



OF COUNSEL

Monica D. Castillo

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Monica D. Castillo, a former in-house Los Angeles deputy city attorney, is a member of Best Best & Krieger LLP's Municipal Law practice group. Monica advises public agency clients on day-to-day matters and special projects. Her approach is to work closely with staff and city management to comprehensively learn, understand and achieve client objectives. In her general counsel role, Monica is well-equipped to guide clients on a range of issues, from transactional needs and tenant rights to litigious matters.

Monica serves as assistant city attorney for the City of Santa Paula, and performs assistant city attorney functions for the cities of Hermosa Beach and Signal Hill. She regularly staffs Santa Paula Planning Commission meetings and periodically staffs Hermosa Beach City Council and Planning Commission meetings.

Monica has meaningful transactional experience. She has drafted and negotiated several contracts, including affordable housing agreements, software agreements and agreements for the sale or lease of real property.

Monica has also drafted a variety of novel ordinances and updated existing ordinances in conformity with new state laws. To name but a few, she has drafted anti-smoking, rent control, sidewalk vending and housing ordinances. More recently, Monica has developed particular knowledge of local emergency eviction moratoria and legal issues surrounding this

CORE PRACTICES

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Housing, Economic Development and Real Estate

Land Use, Planning & Zoning

Municipal Law

legislation. As a result, Monica also has a thorough understanding of the California laws impacting landlord and tenant rights that apply during non-emergency situations, including the Tenant Protection Act of 2019.

In addition to providing advisory services, Monica defends municipal clients in litigation. One of her pending cases alleges Brown Act violations and another challenges a client's residential eviction moratorium.

Before joining BBK, Monica was in the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office's Land Use Division of the Municipal Law Branch. During her more than 3 years with the Division, Monica advised the Department of Building and Safety and Department of City Planning. She served as deputy city attorney to the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners at public meetings. Monica also successfully represented the City in litigation and drafted several ordinances. She prevailed in defending approvals for projects ranging from single-family residences to large commercial developments. Monica also has experience with California Environmental Quality Act compliance and litigation.

Monica launched her legal career at Morrison & Foerster LLP's Los Angeles office, where for more than 3 years she represented Fortune 500 companies in complex commercial litigation. Monica is admitted to the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

Monica grew up in Orange, California. She enjoys baking, attending concerts and comedy shows, reading classic dystopian literature and playing with her 6-year-old Terrier mutt.

Accolades

- The Wiley W. Manuel Certificate for Pro Bono Legal Services, 2011–2013
- USC Law Summer Fellowship, 2007-2008
- Harvard Center for Public Interest Careers Fellowship, 2003-2004
- Mellon Mentored Scholar at Harvard, 2000-2003

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

University of Southern California
Gould School of Law, J.D.

Harvard University, B.A. English &
American literature & language,
magna cum laude

Bar Admissions

California

LANGUAGES

English

Spanish