



Natalie M. Smith

Associate

Natalie is an Associate in the firm's Health Care practice. Natalie's practice focuses on matters related to contracted and non-contracted provider disputes, health insurance fraud, and regulatory actions before state agencies.

Prior to joining the firm, Natalie worked as an attorney for the administrative litigation team at the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). At DHCS, Natalie litigated a wide variety of matters related to the fiscal integrity of California's Medi-Cal program before DHCS' Office of Administrative Hearings and Appeals. In doing so, Natalie litigated matters related to financial audits DHCS performed of acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and county mental health programs, as well as initial rate setting audits and change in scope of service appeals filed by federally qualified health centers. Natalie also litigated post-payment, post-service audits of non-institutional providers, including providers enrolled in DHCS' Denti-Cal program. Natalie provided advice and counsel on issues related to DHCS' Medi-Cal electronic health records incentive payment program as well, and litigated the first administrative appeal DHCS received challenging its audits of incentive payments made to institutional providers enrolled in the program.

In total, Natalie obtained over two dozen final administrative decisions that were favorable to DHCS. These decisions included a number of orders of dismissal of administrative appeals challenging the legality of the 2004-2005 state fiscal year rate reduction the California legislature enacted via Senate Bill 1103 (SB1103). These dismissals and others were subsequently appealed to the superior court and California Court of Appeal. Ultimately, the Court of Appeal upheld DHCS' dismissal of four SB1103 administrative appeals, including one appeal Natalie litigated, on the same legal basis she advanced at the administrative level. (See *Hi-Desert Medical Center, et al. v. Douglas* (2015) 239 Cal.App.4th 717.)

Finally, as a member of the administrative litigation team, Natalie handled special education due process appeals before the Office of Administrative Hearings, provided advice and counsel to DHCS' human resources branch, and successfully litigated a number of employment matters before the State Personnel Board and Department of Personnel Administration.

Publications

Sacramento

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Practices/Industries

Health Care

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"Recent California Court of Appeal Decisions Highlight Importance of Process and Need for Signature of Authorized Individual to Secure Binding Arbitration Agreement," co-author, Senior Housing and Care Law Alert (September 2019)

"Update on Eple: California's 'New' Procedure for Providing Medical Interventions Requiring Informed Consent to SNF Residents Who Lack Both Capacity and a Legal Representative," co-author, Health Care Law Alert (September 2019)

"New Regulations for Binding Pre-Dispute Arbitration Agreements with Long-Term Care Residents," co-author, Senior Housing and Care Law Alert (August 2019)

"CMS' Changes to Nursing Home Compare and the Five Star Rating System," co-author, American Health Lawyers Association (May 2019)

"Proposed Bill Would Increase Skilled Nursing and Intermediate Care Facility Citations and Penalties," *Senior Care & Housing Law Alert* (February 2019)

Presentations

"LGBT Considerations in Senior Living," 69th Annual California Association of Health Facilities Convention Conference, co-speaker (November 2019)

Professional Affiliations

California Association for Healthcare Attorneys

Sacramento County Bar Association

Women Lawyers of Sacramento

Education

J.D., Golden Gate University School of Law (2010)

B.A., University of California, Davis (2005)

Admissions and Courts

California