

Clay C. Wheeler

Partner

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Services

Complex Commercial Litigation

Directors & Officers Litigation

Government & Regulatory

Securities Litigation

White Collar Crime & Internal

Investigations



Clay Wheeler is an experienced trial lawyer who handles complex criminal and civil litigation matters. As a member of the firm's Government Enforcement & Investigations team, Mr. Wheeler helps clients respond to government enforcement actions that carry potential criminal consequences. He also counsels organizational clients on compliance issues and conducts necessary internal investigations.

Mr. Wheeler's experience includes representing clients in connection with enforcement actions by the U.S. Department of Justice, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the North Carolina Department of Justice. Mr. Wheeler has worked with clients in the banking, retail, hotel, construction, food processing, telecommunications, and health care sectors.

Prior to joining Kilpatrick Townsend, Mr. Wheeler served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina (2002-2011), and Chief of its Economic Crimes Section (2009-2011). As a federal prosecutor, Mr. Wheeler led teams consisting of AUSAs and federal agents in the investigation, prosecution, and, when necessary, trial of complex financial crimes. He worked extensively on securities and investment crimes, computer data theft, tax fraud (including cross-border offenses), money laundering, and health care fraud.

As Chief of the Economic Crimes Section at the U.S. Attorney's Office, Mr. Wheeler was responsible for the work of eight economic crimes prosecutors, covering a broad range of matters, from environmental crimes to mortgage fraud to government contracting fraud. He also served as the office's Financial Fraud Coordinator,



Bankruptcy Fraud Coordinator, Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, and Health Care Fraud Coordinator.

Mr. Wheeler clerked for United States District Judge Susan Y. Illston in San Francisco, and practiced with a national law firm in Palo Alto, California, before joining the U.S. Department of Justice.

Mr. Wheeler is a Senior Lecturing Fellow at Duke Law School where he co-teaches a course on the role of the federal prosecutor.

Mr. Wheeler was recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in 2020 and the four years immediately preceding for Securities Litigation. He was voted a *Business North Carolina* magazine “Legal Elite” in 2013 for Criminal Law and was named a “Future Litigation Star” among North Carolina attorneys in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 by the *Benchmark Litigation* guide.

Experience

Successfully represented medical professional in criminal Medicaid billing fraud investigation and related proceeding before the relevant North Carolina licensing board. No charges were brought against the client and the licensing board concluded no disciplinary action would be taken.

Reached a favorable settlement with a relator, the federal government and State of Georgia for a medical practice in a Federal False Claims Act litigation brought by a former employee.

Conducted an internal investigation for a company concerning alleged fraudulent conduct in the Philippines by company employees and third-party agents, and recommended measures to further improve the company's compliance program.

Represented an Audit Committee of a medical diagnostic company in conducting an internal investigation involving compliance and assisting with related government disclosure and resolution.

Performed an internal investigation with regard to alleged FCPA, fraud and export issues for a company's Audit Committee with regard to conduct all over the world, including Kuwait, Vietnam, Costa Rica, and Egypt. Also, aided in strengthening the company's compliance program.

Conducted an internal investigation for a federal government contractor into False Claims Act allegations and possible breaches of internal policies and procedures.

Education

Duke University School of Law, J.D. (1997) *Duke Law Journal*, Editor-in-Chief



Williams College, B.A. (1992)

Admissions

North Carolina (2008)

California (1997)

Professional & Community Activities

Duke University School of Law, Senior Lecturing Fellow

Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority, Board of Directors, Member (2013-2015)

Insights

[News Releases](#)

Kilpatrick Townsend Achieves Strong Rankings in Benchmark Litigation 2020
January 6, 2020

[Events](#)

2019 International Association of Financial Crimes Investigators Conference
August 29, 2019

[News Releases](#)

Record-Breaking Recognition for Kilpatrick Townsend in *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2020
August 15, 2019

[In The News](#)

Argent Beats Proposed Class Action Over \$198M Stock Buy
August 9, 2019

[News Releases](#)

Seven Kilpatrick Townsend Attorneys Recognized in Benchmark Litigation 2018
September 24, 2018

[In The News](#)

Record-Breaking Recognition for Kilpatrick Townsend in The Best Lawyers in America® 2019
August 20, 2018



Events

Bribery and Corruption Enforcement and Compliance Trends for Non Compliance Professionals
December 7, 2017

News Releases

Record-Breaking Recognition for Kilpatrick Townsend in The Best Lawyers in America® 2018
August 15, 2017

Publications

Supreme Court Confirms Expansive View of Insider Trading
December 15, 2016

Events

Responding to Government Cybersecurity Investigations
November 18, 2016

Events

The Yates Memo Turns One – Corporate Officers and Criminal Liability Following the DOJ's Yates Memorandum
October 13, 2016

News Releases

Clay Wheeler Featured Panelist at the Corporate Counsel Thought Leadership Discussion and Dinner
October 12, 2016

News Releases

Kilpatrick Townsend Earns Record-Breaking Recognition in Annual Best Lawyers in America 2017
August 16, 2016

News Releases

Eight Kilpatrick Townsend Attorneys Named to 2016 Benchmark Litigation
August 9, 2016

News Releases

Kilpatrick Townsends Clay Wheeler and Dustin Greene Honored by Legal Aid of North Carolina
September 24, 2015



[News Releases](#)

Kilpatrick Townsend Earns Record-Breaking Recognition in Annual Best Lawyers in America 2016

August 19, 2015

[In The News](#)

Kilpatrick Townsend's Media Report June 12-18, 2015

June 19, 2015

[In The News](#)

Kilpatrick Townsend's Clay Wheeler Quoted in Law360 re: "Cardinals Face Rough Road In First-Ever Sports Spying Probe."

June 17, 2015

[In The News](#)

Kilpatrick Townsend's Media Report March 20-26, 2015

March 27, 2015