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FENSTERMAN, LLP

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Municipal Law Practice



LONG ISLAND

(516) 328-2300

BROOKLYN

(718) 215-5300

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(914) 607-7010

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(585) 218-9999

ALBANY

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ATTORNEY ADVERTISING



LEADERS IN MUNICIPAL, ENVIRONMENTAL & LAND USE LAW

Abrams Fensterman is one of New York's leading municipal, environmental, and land use law firms. Founded in 2000, the firm has grown to 120 attorneys across five offices—Lake Success, Brooklyn, White Plains, Rochester, and Albany—offering unmatched experience in representing local governments throughout the Hudson Valley and across the state.

We counsel municipalities on the full spectrum of issues they face, including municipal and environmental law, public sector labor and employment, land use and zoning, government contracts, commercial litigation, civil rights and First Amendment matters, regulatory compliance, telecommunications issues, ethics, and investigations.

Our team includes former judges, long-serving Town and Village Attorneys, Planning and Zoning Board counsel, and seasoned litigators who have handled thousands of municipal matters at both the trial and appellate levels.

We advise municipal clients on burgeoning issues, such as short-term rental legislation, solar farms and small cell tower installation. We have negotiated the successful implementation of developer community benefit agreements.

As a multidisciplinary law firm, we provide our municipal clients with immediate access to experienced attorneys across numerous practice areas. When specialized issues arise—such as intellectual property claims, complex litigation, environmental matters, or appellate work—we draw on the firm's depth to ensure comprehensive, timely support.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss how Abrams Fensterman can support your municipality's legal needs.

ABRAMS FENSTERMAN LLP
Robert A. Spolzino
Municipal Practice Chair
rspolzino@abramslaw.com
(914) 607-7010



COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

For the municipalities we serve as general or special counsel, our work spans every aspect of local government operations. Our services include:

- Attending board and committee meetings
- Advising governing boards, planning boards, zoning boards, and administrators
- Drafting local laws, resolutions, notices, decisions, and legal opinions
- Ensuring compliance with SEQRA, the Open Meetings Law, FOIL, and other state and federal requirements
- Preparing and negotiating contracts (other than bond work)
- Defending municipal actions in litigation, appeals, arbitration, and Article 78 proceedings

LABOR COUNSEL

We negotiate and draft collective bargaining agreements, handle grievances and arbitrations, prosecute disciplinary matters, and represent municipalities before the EEOC, NYSDHR, and in state and federal courts.

LAND USE COUNSEL

We draft zoning and environmental legislation, guide land use boards, review SEQRA submissions, prepare determinations, and defend municipal decisions in litigation.

LITIGATION

Our attorneys regularly handle Article 78 proceedings, civil rights matters under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, contract and real estate disputes, and environmental litigation at both the trial and appellate levels.



Representative Municipal Clients

Our attorneys have represented or currently represent the Comptroller of the City of New York, as well as the following municipalities and public entities:

CITIES

- New Rochelle
- White Plains
- Peekskill
- Yonkers

TOWNS

- Beekman
- Greenburgh
- Eastchester
- North Castle
- North Salem
- Somers
- Mamaroneck
- Kent
- LaGrange
- Ramapo
- Orangetown
- Union Vale
- Amity
- Grove
- Allen
- Angelica
- Belfast
- Birdsall
- Granger
- Willing

VILLAGES

- Mamaroneck
- New Paltz
- Pelham
- Pelham Manor
- Larchmont
- Mount Kisco
- Briarcliff Manor
- Canaseraga
- Washington
- Belmont
- Canaseraga

OTHER ENTITIES

- Fire Districts (Belfast, Belmont, Friendship, Hinsdale)
- Yonkers City School District
- Additional municipal clients across New York State

SPECIAL COUNSEL APPOINTMENTS

We serve as principal labor and employment counsel for the Yonkers City School District and the Nassau University Medical Center, and as special counsel for the Village of Mamaroneck, the Town of North Salem, and the Pound Ridge Library District. We were recently retained as Town Attorneys for the Town of Beekman in Dutchess County.

