

William E. Lawler III | Partner
White Collar Defense &
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CO-CHAIR, WHITE COLLAR DEFENSE & INVESTIGATIONS PRACTICE GROUP

Bill represents corporations, organizations, government entities, and individuals in high-stakes, high-profile matters in federal and state courts and before regulatory agencies and Congress.

His practice focuses on government enforcement actions and his clients' response to and interactions with them. The specific subject of the actions can vary—as different administrations in the United States and jurisdictions abroad prioritize different types of enforcement—but include the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (“FCPA”), criminal antitrust, government program fraud, public corruption, anti-money laundering, and other white collar crime issues.

Bill also represents and advises a broad range of clients, including corporate boards, audit committees, and management, on business and operational issues such as acquisitions, financings, risk evaluation and mitigation, and internal investigations.

Throughout his career, Bill has tried more than 70 jury cases to verdict, has had 15 appellate arguments, and has conducted hundreds of grand jury and motions proceedings. He has had matters in 37 U.S. states and more than 30 countries. His experience gives him insight into the nuances and developments in enforcement approaches and actions around the globe.

Prior to joining private practice, Bill served as the assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia (1989–1996).

Select Engagements

- Represent an agricultural company in a Department of Justice (“DOJ”) criminal antitrust investigation involving alleged price fixing, market supply manipulation, and customer allocation.
- Represent company owner/founder of Department of Defense contractor in criminal antitrust investigation of price fixing allegations related to certain business relationships including supplier, teaming, and subcontractor agreements.
- Represent company executives in DOJ investigation of government program fraud, including antitrust issues, related to prime and subcontracting consulting, manufacturing, and computer software work for the Department of Defense and other agencies.
- Represent former executives of an international financial institution in a U.S. and UK investigation of alleged securities violations, money laundering, and bribery/corruption offenses.
- Represent a pharmaceutical company executive in a DOJ criminal investigation of the generic pharmaceutical industry.
- Represent executives of a multibillion-dollar Mexican development company in an FCPA/anti-corruption investigation.
- Represent an individual in a federal corruption investigation of the District of Columbia’s 2010 mayoral election.
- Trial representation of an individual against the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) in a case of first impression regarding the application of the FCPA’s anti-bribery provisions.
- Represented a defendant in the largest federal campaign finance fraud case ever brought against an individual.
- Represented a New Jersey governor in an investigation of political corruption and a threatened civil lawsuit.
- Represented a former head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Hostage Rescue Team in litigation as well as congressional and special counsel investigations.
- Represented two U.S. companies in a coordinated DOJ and SEC FCPA investigation of the energy industry in West Africa; succeeded in having the cases closed without the government taking any action against the clients.
- Represented an international freight forwarding company in an antitrust investigation conducted by the DOJ and foreign authorities involving allegations of price-fixing and market manipulation among freight forwarders in connection with surcharges levied on customers for international ocean and air freight services; assisted the client in negotiating a favorable resolution.
- Represented a congressman in a criminal investigation of federal lobbying practices and allegations of corruption, bribery, and improper influence.
- Represent an European energy services company in an FCPA/United Kingdom Border Agency/anti-corruption investigation involving Italy, Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
- Represented a foreign corporation in a DOJ investigation of criminal international antitrust violations, including price-fixing and global market

allocation in the maritime construction industry; the client was not charged and ancillary civil litigation was resolved favorably.

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Maryland
- U.S. District Court - District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court - Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court - Southern District of Texas
- United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- U.S. District Court - Virgin Islands

Memberships

- American Bar Association
- Bar Association of the District of Columbia
- International Association of Defense Counsel

Education

- Georgetown University Law Center, JD, cum laude
- University of Notre Dame, BA, cum laude

Recognitions

- 2008–2024, Criminal Defense: White-Collar, Washington, D.C., listed in *Best Lawyers in America*®
- 2012–2013, 2016–2018, 2023–2024, “Local Litigation Star” (District of Columbia), listed in *Benchmark Litigation*
- 2007–2017 and 2019–2024, Washington, D.C., “Super Lawyer” in White Collar Crimes, listed in *Super Lawyers*
- 2014–2024, Litigation: White Collar Crime & Government Investigations (District of Columbia), listed in *Chambers USA*
- 2020, “Best Lawyer in Criminal Defense–White Collar,” listed in *Washingtonian*
- 2016–2020, FCPA, listed in *Chambers Global*
- 2018–2020, “Top 100: Washington, D.C.,” listed in *Super Lawyers*
- 2020–2021, listed in Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll
- 2023, Thought Leader in Business Crime Defense - Corporates, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- 2016–2017 and 2020–2022, Global Leader in Business Crime Defense, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- 2016–2017 and 2020–2022, Global Leader in Investigations, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*

- 2015-2019, FCPA (Nationwide), listed in *Chambers USA*
- 2015-2019, White-Collar Criminal Defense, listed in *The Legal 500 United States*
- 2009, Business Crime, listed in *International Who's Who of Business Lawyers*
- 2012, "Washington D.C. & Baltimore's Top Rated Lawyers," listed in American Lawyer Media

Professional Activities

Bill is actively engaged in various legal organizations and associations, including serving on the board of directors of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia (1993–present), where he previously served as president (2002–2003) and as chair of the Young Lawyers Section (1994–1995). He also currently serves as vice chair of the International Association of Defense Counsel's White Collar Committee (2011–present) and previously served as a member of the American Bar Association House of Delegates (1992–1993, 2001–2004).