

Marina A. Torres



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PROFILE

Ms. Torres is an experienced litigator and federal prosecutor with over 30 trials in federal and state courts. Her practice focuses on trial work of all types, complex litigation, criminal investigations and enforcement. She has broad experience with government enforcement actions, corporate internal investigations, and solving complex and sensitive legal, policy, and regulatory issues.

Prior to joining Halpern May Ybarra Gelberg LLP, Ms. Torres was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in both the District of Columbia and the Central District of California. Most recently, she was the Opioids Coordinator for the International Narcotics, Money Laundering and Racketeering Section of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California. In that capacity, she led and coordinated the law enforcement response to the growing epidemic of opioid diversion and overdoses within the District, working with a broad array of federal, state and local agencies, officials and community groups. As a seasoned prosecutor, Ms. Torres led numerous high-profile investigations and prosecuted individuals, corporations and international criminal enterprises for financial crimes, fraud, money laundering, racketeering, corruption, tax violations, identity theft and international drug trafficking. Ms. Torres also completed rotations within the domestic violence, felony sex offense, and appellate units of the D.C. U.S. Attorney's Office. She has briefed and



argued several cases before the Ninth Circuit and D.C. Circuit Courts of Appeal. Ms. Torres has received multiple awards and recognitions for her work in law enforcement, including a commendation from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and U.S. Secret Service for her work in a wide-ranging gang investigation (2020), the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Director's Award for securing a trial victory against a suspected white nationalist engaging in a complex mortgage fraud (2019), and a Special Achievement Award from Main Justice (2017).

Ms. Torres also served as a political appointee with the Department of Homeland Security under President Obama, where she was part of the policy team leading the design and implementation of the President's executive actions on immigration. In that role, Ms. Torres counseled the Secretary and senior Department leadership on responses to Congressional investigations and agency oversight, as well as provided high-level legal and policy support to the Director on complex and highly sensitive USCIS programs. Ms. Torres maintains active Top Secret Security Clearance. Prior to joining the Obama Administration, Ms. Torres honed her litigation skills at the law firms of Wilmer Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP and Munger Tolles and Olson LLP. There, she provided strategic counsel and investigation-related assistance to a broad suite of companies confronting criminal, regulatory and Congressional inquiries, with a focus on Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) matters.

She has been honored for her immigration and civil rights work by the ACLU of Southern California (twice), by the National Immigration Legal Center, and was previously selected for the 2013 "Inaugural Hot List" for the Mid-Atlantic Region by "Lawyers of Color," a list compiled to recognize early-to-mid-career attorneys under 40 who are excelling in the legal profession. Ms. Torres was also listed in Huffington Post's "Top 40 Latinos under 40 in Politics," chosen as the "2015 Rising Star" by the Hispanic Bar Association of DC (HBA-DC), and selected as a Political Partner in the Truman National Security Project. Ms. Torres was selected as a Salinas Scholar for the Aspen Institute and is also a Term Member for the Council for Foreign Relations. She has served on numerous boards of various nonprofits in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

Ms. Torres is admitted to practice in California and the District of Columbia, as well as before the United States District Court for the Central District of California, and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. Ms. Torres received her law degree from Stanford Law School, where she was on the executive board of the Stanford Law Review, and her BA from the University of California at Berkeley, where she graduated with distinction.

EDUCATION

- Stanford Law School, J.D. Stanford Law Review, Stanford Mock Trial Team, Stanford Journal of Civil Rights & Civil Liberties, Stanford Latino Law Students' Association
- University of California, Berkeley, B.A. Rhetoric, Political Science, and Ethnic Studies (minor), with distinction

PUBLICATIONS

- “Inside Looking Out: An Application of International and Regional Linguistic Protections to the U.S. Spanish-Speaking Minority,” 87 Neb. L. Rev. 599 (2009).

