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## Joanna M. Topping

PARTNER



### White Plains

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This biography is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

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## PRACTICE AREAS

- Appeals
- Commercial Litigation
- Civil Litigation
- Discrimination Matters (before the NYS Div. of Human Rights)
- Employment & Labor Law
- Environmental, Land Use and Zoning
- Insurance Defense
- Civil Rights
- Municipal Law Practice

Joanna M. Topping is a Partner at Abrams Fensterman, LLP. Ms. Topping's practice focuses on civil litigation and counseling in the areas of municipal, education, civil rights, labor and employment law. She also has significant experience handling insurance defense litigation including the areas of employment discrimination, labor and general liability. Ms. Topping has tried numerous cases receiving favorable verdicts in New York state and federal trial courts and regularly represents clients in administrative forums such as the New York State Division of Human Rights and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Ms. Topping also provides services to help clients avoid litigation, including drafting and negotiating employment and separation agreements, drafting employee manuals and conducting internal investigations on behalf of employers.

Drawing on her strong written and oral advocacy skills, Ms. Topping also effectively represents the interests of private and municipal clients in appellate matters. Her appellate experience encompasses

many areas including employment, civil rights, products liability, automobile and premises liability and commercial litigation.

Ms. Topping practiced in the areas of plaintiffs' personal injury and criminal defense before joining and becoming a partner in a large national defense firm. Her prior experience brings unique insight to her analysis of the claims she handles in her current practice. She also previously worked as a law clerk in the offices of the Kings County District Attorney, Nassau County District Attorney and United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York.

Ms. Topping earned her Juris Doctorate from Brooklyn Law School where she served as Articles Editor of the Law Review.

Ms. Topping is admitted to practice in the State of New York.

## **BAR ADMISSIONS**

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- New York
- United States Court Of Appeals, Second Circuit
- United States District Court, Southern District Of New York
- United States District Court, Eastern District Of New York
- United States District Court, Northern District Of New York
- United States District Court, Western District Of New York

## **EDUCATION**

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- J.D., Brooklyn Law School, Law Review, Articles Editor
- B.A., Boston University

## **REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS**

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- Obtained a defense verdict on behalf of a corporation in a case involving federal race and gender discrimination claims brought by an employee of the company;
- Obtained a defense verdict on behalf of a city in a case involving federal racial discrimination claims brought by one of the city's employees;
- Successfully moved to dismiss a §1983 "stigma plus" claim and state law defamation claims brought by a high ranking official of a public benefit corporation because of press releases and news reports that followed the termination of his employment;
- Obtained a defense verdict against a city and two of its police detectives in a federal case involving claims of excessive use of force during an arrest;
- Obtained dismissal of Labor Law § 201-d claim brought by an employee against a county alleging that he was terminated because of his political activity;

- Defended and secured a favorable settlement for a city in a §1983 action brought by a developer whose approvals were revoked after significant community opposition to the project developed;
- Successfully moved to dismiss a New York State inmate's Americans with Disabilities claim against a public benefit corporation providing health care services.
- Obtained summary judgment dismissing complaint in gender discrimination in employment claim against a city;
- Obtained summary judgment dismissing complaint of violation of civil rights arising out of involuntary commitment to psychiatric facility against a county;
- Obtained summary judgment dismissing a complaint by an employee against a school district alleging sexual harassment and gender discrimination.

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS**

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- New York State Bar Association, Member
- New York State Association of School Attorneys, Member
- Westchester Women's Bar Association, Member