Maryland School of Law, JD, Order of the Coif
- University of Southern California, MMA, with honors

Recognitions

- 2020–2024, Admiralty and Maritime Law in Washington, D.C., listed in *Best Lawyers in America*®
- 2013–2024, Washington, D.C., “Super Lawyer” in Transportation & Maritime, listed in *Super Lawyers*
- 2013–2024, Transportation: Shipping/Maritime: Regulatory Law – Band 1, listed in *Chambers USA*
- 2022, listed in Euromoney’s *Women in Business Law Expert Guides*
- 2019–2022, “Top 100 Women in Shipping,” listed in *All About Shipping*
- 2017–2024, listed in *The Legal 500 United States*
- 2022–2024, Hall of Fame: Transport: Shipping - Litigation and Regulation, listed in *The Legal 500 United States*
- 2019–2021, “Leading Lawyer,” listed in *The Legal 500’s Guide to Outstanding Lawyers Nationwide*
- 2017–2024, listed in *Who’s Who Legal – Shipping*
- 2023–2024, listed in *Who’s Who Legal – Environment & Climate Change*
- 2023–2024, Thought Leader: USA in Shipping, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- 2023, Global Leader in Environment and Climate Change, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- 2020–2023, Global Leader in Shipping, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- 2015, “Top Ten Lawyer” for Shipping Law, listed in *Lloyd’s List*

Professional Activities

Jeanne has been a guest lecturer at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy where she has spoken on legal issues related to oil pollution incidents for the Academy's OPA 90 Qualified Individual training program. Jeanne has been extensively involved in the Women's International Shipping & Trading Association ("WISTA"), having served as president of WISTA USA from 2008 through 2013, prior to being elected to WISTA's International Board in 2013, where she served for six years. Jeanne now serves on the Board of WISTA USA. Jeanne also served on the Advisory Board of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center from 2007 to 2021. Jeanne is a member of the Maritime Law Association and serves on the U.S. Coast Guard Foundation's Dinner Committee for the *Annual Tribute Dinner in Our Nation's Capital*. Jeanne now serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Coast Guard Foundation and the Seamen's Church Institute.