

Our Governmental Entity Representation

For decades we have been helping dozens of public entities — big and small — manage their affairs and achieve their public policy goals. We have decades of experience in public policy matters, and our team includes two former Oregon Deputy Attorneys General, other former high-level lawyers of the Oregon Department of Justice, and attorneys who regularly advise government and public officials. Our public entity clients include city, county, special district and regional governments and agencies, along with intergovernmental organizations.

We also represent school districts, community colleges and universities.

We provide proactive advice and counsel concerning matters contemplated by governmental entity clients, we assist with the legal aspects in implementing such matters, and we address and represent clients in issues, disputes, and administrative matters that routinely arise.

We have become the trusted legal counsel for public clients in a broad range of matters, including:

- **General Counsel** – We serve government entities as their outside general counsel, providing direct advice on all matters within our expertise and coordinating attorneys on matters requiring specialized counsel.
- **Public Entity Litigation** – We routinely represent public entities in a variety of litigation matters, including those relating to employment, procurement, contract, government ethics, tort claims, civil rights claims, and employment claims and lawsuits.
- **Constitutional Law** – We are often called upon to give our opinion on the correct interpretation of the Oregon and United States Constitutions to local governments and the Oregon legislature, and we have successfully litigated state and federal constitutional issues in state and federal courts, including the United States Supreme Court.
- **Government Power & Authority** – We work with government clients to understand the often byzantine web of legal authorities that determine what they can and cannot do, and how they can do it. Our government attorneys are particularly skilled at understanding the intersection of constitutions, statutes, charters, and codes that govern our clients' activities. With that knowledge, we help governmental clients develop strategies to address the pressing needs of their communities – either through action within the bounds of governing law or by pursuing appropriate changes to those laws.
- **Government Ethics** – We guide clients by providing counsel, advice, and representation before the Oregon Government Ethics Commission on matters such as:
 - Training programs on prohibited activities and reporting requirements
 - Disclosure of economic interests, gift regulations, and lobbying regulations
 - Conflict of interest matters
 - Special issues arising in the government contractor arena
 - Representation of government clients in investigations and enforcement proceedings by ethics regulators
 - Design and implementation of programs and procedures to restore public confidence in governmental entities accused of unethical behavior
- **Open Meetings and Public Records** – The intersection of open meetings and public records law balances the public's right to know about matters concerning their government and the public interests served by appropriate exceptions to such law. We advise governments on how to conform their conduct to the requirements of that law.
- **Public Contracting** – We routinely advise and represent public municipalities on all aspects related to the public contracting process on matters concerning public-private partnerships, including:
 - Bid and notice requirements
 - Bid protests
 - Performance matters and other disputes

- **Public Employees Retirement System** – Our attorneys possess a depth of understanding of the legal, political and economic issues surrounding PERS that no other law firm can match. That expertise has led public employers and PERS members alike to rely on us to help navigate their rights and responsibilities. We have helped public employers manage their obligations under the law and avoid unnecessary liabilities, and we have helped employees and retirees understand and successfully pursue their rights to the retirement benefits they worked for.
- **Eminent Domain** – Municipalities commonly need to acquire private property for roads, buildings, pipelines and utility lines, and other public projects. We help municipalities by advising them on matters concerning the proper procedures that must be followed to exercise eminent domain rights, and we represent them in contested matters that may arise, including administrative proceedings, property valuation, and inverse condemnation.
- **Civil Rights Litigation** – We defend public clients in a variety of civil rights claims, including those arising under 42 U.S. Code Section 1983 and corresponding state law claims concerning the deprivation or violation of rights in various contexts.
- **Labor and Employment** – We regularly advise governmental entities on their rights and obligations in connection with labor unions and employees, and defend our clients before state and federal agencies and in court when disputes arise.
- **Government Affairs** – We represent local and regional governmental entities in their dealings with state government, including regulatory matters and lobbying for changes in state law.

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