



Theodore L. Kornobis

Partner

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OVERVIEW

Ted Kornobis is a partner in the firm's White Collar Defense and Investigations practice group. He helps navigate clients through high-stakes government investigations and enforcement actions, defends complex civil and white collar criminal litigation, and conducts sensitive internal investigations for entities and their boards of directors.

The investigations and litigation that Ted handles often implicate potential regulatory, civil, or criminal exposure spanning a range of issues, including federal and state fraud statutes, the federal securities laws, the False Claims Act (FCA), environmental and energy laws, and anti-money laundering (AML) regulations.

Ted has developed deep experience advising clients on matters involving the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), FINRA, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), components of the Department of Transportation, and many other agencies and regulators. While prepared to vigorously litigate against the government, Ted has also had repeated success dissuading government agencies from pursuing enforcement actions against his clients.

In addition to defending government enforcement actions, Ted's litigation practice covers qui tam actions, securities class action and shareholder derivative lawsuits, agency rulemaking challenges, mutual fund litigation, and investment disputes. His clients include public and private companies across industries, investment companies and their associated service providers or boards, investment advisers, and broker-dealers.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Ted previously worked at a strategic communications and public policy firm, at a healthcare trade association, and on political campaigns. During law school, he represented non-profit organizations on matters in federal court and before the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognized by *The Legal 500 United States* as a Recommended Lawyer for Corporate investigations and white-collar criminal defense: advice to individuals and Corporate investigations and white-collar criminal defense: advice to corporates, 2024

- Certification in Legal Project Management by the LPM Institute
- Selected to annual Top 40 Under 40 list of Washington, DC legal talent, 2018

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

Ted is actively involved in the community. His pro bono work covers housing, civil rights, child custody, and other issues. He is an officer and board member of a non-profit organization that provides aid to the Washington, DC region homeless population, and co-leads the organization's annual city-wide clothing drive that collects and distributes tens of thousands of items each year to dozens of shelters.

EDUCATION

- J.D., Georgetown University Law Center, 2009 (*magna cum laude*)
- B.A., George Washington University, 2005 (*magna cum laude*)

ADMISSIONS

- Bar of District of Columbia
- Bar of New York
- District of Columbia Court of Appeals
- United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- United States District Court for the District of Columbia
- United States District Court for the District of Nebraska
- United States District Court for the Southern District of New York

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP POWERED BY HUB

- 27 February 2026, United States: Second Circuit Applies Loper Bright to Reject Reliance on SEC Definition of Investment Adviser in Enforcement Action
- 25 February 2026, United States: It's Official-The SEC Issues a Revised Enforcement Manual for the First Time in Nearly a Decade
- February 2026, Trade and Customs Enforcement and Investigations
- 1 December 2025, SEC Examination Priorities Show Continued Focus on Risks in Changed Enforcement Environment

- October 2025, 2025 Asset Management and Investment Funds Fall Conference—Washington, DC
- 4 August 2025, DOJ Guidance Aims to Clarify "Illegal DEI," Raising the Stakes for Potential Investigations and Enforcement
- June 2025, DEI Enforcement: New Signals to Expect "Aggressive" Investigations and Litigation under the False Claims Act
- 15 May 2025, Clearer Carrots and More Restrained Sticks: Key Updates to DOJ Corporate Enforcement Policies
- April 2025, Predictions for Financial Regulatory Enforcement Under the Trump Administration
- March 2025, DEI Enforcement: False Claims Act and Other Risks on the Horizon
- February 2025, Asset Management Regulatory Year in Review 2024
- November 2024, Asset Management and Investment Funds Fall Conference—Washington, D.C.
- 10 October 2024, Is It the End of the False Claims Act As We Know It? District Court Rules Qui Tam Provisions Unconstitutional
- 3 July 2024, Jarkesy's Impact on Agency Enforcement Proceedings: Potential Implications for the SEC and Beyond
- May 2024, Handling Allegations of Noncompliance: Internal Investigations and Self-Reporting
- 6 May 2024, EPA's New Strategic Civil-Criminal Enforcement Policy: Will Enhanced Coordination Lead to More Criminal Enforcement?
- 6 December 2023, FERC Issues 2023 Enforcement Report
- 14 November 2023, When the Government Comes Knocking
- 2 November 2023, Asset Management and Investment Funds Fall Conferences - Washington, D.C.
- 10 October 2023, Recent Settlements Provide Insight on the SEC's Approach to Self-Reporting and Cooperation Credit in Enforcement Actions
- 30 May 2023, FERC Approves Enforcement's Settlements With Two Demand Response Providers
- 6 April 2023, Fifth Circuit Affirms Dismissal of Derivative Suit Against Mutual Fund Adviser and Trustees
- 5 April 2021, EPA Releases New Tool to Analyze Costs of Complying With a State-Proposed No Discharge Zone, But It Carves Out Capital Costs From the Analysis
- 3 July 2019, Court Grants Summary Judgment to Defendant Investment Adviser in Section 36(b) Excessive Fee Lawsuit
- 4 April 2019, Supreme Court Wades Into Circuit Split, Endorses Broader View of "Scheme Liability" for Disseminating False Statements

