

Matt K. Nguyen

Associate



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Issues and Appeals

CooleyREG

White Collar Defense and Investigations

State Attorneys General

Commercial Litigation

National Security

Matt represents innovative clients in high-stakes disputes, with a focus on complex trial and appellate litigation, government investigations, and impact pro bono centering on civil rights, racial justice and the rule of law. Drawing on his diverse government service, including as a counselor to senior elected and military leaders, Matt strategically advances client priorities to achieve winning results.

Matt's recent matters include representing:

Issues, appeals and government litigation

- A prominent US law firm in a First, Fifth and Sixth Amendment, equal protection and separation of powers challenge to President Donald Trump's executive order retaliating against the firm for its pro bono representations and protected associations (DDC)
- A director of one of California's largest charitable foundations in an eight-figure private enforcement action, establishing whistleblower protections for 110,000 charities (California Supreme Court)
- Forty neuroscience scholars, the American Academy of Pediatric Neuropsychology and others challenging the constitutionality of condemning late adolescents to life without parole, leading to several precedential rulings (California, Massachusetts, Michigan and New Jersey Supreme Courts)
- The Asian American Federation, Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California, GLAAD, Hispanic Heritage Foundation, LGBT Tech, Muslim Public Affairs Council, National Hispanic Media Coalition, Sikh Coalition, Stop AAPI Hate and others in a First Amendment and equal protection challenge to the nationwide TikTok ban (US Supreme Court and DC Circuit)
- The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California, ACLU of Northern California, Black Lives Matter and other nonprofits challenging a law that suppresses First Amendment-protected speech seeking accountability for police misconduct (California Supreme Court)
- Democratic presidential campaigns, the Democratic National Committee and state parties to protect voting rights in battleground states for the 2020 and 2024 elections (federal/state courts in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin)
- A major airline in enforcement actions by the US Department of Justice (DOJ), state attorneys general and private plaintiffs, and in preserving a summary judgment win (First Circuit and D. Mass.)
- A life sciences startup in an Administrative Procedure Act challenge to delayed US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of its lifesaving drug for certain lung disorders (DDC)
- A real estate company and its CEO in preserving an arbitration win against a business partner; and a

software company CEO in a securities appeal (California Supreme Court and Courts of Appeal)

- Certified classes of detained persons against Immigration and Customs Enforcement and its private prison contractors in Northern and Southern California, contributing to the release of hundreds of medically vulnerable immigrants based on constitutional rights violations (N.D. Cal. and S.D. Cal.)
- The ACLU and 14 ACLU state affiliates seeking to protect the fundamental rights of Native American children, families and tribes (US Supreme Court)
- A unicorn startup in reversing lower courts' dispositive order and summary writ denial involving statutory interpretation via a grant-and-transfer order (California Supreme Court)
- A top tech company in a mass action appeal involving online data (California Court of Appeal)
- Fifty cybersecurity leaders and organizations opposing a first-of-its-kind US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) cybersecurity enforcement action against SolarWinds and its chief information security officer (SDNY)
- Fintech and biotech companies in defeating petitions for review (California Supreme Court)
- UC Berkeley Law Dean Erwin Chemerinsky and other top federal court scholars supporting the NAACP's constitutional challenge to North Carolina's voter suppression laws (US Supreme Court)
- March For Our Lives, Everytown for Gun Safety and Brady: United Against Gun Violence seeking to stem the proliferation of unregulated ghost guns for criminal activity (N.D. Tex. and S.D. Tex.)
- Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California, the Asian Law Caucus, California Black Power Network, Disability Rights California and three ACLU affiliates challenging the constitutionality of a voter suppression law adopted by the City of Huntington Beach (California Superior Court)

Government investigations

- A top smartwatch company, global ecommerce platform and snow sports company in product safety investigations by DOJ, the US Consumer Product Safety Commission and state attorneys general
- A top management consultancy in its response to a US Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations subpoena involving sports and foreign affairs
- A top medtech company chief financial officer in an SEC investigation involving a device recall
- A global gaming platform in online safety investigations by state attorneys general
- A top generative AI company in its response to a US House Judiciary Committee subpoena
- Edtech startups in various investigations by DOJ, the US Federal Trade Commission, US Department of Education and US Department of Veterans Affairs
- A former DOJ senior official witness in a highly publicized DOJ Special Counsel prosecution and in a separate DOJ inspector general investigation, both with national security implications
- A unicorn AI startup in an investigation involving the US False Claims Act, US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and the US Office of Foreign Assets Control
- A client in a DOJ prosecution alleging fraud, resulting in a favorable one-day sentence
- Public cloud computing, dating and social media companies in responding to DOJ subpoenas on the US Stored Communications Act and US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act

Other matters

- A top tech company, top smartphone maker, public safety contractor and the second-largest US television broadcaster in defending against various putative class actions
- A top federal elected official on extraordinary constitutional issues involving Trump's attempts to overturn

the results and certification of the 2020 presidential election

- Startups and emerging companies in several trade secret and contract disputes
- An edtech startup in resolving an affirmative eight-figure dispute with a major US public university
- A major news publisher on minimizing national security and legal risk related to its viral article on domestic election integrity, foreign state espionage and US counterintelligence
- A musician in resolving a racial justice trademark dispute with Lady Antebellum
- Numerous Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander advocacy and educational groups on intellectual property and licensing, nonprofit formation and antidiscrimination advocacy

Fiercely committed to public service, Matt concurrently serves as the chief legal officer (Brigade Judge Advocate) and captain for the US Army Reserve's 304th Sustainment Brigade, advising 25 commanders on national security and administrative law governing 2,500 soldiers. He also has deployed abroad to support NATO. Separately, Matt has advanced the legal and policy priorities of elected US leaders, including the Harris-Walz presidential campaign, Joe Biden's presidential campaign and transition, then-Senator Kamala Harris, former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, former Department of Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, California Gov. Gavin Newsom and former California Gov. Jerry Brown.

The son of Vietnam War refugees, Matt attended K-16 public schools, graduating from UC Berkeley with a perfect record. He earned his JD from Yale Law School as a PD Soros Fellow, Coker Fellow teaching torts and legal writing, notes and comments editor of the Yale Law Journal, managing editor of the Yale Law & Policy Review, a founding advocate for the We Care Coalition, a Solomon Center for Health and Law Policy-affiliated author, and director of the Education Adequacy Project Clinic. In his free time, Matt enjoys global travel, snowboarding, pickleball, volleyball, golfing and adventures with his Shiba Inu.

Clerkship

- Justice Goodwin Liu, California Supreme Court

Education

The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School
OBC superior academic performance,

Yale Law School
JD Coker Fellow, Yale Law Journal,

University of California, Berkeley
BA salutatorian, summa cum laude, Political Science

Admissions & Credentials

California

District of Columbia

Rankings & Accolades

Advocates for Justice Award, ACLU of Southern California (2025)

Litigator of the Week Shoutout, The American Lawyer

Forbes 30 Under 30 (Law & Policy)

The Green Bag Almanac and Reader: Exemplary Legal Writing (2020)

Memberships & Affiliations

Pathfinder, Leadership Council on Legal Diversity

Elected Fellow, American Bar Foundation