NEWS

- Fox News: Two year investigation into drug dealing in skid row results in 50 arrests.”
- DOJ: “DEA-led crack-down on prescription opioid diversion targets medical professionals with criminal charges.”
- DOJ: “High desert doctor arrested on federal narcotics charges for issuing prescriptions without medical need after telemedicine sessions.”
- DOJ: “Federal authorities announce 11 cases charging alleged drug dealers with providing opioids that led to fatal overdoses.”
- ATF: “Gardena 13 gang member gets 10 plus years in prison”
- DOJ: “Inland empire man sentenced to nearly 6 years in federal prison for bogus debt-elimination services that cost victims \$1.6 million.”
- DOJ: “Operator of Long Beach medical clinic sentenced to more than 3 years in federal prison for selling prescriptions for powerful opioids.”
- Huffington Post: “40 Under 40: Latinos in American Politics.”
- Aspen Institute: “2019 Ricardo Salinas Scholar.”
- ACLU: “16th Annual Law Luncheon”

REPRESENTATIVE CASES

- **AS A FEDERAL PROSECUTOR:**
- Obtained conviction at trial on 30 mail- and wire-fraud counts, and lengthy prison sentence, for operator of bogus debt-elimination scheme who defrauded hundreds of victims, mostly distressed homeowners ravaged by the Great Recession who believed defendant’s promises to wipe their mortgage debt.
- Part of a large-scale, multi-agency operation targeting drug cartel and gang distribution networks preying on homeless individuals in the Skid Row area of Los Angeles, resulting in 50+ arrests and the seizure of various drugs (including more than 46,000 fentanyl pills).

- Secured convictions for a leader of a sophisticated identity theft scheme for using insiders at financial institutions and phone companies to obtain information from customer accounts that were then utilized to create fake accounts and credit lines at luxury shops and department stores.
- Prosecuted Beverly Hills doctor on several drug distribution counts for unlawfully selling controlled drugs (mostly opioid painkillers) to an undercover agent outside the legitimate practice of medicine, as well as for structuring cash deposits, tax fraud and money laundering.
- Led investigation of bribery, corruption and drug trafficking charges targeting TSA agents believed to be smuggling controlled substances through security check-points to couriers, who would then transport the drugs out of California for sale in another state, in a multi-state drug trafficking scheme.
- Filed charges against, and participated in the investigation of, several Fashion District importers in a scheme to undervalue imported garments and avoid paying millions of dollars in duties to the United States, as well as a tax fraud scheme in which the company's owners failed to report on tax returns millions of dollars derived from cash transactions.
- Led and coordinated prosecution of 11 cases charging 12 drug dealers with providing opioids that resulted in fatal overdoses. Prosecuted doctors, pharmacists and other medical professionals for illegal prescribing practices, diversion of controlled substances, financial fraud and money laundering offenses.
- Obtained conviction at trial against owner of medical clinic who illegally sold paper prescriptions for oxycodone to undercover officer for cash, often in the parking lot of his clinic.
- Secured lengthy prison sentence for gang member and 8-time convicted felon on a variety of firearm- and drug-related charges.
- Led multiple wiretaps in investigations targeting international drug cartel members involved in drug trafficking, financial fraud and money laundering.
- Led investigation into suspected embezzlement and tax fraud by CEO of cryptocurrency firm.
- Secured conviction in bench trial involving the attempted sex trafficking and enticement of a minor.
- **IN PRIVATE PRACTICE:**
 - Second-chaired week-long California state jury trial on behalf of a multi-billion dollar oil refining and marketing company in a contract and negligence dispute with a public utility company.
 - Member of trial team successfully defending best-seller author against allegations made by director seeking half of the \$55 million in domestic profits generated from film and book sales.
 - Lead senior associate managing an international money laundering investigation on behalf of a large financial institution in Latin America.
 - Conducted several FCPA due diligence projects for leading multi-national corporation specializing in internet-related services and products.
 - Assisted in internal investigation for mining operation involving allegations of bribery and other issues.
 - Represented major financial institution in complying with OCC examination related to mortgage approval process.

- Assisted in internal review of Puerto-Rico-marketed insurance products to ensure compliance with UDAAP standards, CFPB expectations.
- **PRO BONO:**
- Co-counsel with the ACLU of Southern California and the United Farm Workers in litigation against the State of California for the failure of its agencies to properly enforce regulation protecting the rights of farm workers.
- Co-counsel with the ACLU of Southern California in a successful class action lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of a neighborhood gang injunction implemented by the Orange County District Attorney's office. Judgment affirmed by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in published, ground-breaking opinion.
- Represented disabled legal permanent resident fighting mandatory deportation proceedings that were based on a 15-year-old misdemeanor conviction. Successfully obtained bail for client, avoiding detention for duration of proceedings; wrote and defended several motions for termination of deportation proceedings in immigration court.