



Susan J. Onuma

Counsel | New York

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Areas of Practice

Corporate Law | Japan Practice | International Law | Labor & Employment | Real Estate

Susan Onuma is Counsel in the Corporate Practice of Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP.

Susan offers guidance to both publicly and privately held entities navigating the complex legal landscape of conducting business in the United States. Beyond handling specific legal matters, she frequently assumes the role of outside general counsel for American subsidiaries of Japanese firms. In this capacity, she provides comprehensive support to management across all aspects of their operations, ensuring their understanding and adherence to various regulations and laws spanning corporate governance and compliance, employment, export controls, antitrust, creditor's rights and immigration. Susan's clientele spans diverse industries, encompassing chemicals, consumer goods, food, manufacturing, real estate, logistics, trade, pharmaceuticals, medical products, retail and hospitality.

While Susan primarily concentrates on general business and commercial transactions in her practice, she also assists clients in navigating the complexities of US litigation, including preparing for depositions and overseeing the discovery process. Susan has helped in successfully defending a client in a five-month jury trial in Anchorage, Alaska that involved a class action antitrust case over salmon price fixing.

Additionally, she advocates for individual business owners regarding their legal concerns, as well as coordinates estate planning and administration matters. Susan is a longtime leader in business and civic organizations that support the Japanese and Japanese American community. In 2014 she received the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation for her work in furthering US-Japan relations and in 2015 was awarded the Outstanding 50 Asian Americans in Business Award. In 2020, she was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun by the Government of Japan, the highest honor bestowed on civilians.

Admissions

New York

Education

J.D., University of Pennsylvania Law School

B.A., Barnard College (Columbia University)

Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies, Tokyo

Languages

Japanese

Memberships

- Honorary President and member, Board of Directors, Japanese American Association of New York, Inc.
- Board of Governors, Japanese American National Museum (Los Angeles)
- Corporate Secretary, Japan Society (New York)
- Founding board member, U.S.-Japan Council (USJC) (Washington, DC)
- Board of Directors, Japanese Medical Society of America (New York)
- Board of Directors, Vice Chair and Secretariat, Japan History Council of New York, Inc.
- Board of Directors, NY Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League