



PARTNER

Whitney (Blackhurst) Saraka

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Whitney (Blackhurst) Saraka is a partner in Best Best & Krieger LLP's Special Districts practice group. Her practice focuses on civil litigation, including public works disputes; eminent domain and inverse condemnation actions; fee, tax, assessment and rate challenges; tort claims; real property disputes; land use and entitlement actions; mobile home rent control challenges and title insurance disputes.

Whitney has extensive state and federal experience litigating on behalf of special district, city, county and private clients. Understanding the impacts of litigation, Whitney takes a proactive approach to identify potential areas of liability and advise on best practices to anticipate and avoid litigation. When a dispute is unavoidable, she counsels clients in responding to incidents, conducting administrative hearings and handling Government Code claims. She represents clients in all phases of litigation, including alternative dispute resolution, writ proceedings, jury and court trials and appeals. She zealously advocates for her clients, while finding practical solutions and best possible outcomes in a cost-efficient manner.

Whitney is admitted to practice in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California and the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California. As a leader in her field, Whitney often publishes guidance on various aspects of litigation, including Anti-SLAPP motions and protections for public agencies.

CORE PRACTICES

- Municipal Law
- Public Agency Litigation
- Special Districts

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

- California Western School of Law, J.D., magna cum laude
- California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, B.A., political science, cum laude

Bar Admissions

- California

Since entering the legal field, Whitney has dedicated time and talents to the local community. She taught basic legal principles to underprivileged youth through Street Law San Diego, prepared at-risk high school students for college and the workforce through the Crawford Academy of Law's Student Mentoring Program, and provides pro bono services as a volunteer attorney through the Casa Cornelia Law Center. In addition, while in law school, Whitney was an associate writer and editor for the *California Western Law Review* and *International Law Journal*

and was awarded the Creative Problem Solving Scholarship and the Academic Merit Scholarship. She worked as a judicial extern in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California, as a law clerk for Clifford & Brown and as a certified legal intern for the Juvenile Dependency Division of San Diego County Counsel. She was also a member of the Public Service Honors Society in 2011.

Prior to joining BBK, Whitney practiced title insurance and business litigation at Andersen Hilbert & Parker, LLP. She applies the civil litigation skills developed there to assist her public entity clients.

Whitney was born and raised in Bakersfield, California, and now lives in San Diego. She enjoys playing recreational sports and spending time with her family and friends.

Accolades

- *The Best Lawyers in America*® "Ones to Watch" – 2024
- *Super Lawyers* "Rising Star," State, Local and Municipal, 2023

Professional & Community Involvement

- San Diego County Bar Foundation
- San Diego County Bar Association
- Kern County Bar Association
- Lawyer's Club of San Diego

Thought Leadership

Presentations

- "Identification and Elimination of Implicit Bias (CLE Workshop)," Association of California Water Agencies Spring Conference & Exhibition, May 8, 2018

LANGUAGES

English