- 18 January 2019, An Update on False Claims Act Litigation: Circuit Splits and Other Developments in 2018
- 27 August 2018, Cross-Border Investigations: When Are Documents Developed in the Course of an Internal Investigation Protected By Legal Privilege?
- 29 June 2018, Supreme Court Offers Others a Chance for a Second Bite at the Apple in Federal Administrative Adjudication Proceedings – But the Clock is Ticking
- 20 October 2017, D.C. Circuit Opinions Call into Question FINRA's Ability to Impose "Capital Punishment" on the Securities Industry
- 20 June 2016, U.S. District Court (Again) Rules that Parties Can Challenge a CFPB Information Request Without Revealing Their Identities
- 17 June 2016, U.S. Supreme Court Implied Certification Case Both Expands and Limits False Claims Act Liability
- 22 April 2016, "A Bridge Too Far:" CFPB's Authority Grab Rejected by Federal Judge
- 29 March 2016, Heard at the 2016 SIFMA Conference
- 8 March 2016, A New Cyber Regulator on the Beat: The CFPB Issues its First Cybersecurity Order and Fine
- 5 November 2015, D.C. District Court Decision Supports Principle of Allowing Companies to Challenge CFPB Information Requests without Fear of Public Disclosure of Investigation
- 12 May 2015, Department of Justice Issues Guidance on Organizations' Responses to Cyber Incidents

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- ["Takeaways for SEC enforcement: Looking back at FY 2025 and the first six months of Chairman Atkins,"](#) *Reuters Legal News*, October 2025
- ["Clearer carrots and more restrained sticks: Key updates to DOJ corporate enforcement policies,"](#) *Thomson Reuters' Westlaw Today*, 27 May 2025

NEWS & EVENTS

- 4 February 2026, Trade and Customs Enforcement and Investigations
- 15 November 2024, K&L Gates Named Among the Top 30 Investigations Firms Worldwide by *Global Investigations Review*
- 2 November 2022, 2022 K&L Gates Asset Management and Investment Funds Conference — Washington, D.C.
- 21 February 2019, K&L Gates Names 24 New Partners Across Four Continents

OTHER MEDIA MENTIONS

- Quoted, "[Companies Heed SEC Call for Self-Reporting, but Want Clear Perks](#)," *Bloomberg Law*, 29 November 2023

AREAS OF FOCUS

- White Collar Defense and Investigations
- Administrative Law
- Anti-Money Laundering (AML)
- Class Action Defense
- Federal, State, and Local False Claims Act
- Internal Investigations
- International Trade, Investment Controls, and National Security
- Securities Enforcement / Financial Regulatory Enforcement
- US Congressional Investigations

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

Government Enforcement and White Collar Criminal Cases

- Successful defense of a former executive at a Fortune 100 company in SEC litigation alleging improper revenue recognition, resulting in all charges being dismissed after over four years of litigation.
- Representing several individuals in multiple international white collar criminal investigations into alleged fraud, false statements, and violations of the Clean Air Act and other environmental laws regarding vehicle emission certifications.
- Defending several large financial institutions in False Claims Act (FCA) and FIRREA investigations by the US Department of Justice, HUD, and Offices of Inspectors General (OIG) regarding residential mortgage origination and servicing practices.
- Represented biopharmaceutical company and its CEO in an extensive and wide-ranging SEC enforcement investigation, resulting in a declination of enforcement action after successful advocacy with the SEC staff.
- Defended energy trading market participant in FERC investigation relating to compliance with market rules by battery storage facility in CAISO market.
- Defense of registered representative in FINRA investigation concerning allegations of misleading statements in connection with bond market sales practices, resulting in successful declination of enforcement action.

