

Contact

Melanie M. Speight

Special Employment Law Counsel

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Melanie Speight is a Special Employment Law Counsel in the Labor and Employment Law Department and a member of the Employment Litigation Group; Employment Counseling, Training and Pay Equity Group; and Workplace Investigations Group.

Melanie is a highly experienced federal litigator. Prior to joining Proskauer, Melanie served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York, handling a complex array of affirmative and defensive cases on behalf of the United States in United States District Court and Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of New York and the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. Melanie served as Chief of the Immigration Litigation Unit, overseeing a large team of attorneys handling one of the most voluminous dockets of immigration challenges in the nation, and was chosen to lead the Office's specialized Consumer Protection Team, of which Melanie was an inaugural member. As an AUSA, Melanie handled several high-profile cases with enormously high stakes, ranging from defending significant constitutional challenges to prosecuting fraud actions worth billions of dollars in civil penalties. Melanie earned the Department of Justice Director's Award for exceptional contributions as an AUSA.

In addition, Melanie served as a Senior Counsel and was selected to be a member of an elite trial team in the Special Federal Litigation Division of the New York City Law Department, where she won multiple awards for excellence in litigation.

Melanie's experience enables her to handle cases through all phases of litigation, reaching favorable outcomes through settlement or motion practice based on clients' interests. When pre-trial resolution is not possible or desirable, Melanie is a seasoned first-chair trial lawyer, having taken more than twenty federal jury trials to verdict as lead counsel and supervised many more. Melanie has taught trial strategies and skills locally and nationally, to government attorneys with the National Institute for Trial Advocacy and in Washington, D.C. as a presenter for the International Municipal Lawyers Association.

In addition to her litigation experience, Melanie served as an Adjunct Professor of Clinical Law at Brooklyn Law School, teaching federal civil litigation.

Melanie is engaged in the legal community. She is the co-Chair of the Federal Bar Council's Diversity Committee, a member of the Metropolitan Black Bar Association, and previously served in a committee leadership role with the New York City Bar Association. She has also volunteered as a mentor for St. John's University students.

Melanie received her B.A. from St. John's University and J.D. from Brooklyn Law School where she was a member of the Moot Court Honor Society and Associate Managing Editor of the Brooklyn Journal of International Law.

Practices

Workplace Investigations, Labor & Employment, Employment Litigation, Employment Counseling, Training & Pay Equity

Education

Brooklyn Law School, J.D.
St. John's University, B.A.

Admissions & Qualifications

New York

Court Admissions

Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of New York

United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York

United States District Court for the Southern District of New York

Memberships

New York City Bar Association

Federal Bar Council

Metropolitan Black Bar Association

Awards & Recognition

United States Attorney’s Award for Community Outreach

Edith Spivak Award

Nominated for the New York City Bar Association’s 2017 Municipal Affairs Award