

Zie Alere

Associate

Richmond

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OVERVIEW

Zie assists clients in developing effective strategies to help deter or mitigate the risk of enforcement actions and litigation. He primarily focuses on highly regulated industries, including tobacco and cannabis. As a member of the firm's Tobacco + Nicotine team, Zie contributes to analyses of various compliance issues, including state excise taxation, state licensing, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations, and the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA).

Zie regularly provides ongoing commentary and analysis on developments in the state and federal regulatory landscape through the firm's [Regulatory Oversight Blog](#) and newsletter, [Tobacco Law Blog](#), and [Cannabis Communications Newsletter](#). Frequent topics include FDA enforcement, state tobacco/nicotine regulatory trends, and the ever-developing U.S. cannabis regulatory environment.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Advising an international tobacco company on state legislation regarding tobacco excise taxes, including analysis of related Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement issues.
- Performing regulatory due diligence in connection with the negotiation of joint venture agreements regarding the acquisition and development of a casino and hotel mixed-use development.
- Advising an online tobacco retailer regarding state and local tobacco regulatory issues presented by the delivery of products to consumers.
- Advising an international tobacco company on compliance with state laws regarding licensing, excise taxes, age verification obligations, and delivery sale requirements.
- Assisted in the filing of Freedom of Information Act requests for relevant information from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to inform future pro bono representation of veterans.

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- [Cannabis](#)
- [Regulatory Investigations, Strategy + Enforcement](#)
- [Tobacco + Nicotine](#)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Intern, Chesapeake Office of the Public Defender, 2019
- Intern, Office of Senator Mark Warner, 2018

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- University of Richmond School of Law, J.D., *summa cum laude*, 2023, Order of the Coif; McNeill Law Society
- College of William & Mary, B.A., *magna cum laude*, 2020

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Virginia

PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author, “FDA Issues Draft Guidance on Flavored ENDS PMTAs,” *Regulatory Oversight and Tobacco Law Blog*, March 23, 2026.
- Co-author, “Third Circuit Ruling Highlights Unique Dynamics for Cannabis-Related Contract Disputes,” *Regulatory Oversight*, February 17, 2026.
- Co-author, “Circuit Split Emerges on State Marijuana Residency Rules, With Ninth Circuit Finding Dormant Commerce Clause Inapplicable,” *Regulatory Oversight*, February 10, 2026.
- Co-author, “Federal Court Bars Enforcement of Virginia Vapor Directory, Pending Fourth Circuit Ruling,” *Regulatory Oversight and Tobacco Law Blog*, December 24, 2025.
- Co-author, “Congress Narrows Federal Definition of ‘Hemp,’ Effectively Banning Most Intoxicating Hemp Products,” *Regulatory Oversight*, December 10, 2025.
- Co-author, “FDA Pilot Program Will Fast-Track Certain Nicotine Pouch PMTAs,” *Regulatory Oversight*, October 21, 2025.
- Co-author, “California Finalizes Unflavored Tobacco List Regulations,” *Regulatory Oversight and Tobacco Law Blog*, September 23, 2025.
- Co-author, “Unpacking the Illicit E-Cigarette Crackdown by State AGs,” *Law360*, March 19, 2025.
- Co-author, “FDA Proposes Limiting Nicotine Levels in Cigarettes and Certain Other Combusted Tobacco Products,” *Regulatory Oversight and Tobacco Law Blog*, January 18, 2025.
- Co-author, “Cannabis Rescheduling: ALJ Cancels Upcoming Hearings on Proposed Rulemaking,” *Regulatory Oversight*, January 15, 2025.
- Co-author, “Getting Into the Weeds on Marijuana Excise Taxes: Trends and Outliers in the Largest Markets,” *Reuters*, November 25, 2024.
- Co-author, “FDA Says Agency Will Enforce the Cigarette Graphic Warning Rule in December 2025, But Pending Litigation Could Still Derail Those Plans,” *Regulatory Oversight and Tobacco Law Blog*, September 30, 2024.
- Co-author, “FDA Proposes Submission Tracking Number Requirement for ENDS Imports,” *Regulatory Oversight and Tobacco Law Blog*, September 16, 2024.
- Co-author, “Happy Hour at 4:20? Lessons from Minnesota’s Booming Hemp-Derived THC Beverage Market,” *Regulatory Oversight*, September 4, 2024.
- Co-author, “Industry Urges SCOTUS to Consider FDA Graphic Cigarette Warnings,” *Regulatory Oversight and Tobacco Law Blog*, August 27, 2024.

- Co-author, “Federal Court Rules Montana AG Preempted from De-Listing Cigarette Manufacturer,” *Regulatory Oversight* and *Tobacco Law Blog*, July 18, 2024.
- Co-author, “FDA Unauthorized ENDS Enforcement: 2024 Mid-Year Roundup,” *Regulatory Oversight* and *Tobacco Law Blog*, July 3, 2024.
- Co-author, “Federal and State Approaches to Therapeutic Cannabis,” *Regulatory Oversight*, May 28, 2024.
- Co-author, “Awarding Medical Cannabis Licenses: Takeaways From Recent Alabama Lawsuit,” *Regulatory Oversight*, April 30, 2024.
- Co-author, “Recreational Marijuana Regime Passes Virginia General Assembly,” *Regulatory Oversight*, March 4, 2024.
- Co-author, “En Banc Fifth Circuit Solidifies Circuit Split on Flavored ENDS Product MDOs,” *Regulatory Oversight* and *Tobacco Law Blog*, February 5, 2024.
- Co-author, “2023 Privacy Year in Review,” *Troutman Pepper*, February 1, 2024.
- Co-author, “Multiple States Consider Establishing Vapor Product Directories,” *Regulatory Oversight* and *Tobacco Law Blog*, January 22, 2024.
- Co-author, “FDA Maintains Heightened Enforcement Against Sellers of Illegal E-Cigarettes,” *Regulatory Oversight* and *Tobacco Law Blog*, December 21, 2023.
- Co-author, “Green in a Gray Area: Lessons for Virginia Cannabis ‘Gifting’ Businesses,” *Virginia Lawyers Weekly*, November 27, 2023.