

Russell Capone

Partner



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New York

White Collar Defense and Investigations
Trials
Crisis Management
Commercial Litigation
False Claims Act/Qui Tam/FIRREA
Export Controls and Economic Sanctions
Sports+

Russell Capone is a former federal prosecutor with significant experience handling complex criminal cases, particularly those involving corruption, financial fraud and other white collar crimes. Russell served for more than 10 years at the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, most recently as chief counsel to the US Attorney. In that role, Russell helped oversee SDNY's most significant and sensitive investigations and prosecutions involving, among other crimes, white collar and cybercrime, securities fraud, public corruption, terrorism, gang violence, organized crime, sex trafficking and international narcotics trafficking. He also helped supervise matters arising in SDNY's Civil Division, including those involving civil rights violations, as well as violations of the False Claims Act and Anti-Kickback Statute.

Russell previously served for three years as chief of SDNY's Public Corruption Unit. Earlier in his career, he worked as a prosecutor in that unit and the Violent and Organized Crime Unit.

During his time as a federal prosecutor, Russell handled or supervised many of the Department of Justice's highest-profile cases. Among others, he oversaw the investigations and prosecutions of Michael Cohen, Michael Avenatti, Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell, as well as high-ranking officials in city and state government, including a former top aide to the governor of New York. He also investigated and supervised a series of cases involving fraud and corruption in NCAA basketball, and oversaw investigations and trials involving violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. As first-chair trial lawyer, Russell successfully handled criminal jury trials involving white collar crime and murders, and other violent crimes, as well as appellate arguments before the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Drawing from his extensive public and private sector experience, Russell understands the full array of potential legal issues affecting his clients. Whether the possibility of civil or criminal liability exists, Russell skillfully navigates clients through the intimidating, uncertain and challenging situations they encounter. These matters often involve trials, government investigations, regulatory inquiries and serious fraud allegations, as well as possible local, state and federal crimes. Russell's experience and deep understanding of these areas helps him negotiate and obtain successful outcomes that often avert civil or criminal liability altogether.

Prior to his work as a prosecutor, Russell was an associate at global law firm Davis Polk, handling complex civil litigation matters. During his time at Harvard Law School, Russell served as managing editor of the Harvard Law Review. Russell also served as a law clerk to US District Judge Sidney H. Stein of the US District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Education

Harvard Law School
JD, cum laude, 2005

Tufts University
BA, summa cum laude, 2002

Admissions & Credentials

New York

Court Admissions

US District Court for the Southern District of New York

US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

Rankings & Accolades

Chambers USA: Litigation: White-Collar Crime & Government Investigations – New York (2025)

The Legal 500 US: Corporate Investigations and White-Collar Criminal Defense (2025)