

Counsel

## John Amaya

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## PRACTICES

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Immigration

Litigation and  
Investigations

## EDUCATION

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Georgetown University  
Law Center, LL.M.

University of  
Washington, J.D.

University of  
Washington, B.A.

John Amaya is an experienced attorney and former senior advisor in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

John represents corporations, individuals and foreign governments in connection with global immigration, cross-border investigations, related litigation, and congressional investigations.

John served in the Obama Administration at DHS as the Deputy Chief of Staff for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). There, he managed a broad domestic and international portfolio. John was instrumental in the creation of new operational guidance for worksite immigration enforcement. These policies directly affect businesses and provide guidance for best practices to properly hire and retain a global workforce. John also worked with foreign diplomats and law enforcement to combat and dismantle cross-border trade in violation of federal money laundering, foreign corruption laws, and export controls.

John also served as Counselor to the Director at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. In that capacity, he worked on many complex global immigration matters including the national security response to risks associated with the EB-5 immigrant investor program, the administration of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program and ensuring a fair process for unaccompanied children seeking asylum. Additionally, he played a pivotal role in developing policies for, and the administration of, visas for highly skilled workers, people with extraordinary abilities, and foreign investors.

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Prior to joining the Obama Administration, John served as senior counsel to then-Chairman of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Patrick Leahy, conducting oversight and advising on civil and criminal justice, immigration and homeland security, foreign corruption, sanctions, and judicial nominations. In this capacity, he staffed Senator Leahy on the nomination and confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan, as well as the passage of the landmark comprehensive immigration reform bill, S.744 Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013. Additionally, John counseled corporate executives in preparation for their Congressional testimony ranging in matters from immigration to the FCPA.

John began his legal career as a trial attorney at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) following a judicial clerkship in Billings, Montana. At DOJ, Mr. Amaya represented the United States in federal courts across the country as a litigator in both district courts and courts of appeal.

John is a fluent Spanish speaker.