



Crisis Management

Addressing a crisis in today's climate requires both prompt measures and careful consideration of all potential risks. Winston & Strawn is a trusted business adviser to clients facing complex, fast-moving, high-profile crises.

Moments of crisis require immediate steps based on sound legal and practical strategies. They also need a firm that understands the widespread implications of how a crisis unfolds and the potential long-term impact on a company, its employees, and its reputation. A move in response to a crisis reverberates throughout a company and in the press; a press response starts a new or expanded investigation; an investigation triggers a new civil action. While no one can predict when a corporate crisis will occur, clients will have to act and react faster and smarter than ever. For that, they need a firm with experience and a proven track record of knowing what to do and what not to do. Winston & Strawn is that firm.

Our deep bench of experienced lawyers guides our clients through adversity, handling crises such as cybersecurity attacks, government raids and investigations, company-threatening product recalls, employee theft and malfeasance, senior management scandals, workplace harassment allegations, shareholder activism and hostile takeovers, geopolitical crises, natural disasters, OFAC sanctions, and more.

Our Team includes seasoned attorneys who have served as U.S. Ambassadors and senior State Department officials, former federal law enforcement officials, including U.S. Attorneys and others in both the criminal and civil divisions of DOJ and U.S. Attorney's Offices nationwide; and as attorneys with various federal, state, and local enforcement and regulatory agencies throughout the country. Our lawyers have also served on congressional committees, as in-house counsel and compliance officers, counselors to national and international organizations, and even a former Chief of Staff in the White House.

Legal, marketplace, and communication risks are often nuanced and complex. Our Team is cross-practice, cross-country, multi-lingual, and across the world. We call upon the substantive knowledge and experience of leaders in a variety of practice areas who understand how government authorities approach investigations and litigation, and who are well-positioned to evaluate, manage, and develop effective strategies to address multifaceted threats in an increasingly complex world.

We also provide valuable services that go beyond responding to crises. Our experience spans myriad industries and government authorities, providing us with extensive knowledge to advise on enhancements to compliance procedures and programs aiming to reduce the risk of *future* crises, by identifying potentially problematic and often subtle issues, and minimizing related exposures. We work with clients to conduct in-house training and develop remedial strategies to ensure that, to the extent applicable, issues that may have contributed to the crisis, do not recur.

Key Contacts

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Areas of Focus

Federal & State Government Investigations

We routinely handle highly sensitive federal, state, local, and non-U.S. government investigations—including grand jury proceedings—and criminal and civil investigations conducted by nearly every law enforcement and regulatory agency in the United States, including the DOJ and U.S. Attorney’s Offices, the SEC, CFTC, CFPB, FTC, the Office of Inspector General, and other government authorities. With our deep understanding of government strategies and approaches, our attorneys manage the investigative process in a manner that puts our clients in the best position to assess potential exposure and present strong defenses, while promoting and protecting our clients’ multifaceted interests at all phases of a government investigation. We represent our clients, including organizations, board committees, management, and individuals, in connection with government investigations across myriad industries and involving various subject matters.

Internal Investigations

Our attorneys regularly conduct internal investigations for clients that have been alerted to potential wrongdoing, whether through internal-reporting mechanisms, reports of potential industry-wide issues, whistleblower or relator complaints, a government inquiry, or an audit. We appreciate the sensitivity of these matters and have a keen understanding of the significant business, legal, and regulatory ramifications. We capably strike the delicate balance between conducting a thorough, credible investigation and utilizing an efficient, cost-effective approach.

Congressional Inquiries—including Witness Preparation

We have served as special counsel to congressional committees and represented clients in connection with a wide array of investigations and oversight proceedings conducted by both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate. Many of our engagements in this area have been matters that have dominated headlines. Notably, our attorneys are so experienced with these proceedings that they have even been asked to teach congressional oversight and investigations to law students.

Data Breaches & Cybersecurity Incidents

We work with our clients to ensure that if, and when, they experience a security incident, they are prepared and ready to respond in a highly strategic and efficient manner. We help our clients develop and revise security incident response plans and pressure test their response procedures. This includes evaluating response vendors and working with cyber carriers to ensure that these vendors are accessible and fully prepared in the event of an incident. Our team also frequently provide executive-level tabletop exercises to help raise awareness of issues that may arise in the course of an incident response and hammer out potential strategies to be utilized during an actual response.

Workplace Misconduct Investigations

We have one of the most experienced and long-standing traditional labor teams, which handles the full range of high-profile and complex labor disputes. In addition, we regularly handle single-plaintiff employment litigation, unfair competition matters, counseling and compliance, and other day-to-day employment issues.

Environmental

Our Environmental attorneys have extensive experience defending clients against agency and citizen enforcement of environmental laws. We also handle actions brought by the U.S. EPA and the DOJ, and we litigate against and negotiate with state and local agencies, citizen groups, and private parties across the country.

Product Liability, Safety Concerns & Recalls

Our Product Liability & Mass Torts Practice is one of the industry's most seasoned, with a deep bench of experienced lawyers and a unique combination of extensive trial experience and expansive technical knowledge. With our decades of experience comes a deep understanding of scientific and technical issues in areas such as toxicology, epidemiology, genetics, medical causation, and quantitative and comparative risk assessment.

Infrastructure & Construction Accidents

Our lawyers help to identify and quantify roadblocks and risks at an early stage, so that we can help our clients evaluate and, to the extent possible, mitigate or eliminate risk.

“They’re phenomenal, super reliable, dogged, and the hardest-working lawyers I know.”

Chambers USA

Related Capabilities

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Financial Services Litigation

Government Investigations, Enforcement & Compliance

Government Program Fraud, False Claims Act & Qui Tam Litigation

Labor & Employment

Privacy & Data Security

Product Liability & Mass Torts

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Infrastructure

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