BY THE NUMBERS

25+

Years In Business

120+

Attorneys

250+

Employees

5

Office Locations

30+

Areas of Practice

15

Languages Spoken

Top 400

U.S. Law Firm

LONG ISLAND

BROOKLYN

WHITE PLAINS

ROCHESTER

ALBANY



Representative Matters

Our attorneys have litigated municipal matters for more than 30 years. It would be impossible to put together a comprehensive list, but recent representative matters include: Our municipal litigation successes include:

- Defending the City of Yonkers in a proposed class action involving fire inspection fees
- Securing favorable results for New Rochelle, Mamaroneck, Larchmont, and Pelham Manor in a Clean Water Act citizen suit
- Representing the Town of Greenburgh in litigation challenging a village incorporation petition
- Defending the Westchester County Department of Health in a CERCLA matter
- Prevailing for the City of White Plains in federal litigation regarding group home placement
- Upholding Rockland County's redistricting legislation
- Successfully defending local determinations in multiple Article 78 proceedings, including zoning, ethics, and land use matters



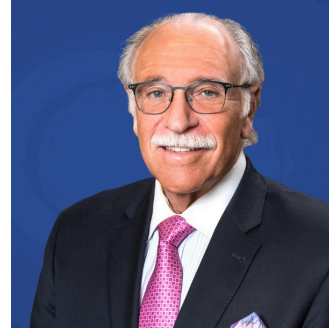


HON. ROBERT A. SPOLZINO (RET.)
EXECUTIVE PARTNER

Bob Spolzino leads the firm's local government practice and has practiced municipal law since 1987, when he was appointed Village Prosecutor of the Village/Town of Mount Kisco. He became Mount Kisco Village Attorney later that year and served until 1995. He has been the Attorney of the Village of Mamaroneck since 2017. For more than eight years, from 2001 to 2009, Bob was a Justice of the New York State Supreme Court. For five of those years, he was a Justice of the Appellate Division, New York's intermediate appellate court, where he decided more than 4,000 appeals and wrote major opinions for the court. Several of his dissents led to reversals by the Court of Appeals, New York's highest court.

Bob's practice now concentrates on municipal law, litigation and appeals. He attends local board meetings on a weekly basis, he has argued seven times in New York's highest court, the New York Court of Appeals, and more than 100 times in the Appellate Division.

Bob's practice currently focuses on advising and representing local governments, land use and environmental regulatory matters and disputes, appeals, and commercial litigation. In that role, he has litigated, and is currently litigating, numerous matters for municipalities on Long Island and in the Hudson Valley. He has taught environmental impact review (NEPA and SEQRA) at Pace University School of Law and served on the Executive Committee of the Municipal Law Section of the NYSBA.



HON. JEFFREY A. COHEN (RET.)
OF COUNSEL

Retired Appellate Justice Jeffrey A. Cohen is of counsel to the firm and is a member of the firm's appellate, litigation, municipal and white-collar criminal law practices. Prior to joining Abrams Fensterman, Justice Cohen served as an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Judicial Department, for more than a decade.

Prior to his ascension to the appellate bench, Justice Cohen was elected to the New York State Supreme Court for the 9th Judicial District (Westchester, Dutchess, Orange, Rockland, and Putnam counties) in 2009. Before that, Justice Cohen was appointed by the Westchester County Executive as Chair of the Westchester County Board of Ethics, where he served for more than eight years.

Justice Cohen is the Co-Founder and President of both the Justice Brandeis Law Society of the 9th Judicial District and the Jewish Bar Alliance, NY which is an umbrella organization of all five Jewish bar associations of Greater New York. He has lectured at Continuing Legal Education (CLE) programs for the Westchester County Magistrate's Association as well as numerous bar and professional associations.



