HUSCH BLACKWELL



Vanessa Villasenor

ASSOCIATE

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OVERVIEW

Vanessa helps clients navigate public policy and government affairs, including regulatory challenges and policy matters.

Before law school, Vanessa spent three years in food safety, quality, and regulatory roles at a meat processing facility in Nebraska, after earning a food science degree with a certificate in fermented foods. She led audit preparation efforts, including one year running the facility's unannounced third-party audit to its highest possible score. That work pulled her toward the regulatory side of the business, and conversations with in-house counsel led her to law school to pursue that interest directly.

During law school, Vanessa gravitated toward the industry side of regulatory practice, drawn to the chance to look inside the industries that need legal counsel and help them work through complex situations. A class on trademarks became a turning point, showing her how law touches every part of a business. She built on that desire to explore the law through a variety of industries and perspectives through her participation in the University of

Service

Public Policy, Regulatory, & Government Affairs

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Minnesota Law School Insurance Law Clinic, a corporate externship with a technology manufacturer, and a judicial externship with the Hon. Colette Routel.

As a summer associate at Husch Blackwell, Vanessa worked on Minnesota cannabis licensing and regulation, researched FDA labeling guidelines, and surveyed state law on the therapeutic use of ketamine. She also contributed to published articles and attorney presentations in the food and drug space, including research used in a Law360 article on DEA rescheduling of research chemicals.

Known for being thoughtful, passionate in her areas of focus, and easy to work with, Vanessa listens closely to understand a problem before working toward a solution. Clients can expect her to stay flexible on how to get there while holding firm where something truly is not negotiable, bringing genuine enthusiasm to every matter.

Education

- J.D., University of Minnesota Law School
  - Dean's Distinguished Scholarship
  - Dean's List
- B.S., University of Wisconsin-Madison
  - Food Science
  - Certificate, Fermented Foods

Admissions

- Minnesota

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