Melissa A. Aikman

Paralegal

Richmond

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D 804.697.2221



OVERVIEW

Melissa is an experienced paralegal in the firm's Regulatory Investigations, Strategy + Enforcement (RISE) Practice Group and supports attorneys within the tobacco practice. Her substantial paralegal experience in the tobacco industry ranges from implementing plans for meeting FDA requirements, which regulate the manufacture, packaging, and sale of tobacco products in the U.S., to supporting clients to ensure compliance with various state regulations governing licenses, permits, and escrow payments. Melissa also assists in representing businesses in regulatory compliance matters initiated by governmental agencies and commercial litigation.

Prior to joining the firm, Melissa was a paralegal and litigation case manager for a global law firm, where she helped attorneys and managed paralegal staff to deliver favorable rulings in multimillion-dollar indemnity contract, securities, and high-risk product liability and tort actions. She also served as a paralegal and paralegal supervisor for a prominent Washington, D.C. law firm, where she worked on complex medical malpractice and product liability cases.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Monitors federal and state legislation and regulations to identify information regarding the licensing, manufacture, packaging, and sale of tobacco products in the U.S.
- Analyzes premarket review requirements and prepares FDA submissions in compliance with the Tobacco Control Act.
- Assists tobacco companies to comply with tobacco licensing, tax, and Master Settlement Agreement laws.
- Conducts due diligence in connection with federal and state tobacco compliance matters for business acquisitions.
- Supports attorneys advising tobacco companies on administrative disputes and litigation matters. Collaborated with counsel for national consumer reporting agency in class action litigation challenging fundamental business practices.
- Assisted counsel for several national and regional banks with case assessment, investigation, and pretrial practices in consumer law disputes.
- Supported counsel for regional mining corporation in shareholder derivative and corporate dissolution litigation brought by minority shareholders including management of electronic discovery, trial preparation and trial support, and appellate briefs.

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- Supervised a team of paralegals, managed litigation, and supported counsel for an acclaimed perfume manufacturer, resulting in new law in the area of trademark infringement.
- Supported counsel in a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision establishing the law on expert testimony.
- Served pro bono as Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Consumer Financial Services
- Enforcement Actions + Investigations
- Regulatory Investigations, Strategy + Enforcement
- Tobacco + Nicotine

ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Consumer Financial Services
- Enforcement Actions + Investigations
- Financial Services Litigation
- Litigation + Trial
- Regulatory Investigations, Strategy + Enforcement
- Tobacco + Nicotine

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, B.A., 1989

CERTIFICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- The George Washington University, Paralegal Certificate, 1992

PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author, “So You’re Looking to Purchase a Tobacco/Nicotine Company,” *Tobacco Reporter*, April 2025.