

WILLIAM HARLA

ATTORNEY AT LAW

William Harla is a partner at DeCotiis and a member of the firm's Executive Committee. He is a member of the Government and Regulatory Affairs, and Litigation practice groups.

His career in the private and public sectors at the highest levels has made him a valued advisor and legal and regulatory strategist to decision makers confronted with achieving results in the face of challenges and resolving complex and nuanced matters. He embodies the highest standards for ethics and legal skills, and he is an effective advocate and a trusted counselor to his clients.

Mr. Harla specializes in government and regulatory affairs, civil litigation, and regulatory and public affairs consulting. He practices in State and federal courts at the trial and appellate levels, including the New Jersey Supreme Court where he has participated in dozens of precedential cases. He has represented clients in groundbreaking matters that have resulted in over 50 published opinions. Mr. Harla has also written numerous legislative enactments and Executive Orders. He has successfully guided a variety of corporate, public and individual clients through the intricacies of the legislative and administrative practice in Trenton in such areas as public utilities and energy, environmental regulation and permitting, government organization, insurance, consumer affairs, alcohol, gaming and other highly regulated industries, among other areas. He has represented clients before such investigatory agencies as the State Commission on Investigation, the State Comptroller and the State Legislature. He has been designated as Special Counsel for many State entities in complex matters, and was instrumental in the drafting of the study, legislation and the implementation of the merger of the New Jersey Turnpike and the Garden State Parkway authorities.

Prior to joining the Firm, Mr. Harla had a varied bi-partisan career in public service. He served as Deputy Chief Legal Counsel to Governor James Florio and as an Assistant Legal Counsel to Governor Thomas Kean. He also served as the Assistant Attorney General in Charge of Administrative Agency Advice overseeing the issuance of legal opinions and administrative and regulatory matters in the Division of Law, Department of Law and Public Safety. As a Deputy Attorney General, Mr. Harla acted as General Counsel to the State colleges, the State Commission on Ethical Standards and the Department of Personnel.

Mr. Harla served as an aide to a Member of the State General Assembly, and as a Research Assistant in the Office of Legislative Services for the State Legislature.



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Governmental Associations

Appointed as an Associate Counsel of the New Jersey League of Municipalities (2008-Present).
Appointed by the New Jersey Attorney General to the Governor's Study Commission on Discrimination in Public Contracts and Procurements. Appointed by the Mayor to the Princeton Neighborhood Advisory Planning Committee (2014-2015).

Mr. Harla has acted as a senior advisor to several New Jersey gubernatorial transitions for ethics, labor and matters of government organization, including the Governor's Office and the Attorney General's Office.

Teaching and Published Articles

Mr. Harla co-taught "New Jersey State and Municipal Government" at the Rutgers-Newark Law School, Spring Semester (2011). He has also been an instructor for the New Jersey Continuing Legal Education Center and the National Business Institute CLE on such topics as attorney ethics, lobbying and ethics, utility lobbying and regulation and the New Jersey judicial and public official appointments process. He has also published articles in a variety of publications on tort claim act immunity, property tax relief and pension reform.

Professional Recognition and Community Service

Martindale-Hubbell AV Peer Review Rated (highest rating for ethical and legal competence).

Appointed by the New Jersey Supreme Court to the Professional Responsibility Rules Committee (September 1, 2015 – August 31, 2018).

Appointed by the Court to the Committee on the Unauthorized Practice of Law (January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2011).

Princeton Area Community Foundation, Trustee (2016 - Present).

The Arts Council of Princeton: Member of the Executive Committee and of the Board of Directors (2014-Present).

Dress for Success for Mercer County: Member of the Board of Directors (2010-Present); 2015 Gala Honoree.

New Jersey State Bar Association; American Bar Association.

Bar Admissions

State of New Jersey (1979); U.S. District Court of New Jersey (1979); U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals (1982).

Education

Mr. Harla is a graduate of the Rutgers School of Law-Newark (1979) and Rutgers College (1974), where he received his B.A in Political Science with high distinction. He was editor-in-chief of the Rutgers Daily Targum.