HON. MATTHEW A. ROSENBAUM (RET.)
PARTNER

Matt Rosenbaum is a partner at Abrams Fensterman, LLP. Matt's involvement in local government began as a member of the Town Board, Deputy Supervisor, Public Works and Public Safety Chair in the Town of Penfield in Monroe County. He was then elected as a Justice of the New York State Supreme Court in the Seventh Judicial District, where he served until 2019. Since retiring from the Supreme Court, Matt has become one of New York's most sought after and respected mediators and arbitrators. He has a reputation for efficiency and effectiveness and is known best for his honest evaluation of cases.

Matt currently represents the towns of Allen, Amity, Angelica, Belfast, Birdsall, Granger, Grove, and Willing, and the Villages of Belmont and Canaseraga in Allegany County, as well as fire districts in Belfast, Belmont, Friendship, and Hinsdale.

Matt's experience with mediations and arbitrations includes his knowledge from serving as the Supervising Judge of the Civil Courts in the 7th Judicial District, where he presided over numerous bench and jury trials. For nearly a decade, he served as both the Commercial Division Judge and the Medical Malpractice Judge based in Monroe County.



ROLAND A. BARONI, JR.
PARTNER

Roland Baroni has been lead attorney for the Town of North Castle since 1982, for North Salem since 1990, and for Somers since 2006. He specializes in land use, zoning, environmental matters, in rem and tax certiorari, representing both private and municipal clients throughout Westchester County.

Roland has extensive experience in preparing, reviewing, and presenting applications for subdivisions, site plans, special use permits, and variances. Roland regularly advises school districts on tax certiorari, PILOT agreements, and related tax matters.



MICHAEL TOWEY, ESQ.
ASSOCIATE

Mike Towey is an associate attorney in Abrams Fensterman's White Plains Office. Mike's practice areas include Land Use & Zoning, Municipal Law, and Trusts & Estates.

Mike is a United States Army veteran, having served for six years with the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, stationed at Joint-Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.



LISA COLOSI FLORIO
PARTNER

Lisa Colosi Florio is a partner at Abrams Fensterman, LLP. She manages the firm's appellate practice and the litigation practice in the firm's White Plains office and also works in the firm's municipal practice. Lisa has a unique combination of knowledge, experience, and reasoned judgment—a foundation earned over the course of nearly 20 years of service as an attorney in the New York State Court System and during an additional decade of legal employment in the public and private sectors.

Lisa previously was honored to serve as Counsel to the Honorable Janet DiFiore, Chief Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals, and the State of New York. Earlier in her career, she was employed as Principal Law Clerk to a Senior Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals, gaining invaluable knowledge of civil and criminal appellate matters.

Lisa previously served in the same Court as an attorney in the Court's central staff, assisting in the review of certiorari factors and jurisdictional issues arising in civil applications for leave to appeal. She also served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Appeals Bureau of the Westchester County District Attorney's Office, heightening her foundation in criminal appellate matters.



MARY E. DESMOND, ESQ.
OF COUNSEL

Mary E. Desmond is a partner in Abrams Fensterman's White Plains office. She is the attorney for the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals in the Town of North Castle. Mary has drafted hundreds of local laws, resolutions, and agreements, as well as decisions for the boards she represents and advises on local government issues such as the State Environmental Quality Review Act, the Open Meetings Law, and the Freedom of Information Law.

Mary has an active environmental law practice. She represents individuals, municipalities, and businesses in a comprehensive range of environmental, land use and administrative law matters. Her practice includes litigating claims under CERCLA (Superfund), RCRA (hazardous waste), the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the New York State Navigation Law (Oil Spill Act), and common law, as well as resolving environmental law enforcement actions brought by government agencies.

During her career, Mary has been involved in the cleanup of various types of contaminated sites, including brownfield remediations, dry cleaning operations, gasoline stations, landfills, and large superfund sites with multiple PRPs. In 2015, Mary was recognized for her work providing legal assistance to low-income New Yorkers whose homes were destroyed by Hurricane Sandy with the Pro Bono Publico award from the Legal Aid Society.



