

Winston & Strawn Fraud Response Team Prepared For Increase In Government Investigations Pending Passage Of New COVID-19 Relief Legislation

DECEMBER 23, 2020

CHICAGO – December 23, 2020 – As negotiations continue on the passage of new COVID-19 relief legislation and the renewal of federal programs offering aid to a wide range of U.S. businesses, Winston & Strawn's Government Program Fraud/False Claims Act Response Team (Fraud Response Team) stands ready to provide strategic counsel for companies and individuals at risk for government investigations and litigation based on alleged wrongdoing in connection with the receipt and use of government funds.

Prior to and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Winston's Fraud Response Team has been providing cross-practice and cross-industry support for organizations and individuals in matters involving alleged government program fraud and violations of the federal FCA and similar state false claims statutes.

This team is particularly skilled in mounting strong defenses to government investigations involving alleged FCA violations, and related *qui tam*/whistleblower litigation, and is adept at counseling clients with respect to avoiding and defending against allegations of wrongdoing in connection with the receipt and use of funds made available under various COVID-19 response and relief programs. The team's cross-practice approach allows for seamless, coordinated support and guidance throughout the entire lifecycle of government program fraud and FCA matters, including expertise from the following practice groups:

- White Collar, Regulatory Defense & Investigations
- Antitrust & Competition
- Appellate & Critical Motions
- Government Contracting
- Health Care & Life Sciences Regulatory, Litigation & Investigations
- Labor & Employment
- Privacy and Data Security
- Securities Litigation
- Tax

“The passage of multiple COVID-19 response and relief programs has increased the number of companies and individuals receiving government funds, and the related risks that those recipients may find themselves in the government’s crosshairs,” said Suzanne Jaffe Bloom, Co-Chair of Winston’s White Collar, Regulatory Defense & Investigations group and one of the Fraud Response Team leaders. “Participants in these critically important Covid-19 programs face heightened scrutiny from government agencies and various appointed ‘watchdogs’ focused on rooting out fraud in connection with these programs, and from potential whistleblowers motivated by the prospect of significant financial rewards. Our Fraud Response Team is ready to jump into action to help clients navigate these complex investigations and mount strong defenses, as well as guide clients on compliance with the ever-changing landscape of these government programs and the identification and mitigation of liability risks.”

Leaders of the Fraud Response Team include several former government lawyers with significant experience investigating and prosecuting fraud matters, including FCA matters:

- Suzanne Jaffe Bloom, a former Assistant U.S. Attorney in both the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York, and former Deputy Chief of the Long Island Criminal Division;
- Jack Knight, a former Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina;
- Abbe Lowell, a former Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, Special Assistant to the Deputy Attorney General, and Special Assistant to the Attorney General at the DOJ; former counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives, including as Chief Minority Counsel, and a special ethics counsel to the House Committee of Standards of Official Conduct (Ethics Committee);
- Matt Orwig, a former presidentially appointed U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas and Assistant U.S. Attorney for both the Northern District of Texas and the Eastern District of Texas;
- Reed Stephens, a former DOJ Civil Division Trial Attorney, Civil Frauds Section, responsible for national FCA litigation; and
- Alessandra Swanson, a former Federal regulator at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Office for Civil Rights.

Further details regarding our Government Program Fraud/FCA Response Team can be found in our brochure. **[Download it here.](#)**

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