HUSCH BLACKWELL



Marisa R. De Feo

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

A seasoned litigator, Marisa primarily represents higher education clients in a wide variety of disputes.

With experience handling almost any case that can arise in the higher education setting, Marisa works on employment issues, tenure disputes and other faculty relations matters, board governance, First Amendment and other civil rights issues, student conduct and affairs—including matters involving Title IX, the Clery Act, and FERPA—and discrimination claims under the ADA, Title VI, and Section 504. She also handles general commercial litigation and premises liability matters as they apply to educational institutions. In addition, Marisa regularly provides policy and compliance guidance to colleges and universities.

Marisa's background includes extensive work with large state university systems, as well as smaller schools and private institutions. Her practice is primarily focused in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey and while she works mostly at the college and university level, she has also advised on issues involving K-12 schools. Beyond higher education, Marisa also handles real estate litigation, including commercial real estate and lease disputes and quiet title matters.

Marisa's interest in higher education litigation began early in her career, when she worked as a junior associate during the high-profile Sandusky scandal in Pennsylvania. The complex legal and investigative issues involved convinced her to focus on this area of law. Since then, she has dedicated her practice to litigation within higher education, gaining significant trial experience with nearly 10 jury and bench trials in both state and federal courts.

Industry

Education

Services

Construction Litigation

Higher Education

K-12 Education

Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution

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Known for her intense preparation and her adaptability in the courtroom, Marisa is trusted to make sound decisions and respond effectively when cases take unexpected turns. Clients value her commitment to their matters and recognize her genuine investment in supporting their educational missions.

Recognition

- *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America*
  - Commercial Litigation, 2026 and 2027
- *The Legal 500 United States*
  - Education, Recommended lawyer, 2026

Education

- J.D., Widener University School of Law
- M.S., West Chester University of Pennsylvania
- B.S., West Chester University of Pennsylvania

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Admissions

- Delaware
- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Delaware
- U.S. District Court, District of New Jersey
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Community Leadership

- Justinian Society of Philadelphia, Board Member
- March of Dimes, Former Board Member

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*Marisa is licensed in Delaware and works a substantial and scheduled portion of the week in Delaware. She also works remotely and is licensed in Pennsylvania, practicing in Garnet Valley, PA.
**Contact Marisa via email or phone for in-person/virtual meetings. Use 3411 Silverside Rd, Ste 104B #203, Wilmington, DE 19810 for mail/deliveries.

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