



Melissa Cook Allison

PARTNER

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Overview

For nearly twenty years, Melissa has advised airports across the country, municipalities and state agencies in Massachusetts, and a variety of private sector clients on complex civil litigation, regulatory and administrative matters.

Melissa's areas of focus are:

- **Litigation:** Melissa's litigation experience spans the public and private sectors and several industries. Recent examples include representation of both Los Angeles World Airports and the Massachusetts Port Authority in lawsuits concerning unauthorized operations by "peer to peer" rental car company Turo, Inc. at LAX and Logan airports; defending the City and County of San Francisco in a constitutional challenge to an ordinance expanding health care requirements for workers at SFO; and successfully defending the Massachusetts Gaming Commission in multiple lawsuits challenging the Commission's award of a casino license to Wynn Resorts under the Commonwealth's Expanded Gaming Act. Melissa also has represented municipalities, private entities, and individuals in litigation and other forms of dispute resolution in a range of matters, such as land use, environmental, contract, and civil rights disputes.
- **Airport Law:** Melissa routinely advises airport owners on federal grant compliance. She has facilitated airport owners' resolutions of significant grant disputes with FAA, including, for example, disputes involving the alleged diversion of airport revenue, releases of airport land, and ACDBE and Title VI compliance. Melissa also has defended airport owners across the country in Part 16 proceedings before the FAA.
- **Public Law:** Melissa helps her governmental clients navigate issues related to conflicts of interest, the Public Records Act, the Open Meeting Law, and internal governance.

Melissa is also committed to pro bono and civic matters. Melissa serves on the firm's pro bono committee and looks for opportunities to grow our pro bono work. Most recently, Melissa represented on a pro bono basis several Boston Public School students and various organizations in their efforts to preserve the statutory cap on the number of charter schools in Massachusetts, and ultimately prevailed in the Supreme Judicial Court. Melissa also is a member of the board of Lawyers for Civil Rights.

Experience

- Successfully defended the Massachusetts Gaming Commission against challenges by the City of Boston, the City of Revere, and individuals (under the Open Meeting Law) to the Commission's award of a casino license to Wynn Resorts.
- Successfully argued before the Supreme Judicial Court to preserve the statutory cap on funding for charter schools in Massachusetts on behalf of *amici* Boston Public School students and various civil rights and educational organizations.
- Successfully defended an airport proprietor in prominent antitrust and RICO litigation in

PRACTICE AREAS

Airports
Litigation
Public Law

CREDENTIALS

Education

Boston College Law School, J.D.

2003 *cum laude*

Senior Articles Editor, *Third World Law Journal*

Bryn Mawr College, B.A.

1999 *magna cum laude*

High Thesis Honors

Admissions

U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals, First Circuit

Massachusetts

U.S. District Court, District of

Massachusetts

U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit

Melissa also has been admitted on

particular matters in several courts

around the country.

Clerkship

Honorable Joseph R. Goodwin, U.S.

District Court, Southern District of

West Virginia

Recognitions

Massachusetts Super Lawyers,

2019-2020

Affiliations

Lawyers for Civil Rights Boston,

Board Member

federal court in Massachusetts.

- Defeated two lawsuits challenging a healthcare provider's decision to require prior authorization before providing coverage for compounded drugs.
- Authored an *amicus brief* on behalf of airport industry organization, Airports Council International, in the 9/11 litigation.
- Successfully defended airport owners in Part 16 proceedings concerning FBO fueling rights.
- Facilitated airport owners' resolutions of significant grant disputes with FAA, including, for example, disputes involving the alleged diversion of airport revenue, releases of airport land, and ACDBE compliance.
- Successfully negotiated with FAA to obtain a substantial reduction of a civil penalty in FAA enforcement action concerning the shipment of hazardous materials.