COLLEEN PIERSON, ESQ.
PARTNER

Colleen is a partner in Abrams Fensterman’s Albany office., focusing on land use law and health care law. Colleen has a deep interest in environmental and land use matters. She was the student co-editor-in chief of the New York Environmental Lawyer. Colleen served for years as an Assistant Town Attorney in the Town of Glenville in Schenectady County, developing broad experience in planning and zoning issues. She also provides counsel on environmental and land use matters to various groups including opposition to proposed projects ranging from short-term rental law proposals to landfills and “glamping” projects.

Colleen represents skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, physicians and other health care industry-related clients (both for profit and not-for-profit) in the area of health care compliance and litigation, with a specific focus on regulatory compliance. She has particular expertise assisting clients with matters before the Dep’t. of Health, Dep’t. of State, and Dep’t. of Education. Colleen has over a decade of New York State government experience, having worked in several roles for the State Legislature and the New York State Division of Budget.

Colleen has wide range of state and federal civil litigation experience, including Article 78 actions Colleen used her knowledge of State government and administrative law to help clients navigate the regulatory frameworks.



DAVID IMAMURA, ESQ.
PARTNER

David Imamura is a partner at Abrams Fensterman, LLP, where he leads the firm’s election and campaign finance law practice and practices civil litigation. David’s practice includes advising and representing clients with respect to New York State Election Law, Campaign Finance Law, and Voting Rights Law matters.

David was elected in 2023 as a member of the Westchester County Board of Legislators, representing District 12 (Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Edgemont, Hastings, Hartsdale, and Irvington). He is the first Asian-American to serve on that Board and is now its Majority Leader. Before his election, David served as Chair of the New York State Independent Redistricting Commission, which was responsible for preparing initial drafts of the State’s Congressional and State Legislature district lines after the 2020 census, having been appointed to the Commission by State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

David also chairs the Saw Mill River Watershed Advisory Board. Immediately prior to joining Abrams Fensterman, David was an associate at an international law firm in New York City. David earned his A.B. from Dartmouth College and his J.D. from Columbia University.



JOANNA M. TOPPING, ESQ.
PARTNER

Joanna Topping, a partner at Abrams Fensterman, focuses her practice on counseling and representing local government entities in municipal, education, civil rights, and employment matters. As lead outside counsel for the Yonkers School District, she negotiates and drafts labor contracts, handles grievances and arbitrations, and represents the District in labor and employment litigation and other disputes.

Joanna has significant experience in defending municipalities and other clients in litigation. She has tried numerous cases receiving favorable verdicts in New York state and federal trial courts. She represents clients in administrative forums; NYSDHR and the EEOC.

Joanna has successfully represented municipalities in race discrimination, gender discrimination, excessive force and illegal search and seizure cases.



BILL COLEMAN, ESQ.
ASSOCIATE

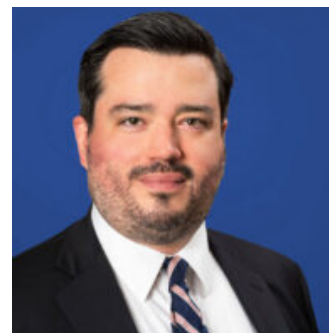
Bill Coleman is an associate attorney at Abrams Fensterman, LLP, focusing on government and commercial litigation, arbitration, construction litigation, mechanics lien foreclosure, landlord/tenant, contract review, and labor/employment litigation.



JOSEPH ERIOLE, ESQ.
PARTNER

Joe Eriole is an experienced land use, municipal and commercial transactions attorney with 30 years' experience in his fields of concentration. He has represented the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors throughout the Hudson Valley from Manhattan to Albany. Joe was the Village Attorney for New Paltz for five years, was the Town Attorney and prosecutor in LaGrange and Union Vale, was the Planning Board Attorney for the Towns of Washington, Union Vale, and Kent, and was the IDA counsel for the County of Ulster.

Joe has been an award-winning instructor of Environmental and Business Law at Marist College and SUNY and has been a regular speaker at national conferences in his field. His practice focuses on real estate development, and environmental law as well as related municipal litigation components.