- Defending members of mutual funds' board of directors in SEC enforcement proceedings involving fund asset valuation issues.
- Represented rental car company in National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) investigation regarding automobile safety recall obligations.
- Defended individual in SEC litigation alleging fraudulent practices to artificially inflate the price of securities and sell unregistered securities.
- Represented investment adviser in parallel DOJ and SEC investigations relating to allegations of fraudulent trading practices.
- Represented energy trading firm and its principal in a FERC investigation related to potential market manipulation and violation of market rules.
- Representing mutual fund and variable annuity provider in SEC investigation regarding VA product offerings and marketing.
- Representing broker-dealer division of national financial institution in FINRA investigation related to advertising and registration regulations.
- Representing internet-based consumer marketplace in CFPB investigation, including formal investigative hearings and responses to civil investigative demands.
- Defense of emerging technology company in SEC investigation and testimony, resulting in declination of enforcement action.

Internal Investigations

- Leading several internal investigations for large financial services client covering allegations of potential fraud and violations of securities laws and self-regulatory organization rules.
- Conducting complex internal investigation for global financial institution regarding anti-money laundering (AML) activities at broker-dealer subsidiary and branch offices.
- Conducting internal investigation into possible violations of False Claims Act and Anti-Kickback Act for federal government contractor, and assisting client with self-reporting to government agencies.
- Conducted internal investigation regarding allegations of financial fraud, environmental crimes, public corruption, and retaliation involving utility company.
- Assisting large financial institutions with internal investigations into issues involving potential False Claims Act and FIRREA liability.
- Conduct internal investigation for wealth management company regarding investment selection and due diligence processes.
- Conduct internal investigation for payment processing company regarding systems and controls regarding use of customer funds and unclaimed property.

Private Litigation and Commercial Disputes

- Successfully obtained dismissal of all claims against government contractor in False Claims Act (FCA) qui tam litigation alleging fraud in connection with small business requirements in government contracts.
- Obtained dismissal of all counts against former CEO of manufacturing, energy, and telecommunication company in federal securities class action lawsuit.
- Defended and obtained summary judgment in favor of mutual fund provider in excessive fee litigation in federal district court under Section 36(b) of the Investment Company Act, and successful affirmance of decision on appeal to United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.
- Successfully obtained dismissal of all claims against investment adviser and board members in shareholder derivative lawsuit alleging breaches of fiduciary duty and contract in connection with investment decisions by a mutual fund, and successful affirmance in United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.
- Successful prosecution of claim on behalf of higher education institution in binding arbitration involving issues of contract interpretation and employment law.
- Representing companies and boards of directors in shareholder class action and derivative lawsuits in federal and state courts, involving claims of federal and state securities law violations, breaches of fiduciary duty, corporate dissolution, and common law claims.
- Representing recreational facility in class-action litigation involving consumer statute and contract claims.
- Obtained dismissal of class action lawsuit against brokerage firm alleging breaches of contract and tort duties in operation of online automatic trading platform, and successful affirmance in United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.
- Successful defense of independent board members in federal shareholder derivative and class action lawsuits alleging breaches of fiduciary duty and RICO violations, and successful affirmance in United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Appellate Litigation

- Challenge to federal agency action in petition before United States Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit under the Administrative Procedures Act, resulting in successful settlement modifying challenged agency procedures.
- Petition for writ of certiorari with the United States Supreme Court in connection with representing a member of a public company's board of directors in discovery dispute involving white collar criminal issues.
- Successful appeal of an adverse decision by the Department of Veterans Affairs regarding benefits coverage for a veteran who experienced in-service exposure to harmful agent.