Kate N. Dodoo

Shareholder, Practice Group Leader

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Oklahoma City

Overview

Kate Dodoo is an accomplished appellate, trial, and labor and employment lawyer who leads both the firm's Appellate Group and Immigration and Compliance Group. She represents businesses in appellate litigation and serves as business immigration counsel for major U.S.-based corporations with global operations and foreign-owned companies with business interests in the United States.

As a member of the firm's Labor & Employment Group, Kate utilizes her immigration experience to assist clients in securing employment-related visas for their employees entering the United States. Her work spans industries such as healthcare, technology, banking and finance, education, and high-audit risk industries. She also provides strategic guidance to employers on I-9 compliance, E-Verify, self-audits, audit preparedness, and defense, as well as counseling employers on various aspects of labor and employment law.

Kate utilizes her extensive experience to represent clients in the administrative, state, and federal trial and appellate courts across a wide range of civil litigation matters.

She also serves as a town attorney and advises Oklahoma municipalities.

As part of her appellate practice, Kate delivers strategic counsel and prepares cases for immediate review through appeals and original actions. At the trial court level, she serves as embedded appellate counsel, collaborating with teams to provide support through the preparation of dispositive motions and jury charges, with an eye towards preserving the record for appellate review.

Kate's achievements have earned her inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America* (commercial litigation; litigation - labor and employment).

Admissions

Oklahoma

Texas

The Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma

U.S. District Courts for the Western and Northern Districts of Oklahoma

U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Fifth and Tenth Circuits

Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)

Education

J.D., Oklahoma City University School of Law
Dean's List; CALI Award; Phi Delta Phi Honors Inn; National Order of the Barristers; William J. Holloway, Jr. American Inn of Court; National Women Law Students' Association; Black Law Students' Association

B.S., University of Central Oklahoma

Kate frequently serves as a guest legal columnist for *The Journal Record* and is a contributing author to *Law360*, the *Oklahoma Employment Law Letter, Midwest Employment Law Letter, HRlaws.com,* and *EmployerLINC*. She is also a frequent speaker at McAfee & Taft's annual EmployerLINC employment law seminar and previously presented at the firm's Corporate Counsel Seminar.

Before joining McAfee & Taft in 2021, Kate dedicated the first 15 years of her legal career to public service at the federal, state, and municipal levels. Her roles included serving as assistant chief counsel in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, where she litigated complex immigration cases before the Executive Office of Immigration Review, U.S. Department of Justice, and litigated appeals in the Board of Immigration Appeals. Additionally, her tenure as an appellate attorney in the Oklahoma Supreme Court honed her skills in providing procedural and substantive legal advice, drafting precedent-setting decisions, and navigating complex civil cases.

Kate has completed advanced training from the National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA), Appellate Judge Education Institute (AJEI), Institute of Special Education Advocacy (ISEA) at the William & Mary School of Law and Stetson University School of Law, School-Justice Partnerships Program from the Georgetown University School of Public Policy (CJJR), and the Police Legal Advisor Training Program (PLATP) at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC).

Active in a number of professional organizations, Kate is currently serving a three-year term as governor on the Oklahoma Bar Association's Board of Governors in addition to serving as a trustee on the association's Bench and Bar Committee, Governor Liaison to the OBA Law School Committee, and a member of OBA Diversity Committee. She is also a fellow of the Oklahoma Bar Foundation and a member of the Oklahoma County Bar Association, Cherokee Nation Bar Association, State Bar of Texas, Texas Bar College, American Bar Association, National Bar Association, and American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Kate has remained a committed community volunteer while maintaining an active professional and family life. Over the years, she has devoted her time to enhancing education opportunities for at-risk and special needs youth through the Oklahoma Children's Court Improvement Program, coaching the Frederick Douglass Moot Court teams at the Oklahoma City University School of Law, mentoring law students participating in the Oklahoma Supreme Court's internship programs, and serving the boards of the Law and Public Safety Career Academy of Douglass High School, the YWCA, and Youth Opportunity Task Force. Her community engagement earned her a nomination for the YWCA's Social Justice Activator Award and recognition as an "Oklahoma Shero" in 2017 by the State of Oklahoma.

