



Our Legal Team



Doug Blanke is founder and director of the Public Health Law Center and chair of the Robins Kaplan Miller & Ciresi Endowed Directorship. He oversees all its programs, with a focus on encouraging healthier lives, including work to reduce the harm caused by tobacco use, prevent childhood obesity, support healthy eating and encourage physical activity. Doug is also executive director of the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium, America's legal network for effective tobacco control policies.

Doug's international work has included monitoring development of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control for the American Lung Association and editing the World Health Organization's handbook on tobacco control legislation. Previously, as an assistant attorney general of the State of Minnesota, he played a key role in the historic Minnesota litigation that resulted in the release of thirty-five million pages of secret tobacco industry documents. He was the 2004 recipient of the American Lung Association's C. Everett Koop "Unsung Hero" Award for his contributions to tobacco control.



Kerry Cork, staff attorney at the Public Health Law Center, works primarily for the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium, providing legal technical assistance on tobacco and other public health law issues to public health professionals and organizations, legal professionals, and leaders throughout the United States. Kerry also oversees the development and dissemination of the Center's publications and communications. She has published and presented on many tobacco and health law issues, including local, state and federal tobacco control regulation and legislation, and has

been a principal investigator on both national and local tobacco law research grants. Her interests include public health as it relates to social justice, human rights, and health disparities; worksite wellness; and privacy. A long-time legal researcher and writer, Kerry holds Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in English literature from the University of Minnesota, as well as a J.D. from William Mitchell College of Law, where she served as editor of the William Mitchell Law Review.



Mike Freiberg, staff attorney with the Public Health Law Center, works primarily for the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium. His work includes two research projects related to menthol in tobacco products and cigarette butt litter. Previously, he researched non-cigarette tobacco products and provided legal technical assistance to jurisdictions around the country working on various tobacco control policies. Mike has worked as an adjunct law professor at the William Mitchell College of Law, having taught classes in legislation and public health law. Mike also serves as a State Representative and spent nine years on the Golden Valley City Council, helping to craft the city's strong secondhand smoke ordinance that was adopted in 2004. From 1999-2001, Mike worked for a member of Congress as a legislative assistant specializing in health care. Mike received his B.A. from Georgetown University and his J.D. from William Mitchell College of Law, where he was salutatorian of his class.



Desmond Jenson, staff attorney with the Public Health Law Center, works primarily for the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium on a project to shape federal tobacco control policy by encouraging the Food and Drug Administration to enact strong tobacco control regulations based on its authority under the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. Desmond also educates the public health and scientific communities about the rulemaking process and highlights opportunities to engage the FDA to create better regulation. He helps the public health community in its efforts to close regulatory gaps and enact novel regulations that anticipate future regulatory issues. Desmond provides legal technical assistance to members of the public health community who wish to participate in the regulatory process and he also provides litigation support to defend tobacco control policies that are challenged by the tobacco industry. Desmond is a recent graduate of William Mitchell College of Law. During law school, Desmond worked as a research assistant at the Public Health Law Center where he helped draft publications and provide legal technical assistance.



Joelle Lester, staff attorney with the Public Health Law Center, works primarily for the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium on a project to support and encourage the Food and Drug Administration to enact the strongest possible tobacco regulations under the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. Joelle coordinates with the public health community to engage with the Food and Drug Administration and provides technical assistance to public health leaders, including litigation support to on federal tobacco regulations against challenges from the tobacco industry. Before joining the Public Health Law Center, Joelle worked as a litigation associate at the firm of McGrann Shea Carnival Straughn & Lamb. She has served as executive director of the Oregon Student Association, a non-profit higher education advocacy group, and as a lobbyist for the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, advocating for public K-12 education. She holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and a law degree from the University of Minnesota Law School (cum laude).



Maggie Mahoney, staff attorney with the Public Health Law Center, is deputy director of the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium, a network of legal centers supporting tobacco control policy improvement throughout the United States. Maggie coordinates the Consortium’s provision of legal technical assistance, and personally provides direct, legal technical assistance on tobacco control issues to public health professionals and organizations, legal professionals, and leaders throughout the United States. She oversees preparation of friend-of-the court (amicus curiae) briefs in key cases; provides and coordinates litigation support to city and county attorneys, state attorneys general and legal counsel representing organizations and individual citizens; assists with development of educational materials; and provides educational and training presentations at state, regional and national conferences. Maggie has been an Adjunct Professor of Law since 2005, teaching public health law and an appellate advocacy skills course, and recently completed a graduate-level public health certificate program through the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. After earning her law degree at William Mitchell College of Law, Maggie researched and drafted opinions for the Minnesota Court of Appeals and then supervised a team of attorneys that issued appellate decisions on behalf of a court-appointed neutral in a major national civil rights class action settlement. Minnesota Lawyer selected Maggie as one of its “2008 Up & Coming Attorneys” – an award reserved for attorneys who have distinguished themselves during their first ten years in practice.



Mark Meaney, a staff attorney with the Public Health Law Center, works primarily with the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium, providing legal technical assistance and training on tobacco control and other public health law issues to public health professionals and organizations, attorneys, and advocates throughout the United States. Prior to joining the Public Health Law Center, Mark worked as a public finance associate at the law firms of McGrann Shea Carnival Straughn & Lamb, Chartered, and Faegre & Benson LLP. Before attending law school, Mark worked as a senior health policy analyst for Metropolitan Health Plan working on compliance issues and a variety of public health initiatives focused on individuals enrolled in safety net programs. Mark also worked as a health services researcher at Central DuPage Health System, a community health system, where he developed and implemented programs to measure and improve the health status of the community. Mark received his law degree, cum laude, from the University of Minnesota Law School and a Master’s degree in policy analysis and public administration from the La Follette School of Public Affairs at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.



Maureen O’Brien is a staff attorney with the Public Health Law Center. She works with the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium to provide legal technical assistance to public health professionals and organizations, legal professionals, and advocates throughout the United States. Before joining the Public Health Law Center, Maureen was an Assistant City Attorney for the City of Madison, Wisconsin, where she drafted ordinances and provided legal advice to the Common Council, prosecuted civil violations of the City code, and provided advice and legal representation to the local Public Housing Authority and City

Planning Department. Maureen received her B.A. *magna cum laude* from Boston University and her J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School.



Warren Ortland is a staff attorney at the Public Health Law Center and the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium, where he provides legal technical support to organizations working to increase the number of smoke-free multi-unit housing developments, as well as individual legal technical assistance to Minnesota communities that are considering smoke-free ordinances. He publishes and presents often on issues relating to the adoption of smoke-free policies for multi-unit residences, apartments and owner-occupied condominiums. Prior to joining the Public Health Law Center, Warren was an Equal Justice Works Fellow, working for two years as the legislative research & policy coordinator at the Minnesota AIDS Project (MAP). At MAP, Warren provided direct legal representation to HIV-positive clients in areas of employment, privacy and benefits. He also researched and drafted legislation on health care coverage for HIV-positive Minnesotans, prevention education funding for African-born immigrants, and HIV confidentiality protection. Warren received his undergraduate degree from the College of William and Mary, and his law degree from William Mitchell College of Law (*magna cum laude*), where he served as an editor on the William Mitchell Law Review.