

## Laura Akowuah

Special Counsel



lakowuah@cooley.com

+1 202 728 7014

Washington, DC

Life Sciences and Healthcare Regulatory  
Food and Beverage  
Wellness  
Life Sciences and Healthcare

Laura's practice focuses on compliance and enforcement of federal food and drug laws and regulations. She joined Cooley after more than 10 years at the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). While at the FDA, Laura served as associate chief counsel for enforcement in the Office of the Chief Counsel, advising on litigation and enforcement spanning all FDA-regulated product areas, including food, drugs, medical devices and biological products. She advised special agents in the FDA's Office of Criminal Investigations and assisted the US Department of Justice (DOJ) in investigations and criminal prosecutions involving violations of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. Most recently, Laura held multiple leadership roles in the Human Foods Program (formerly the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition), including acting director for the Office of Enforcement, acting director for the Office of Compliance Intervention and Consultation, and senior advisor for critical foods enforcement and compliance in the Office of Compliance and Enforcement. While with the Human Foods Program, she led the development and implementation of compliance and enforcement strategies to address regulatory issues and compliance challenges associated with conventional food, dietary supplements, infant formula, produce and imports. Laura also oversaw the compliance strategy and activities for urgent food-related matters concerning outbreaks, recalls, regulatory misconduct complaints, violative inspections and emerging public health issues.

Laura has received multiple accolades for her service at the FDA, including the Outstanding Service Award and the DOJ's John Marshall Award – the department's highest award offered to attorneys. She began her legal career as a law clerk to Judge John A. Gibney, Jr. of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. Before law school, Laura worked on public health initiatives both domestically and abroad.

## Education

University of Virginia School of Law JD, 2012

The George Washington University MPH, Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health, 2009

North Carolina State University BS, Zoology, summa cum laude, 2005

## Admissions & Credentials

Virginia

Not admitted to practice in Washington, DC

Supervised by active members of the Washington, DC Bar

## Court Admissions

US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

## Rankings & Accolades

US Food and Drug Administration: Outstanding Service Award

US Department of Justice: John Marshall Award – Interagency Cooperation (2022)