MICHAEL B. RICHARDS, ESQ.
ASSOCIATE

Michael B. Richards is an associate attorney in the White Plains office of Abrams Fensterman, LLP. He has extensive experience in complex commercial litigation and white-collar investigations.



RAJU SUNDARAN, ESQ.
PARTNER

Raju Sundaran is a partner at Abrams Fensterman, LLP. Raju was previously a Senior Counsel for the New York City Law Department, where he successfully defended law enforcement officers and the City of New York in complex civil rights cases for 14 years. He effectively briefed numerous motions resulting in the dismissal of plaintiff's claims against defendant police officers and the City of New York that could have exposed the officers and the City to multi-million-dollar judgements in favor of plaintiff.

Raju has successfully defended and won numerous federal jury trials with the potential for substantial exposure to a high plaintiff's damages award stemming from a myriad of allegations, including false arrest, malicious prosecution, excessive force, denial of right to a fair trial, deadly force/police-involved shootings, and municipal liability.

Raju has independently handled and defended numerous, complex Section 1983 federal civil rights actions involving allegations against police officers for false arrest, malicious prosecution, denial of right to fair trial, excessive force, and municipal liability from inception/pleadings through discovery, depositions, motion practice, and trial. Raju earned his Juris Doctorate from New York Law School.



GREGORY S. SPICER, ESQ.
ASSOCIATE

Greg Spicer is an associate attorney at Abrams Fensterman, LLP. Greg's focuses on civil litigation, administrative law, and counseling in the areas of public sector labor and employment law, education, and civil rights. He also has significant experience handling insurance defense litigation, particularly in the area of employment discrimination.

Greg regularly represents clients in the New York State and federal courts as well as administrative forums such as the New York State Division of Human Rights, the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the New York Public Employment Relations Board. He has practiced in the areas of labor and employment law, general civil litigation, and municipal and education law for over two decades and has served as an Assistant County Attorney in Westchester County and a Principal County Attorney in Suffolk County.

Greg earned his undergraduate degree from Boston College and his Juris Doctorate from St. John's University School of Law. Mr. Spicer is admitted to practice in the state courts of New York, as well as the United States District Courts for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York.

Why Municipalities Choose Abrams Fensterman

DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE

The attorneys who work in our local government practice are extraordinarily experienced in all aspects of municipal, land use, and environmental law, as well as litigation and appeals. For example:

- Bob Spolzino served as the Village Attorney of the Village/Town of Mount Kisco from 1988 to 1995 and the Village Attorney for the Village of Mamaroneck from 2017 to 2025.
- Roland Baroni has been the Town Attorney for the Town of North Castle since 1982, for North Salem since 1990, and for Somers since 2006.
- Lisa Florio represents the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town of North Salem.
- Mary Desmond represents the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town of North Castle.
- Mike Towey represents the Town Board and the Planning Board of the Town of Somers.
- Joe Eriole was the Village Attorney for New Paltz for five years, was the Town Attorney and prosecutor in LaGrange and Union Vale, was the Planning Board Attorney for the Towns of Washington, Union Vale, and Kent, and was the IDA counsel for the County of Ulster.

RESPONSIVENESS AND APPROACH TO CLIENT SERVICE

We are committed to delivering responsive, high-quality legal services. Your goals are our goals. Our attorneys work closely with municipal leaders, providing practical guidance and timely support. Accessible by phone or email, we take pride in serving as reliable, long-term partners to the municipalities we represent.

TECHNOLOGY, SECURITY & ACCESSIBILITY

We also maintain a secure, modern technology infrastructure. All documents and data are encrypted and stored off-site. Our attorneys have secure remote access through multi-factor authentication, ensuring seamless service both in person and remotely.

FEE STRUCTURES

We typically begin with discounted hourly rates until the scope of work becomes clear. Municipal clients receive substantial rate reductions, and those who retain us as general counsel are eligible for an additional bundled rate that applies uniformly across all attorneys working on their matters.



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3 Dakota Drive
Suite 300
Lake Success, NY
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