Director
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Education:
New York Law School
J.D. (2012)
New Orleans Alternative Spring Break Program, President
Public Interest Certificate Recognition, Recipient
"Official Review" NYLS Sports Law Blog, Co-Founder and Contributor
Institute for Information Law and Policy (IP Center), Associate
Center for International Law, Associate
New York City Law Association Cyberspace Committee, Student Co-Chair

Seattle University
B.A., Communication Studies (May 2008)

Externship:
Legal Intern to Honorable Judge Nicholas Tsoucalas, U.S. Court of International Trade

Areas of Practice:
Commercial Litigation, Intellectual Property

Professional Activities:
Licensed in New York
Licensed in Hawaii
U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
American Bar Association Member
New York State Bar Association (2013)
Hawaii State Bar Association (2013)

Presentation/ Articles:
"Non-Compete Agreements in the Sale of a Business"

JOHN W. KELLY

IP litigation lawyer John W. Kelly, is a Director of the firm. He focuses his practice in the area of commercial litigation, with particular concentration in intellectual property rights. Mr. Kelly is admitted to the New York and Hawaii Bar and earned his Juris Doctor from New York Law School. He is also a member of the panel with the First Circuit Court Annexed Arbitration Program.

Mr. Kelly has been selected to the **Hawaii *Super Lawyers®, "Rising Star"*** list in the practice area of IP Litigation (2020-2023).

Mr. Kelly has been named to ***The Best Lawyers in America® 2026*** list in the practice areas of Real Estate Litigation and Commercial Litigation. Mr. Kelly has also been named to ***The Best Lawyers in America®, Ones to Watch*** list in the practice area of Intellectual Property Litigation since 2021.

Mr. Kelly is named to the ***2026 40 and Under*** list by Benchmark Litigation, US Edition.

Prior to joining Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher, Mr. Kelly was an associate at one of the nation's oldest intellectual property firms based in New York. While there his practice included counseling clients from start-ups to Fortune 100 companies on the prosecution, opposition and enforcement of worldwide intellectual property rights, negotiating coexistence and settlement agreements, providing guidance on business transactions and conducting due diligence for divestments and acquisitions. Mr. Kelly worked closely with the Litigation Group and the Mergers, Acquisitions and Licensing Group during his tenure with the firm.

Since returning to Hawaii Mr. Kelly has assisted a number of clients, from individuals and startups, to large and established corporations with a wide range of intellectual property matters. Mr. Kelly has advised local clients on domestic and international trademark registration, maintenance and enforcement, including litigating matters before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB), state, federal, and administrative tribunals. His work also includes assisting business clients with issues relating to copyright, domain names, rights of publicity and unfair competition. Some of Mr. Kelly's clients include local leaders in the food and beverage, hospitality, fashion, retail, luxury and tech industries in Hawaii.

Mr. Kelly was recently sought out by Hawaii News Now to comment on the "Aloha Poke" case, where a Chicago-based business attempted to stop businesses from using the words "aloha" and "aloha poke". Read here.

Mr. Kelly also has prior experience as a financial instrument consultant at a boutique research firm focused on the review and legal analysis of bond and loan covenants for institutional investors.

During law school, Mr. Kelly was a legal intern at The United States Court of International Trade in New York City, serving the Chambers of the Honorable Judge Nicholas Tsoucalas.