Representative Experience

Litigation and Appeals

- Successfully reversed a $17.1 million jury verdict in a wrongful death-products liability action on appeal, and obtained affirmance from the Oklahoma Supreme Court for a multinational automotive manufacturer.
- Successfully defended an accounting firm in the Oklahoma Supreme Court against a $7.2 million professional negligence action.
- Obtained an order denying the petitioner's application for original jurisdiction and petitions for writs of prohibition and mandamus in a wrongful death action on behalf of the manufacturing company before the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

- Utilized Oklahoma's Citizen Participation Act to secure the dismissal of a plaintiff's claims against a municipality.
- Achieved dismissal of a homebuilder's petitions for writs of prohibition and mandamus against a municipality in the Oklahoma Supreme Court.
- In a case of first impression, successfully secured writs of prohibition and mandamus from the Oklahoma Supreme Court, voiding the trial court's dismissal order and reinstating a multibillion-dollar software company's claim.
- Defended an Oklahoma municipality in trial and appellate courts against the dismissal of its declaratory action and counterclaims.
- Obtained affirmance from the appellate court of a trial court's summary judgment in favor of a national insurance company.
- Secured writs of prohibition and mandamus from the Oklahoma Supreme Court, directing the trial court to dismiss litigation for lack of subject matter jurisdiction in favor of a faith-based entity.
- Defeated appellate jurisdiction in the Oklahoma Supreme Court, leading to the dismissal of an opposing party's appeal against an Oklahoma municipality at the pre-decisional stage.
- Reversed a trial court's order against a nationwide insurance company regarding its claim handling process and denial.
- In a case of first impression to the Oklahoma Supreme Court, reversed a trial court's order denying a multimillion-dollar design and manufacturing company's motion to dismiss claims under the Oklahoma Citizens Participation Act.
- Represented a U.S. manufacturer in a discovery dispute before the Oklahoma Supreme Court, affirming a trial court's order imposing sanctions on the opposing party for pre-suit conduct.
- Secured affirmance at the Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals for a district court's order granting summary judgment to a financial investment firm and advisor accused of fraud.

Immigration and Compliance

- Registered numerous employers for the nation's annual "H-1B lottery" and successfully obtained cap-subject H-1B visas for hard-to-fill specialty occupations across various industries.
- Obtained various nonimmigrant visas, including E-3, R-1, F-1, B1/B2, TN, H-1B, and cap-exempt H-1B for employers across all industries, including architecture and engineering, construction, education, energy, healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing, religious institutions, and technology.
- Obtained permanent resident (green card) status for families.
- Obtained employment authorization.
- Provided proactive enforcement and compliance strategies and defense with a focus on high-audit risk industries for various types of actions involving the U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Form I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification audits and investigations.
- Implemented standard operating procedures and other compliance policies for employers, as well as provided guidance and training to employers and staff on audit preparation and defenses.

Honors and Awards

- Selected by peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America* (2024–Present)
- Honored with *The Journal Record's* Leadership in Law Award, recognizing legal professionals for their professional and civic contributions to the state (2024)
- Named to The National Black Lawyers Top 100 (2021)

Professional Organizations and Memberships

- Oklahoma County Bar Association
- Oklahoma Bar Association (Board of Governors, Governor At-Large; Governor-Liaison to the Budget Committee; Governor-Liaison to the Bench and Bar Committee; Governor-Liaison to the Law School Committee; Trustee, Bench and Bar Committee; Member, Diversity Committee)
- Cherokee Nation Bar Association
- State Bar of Texas
- American Bar Association
- National Bar Association
- American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)
- Oklahoma Bar Foundation (Fellow)
- Texas Bar College, A Professional Society of Legal Scholars

Civic Involvement and Leadership

- Law and Public Safety Career Academy at Douglass High School (Former Board Member)
- Oklahoma Children's Court Improvement Program (Former Taskforce Member and Co-Chair of the Education Workgroup)
- YWCA Enid (Former Board Member)