



Amy K. Tchao

Attorney

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PRACTICE AREAS

Environmental & Natural Resources

Land Use & Conservation

Municipal Law

School & Education

Disability Law

Amy Tchao is Drummond Woodsum's Practice Group Leader for Municipal Law. Over the course of the past two decades, Amy has focused her practice on general municipal law, land use law, and education law.

Amy serves as the town attorney for several Maine municipalities and has served as special counsel for municipalities throughout the State. She has provided guidance to towns and other public clients on a broad range of municipal issues, including land use permitting and enforcement, zoning compliance (including shoreline zoning matters), ordinance drafting, elections, freedom of information requests, property tax, and assessment matters, and review of contract and personnel issues. She has provided legal representation before local and state boards and permitting authorities and has litigated several cases in state and federal court on behalf of municipalities.

Dartmouth College, B.A.,
magna cum laude, *Phi Beta Kappa*, 1986

University of Maine School of Law, J.D., *summa cum laude*, 1993

BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

Maine

New Hampshire

U.S. District Court, District of Maine

First Circuit Court of Appeals

Based on her experience as town attorney for a number of towns along Maine's coast and in its lakes regions, Amy has specialized in resolving complex problems arising from storefront development, access and permitting issues. For example, Amy has represented a municipality in complex, multi-year, multi-party litigation over public beach access and recreation rights, including appearing before the Maine Supreme Judicial Court on these issues. As town attorney, she successfully negotiated a land-use agreement between hundreds of private property owners and the town ensuring public recreational access and ongoing management of the beach resource. She has also drafted ordinances for beach management and use, handled dock and wharf permitting disputes, and provided guidance to coastal towns on public access and ongoing use issues. Amy has presented at several workshops and conferences on topics related to public access to Maine's coastline and storefront areas.

In addition to municipal and land use law, Amy represents public schools in the areas of special education and disability rights law and on legal issues involving students, school

employees and school board policies. She has advised both public and private schools on a variety of issues, and has represented public schools in administrative hearings, before state and federal agencies, and in state and federal court. Amy also has presented at a number of school law conferences nationally and across the State of Maine and has been the lead instructor for a number of graduate level school law courses for the University of Southern Maine.

Amy is listed in Best Lawyers in America, a guide to leading lawyers in the country, in the categories of Municipal Law, Litigation-Municipal Law and Education Law and was selected by Best Lawyers as Maine's 2014 "Lawyer of the Year" in the category of Municipal Litigation. Best Lawyers also named Amy Maine's 2012 Education "Lawyer of the Year."

AWARDS

- Education Law Lawyer of the Year, Portland, ME (Awarded by Best Lawyers) 2012, 2016, 2018
- Litigation - Municipal Lawyer of the Year, Portland, ME (Awarded by Best Lawyers) 2014
- Best Lawyers USA
- Martindale Hubbell, BV Distinguished

MEMBERSHIPS

- Maine State Bar Association
- Maine Council of School Board Attorneys
- New Hampshire Bar Association

COMMUNITY/PUBLIC SERVICE

- Maine Women's Fund
Former Board Member and Executive Committee Member
- Planned Parenthood of Northern New England
Former Board Member