

Margarita K. O'Donnell

Partner

An experienced trial attorney, Margarita K. O'Donnell focuses on white collar criminal defense and civil matters, representing individuals and corporations in government investigations, criminal prosecutions, and complex civil disputes. Drawing on her experience as a former public defender for the District of Columbia where she represented hundreds of felony and misdemeanor clients – including through trial – she brings strong advocacy and a carefully honed understanding of defense strategy to her engagements. As an extension of this work, Maggie also represents medical providers in disciplinary proceedings before state licensing boards.

Of particular relevance to her international clients and in matters with cross-border dimensions, Maggie has lived in various countries in Latin America, Europe, and Southeast Asia, where she cultivated strong cross-cultural communication skills. She has experience conducting proceedings in Spanish and facility with French and Portuguese.

Maggie also serves as the co-lead of Zuckerman Spaeder's award-winning Pro Bono Program. In this role, Maggie brings a deep commitment to public service. Maggie's work includes identifying opportunities for the firm's attorneys to advocate on behalf of those without the means to hire legal counsel, coordinating with legal services organizations, and supporting the firm's engagement in local communities. Maggie supervises or leads pro bono cases, including engagements relating to discrimination, immigration proceedings, and criminal proceedings.

Government service

- Public Defender Service
 - District of Columbia

Professional leadership

- Planning Committee Member, ABA National Institute on White Collar Crime
- Planning Committee Member, ABA Global White Collar



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Practice focus

- White Collar Defense
- Investigations
- Business Litigation
- Legal Profession and Ethics
- Sports
- Pro Bono
- Cultural Assessments and Internal Investigation

Education

- New York University School of Law, J.D., *cum laude*, 2009
 - Notes Editor, *New York University Law Review*
 - Root-Tilden-Kern Scholar
 - Institute for International Law and Justice Scholar
- Columbia University, B.A.,



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Crime Institute

summa cum laude, 2004

- Board Member, Rising for Justice (formerly D.C. Law Students in Court)
- Member, D.C. Bar Foundation Young Lawyers Network Leadership Council
- Member and Volunteer, Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia
- Member, Women's White Collar Defense Association

- Phi Beta Kappa
- Charles A. Beard Prize

Languages

- French
- Portuguese
- Spanish

Recognitions

- DCA Live, Emerging Woman Leader, 2023
- DC Courts, Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll, 2022

Bar admissions

- District of Columbia
- New York

Court admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Columbia

Clerkships

- Hon. Julio M. Fuentes, U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit
- Hon. Louis H. Pollak, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Representative matters

- Represent individuals in investigations by federal law enforcement agencies and grand jury investigations, including investigations by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).
- Represented two companies charged in the DOJ's investigation of FIFA.



- Represents an individual in a criminal appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit.
- Obtained dismissal on summary judgment of a federal civil lawsuit against an MLB player related to claims of assault, battery and civil conspiracy stemming from an altercation at a club.
- Represented a Flint emergency city manager responding to congressional investigation of the Flint, Michigan, water crisis.
- Represents individuals charged with criminal offenses in D.C. Superior Court and investigations by D.C. law enforcement agencies, including the Metropolitan Police Department.
- Represents individuals in sealing their criminal records in D.C. Superior Court.
- Represented a pharmacist in disciplinary proceedings by a state board.
- Represented a physician in disciplinary proceedings by two state boards.
- Pro bono representation of individuals in immigration proceedings.
- Pro bono representation of individuals in criminal proceedings.
- Pro bono representation of plaintiff in federal employment discrimination lawsuit.

