

STEPHANIE O. AKPA

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EXPERIENCE

Office of U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, Washington, DC

Chief Counsel, September 2020 – Present; *Senior Counsel*, February 2018 – September 2020; *Counsel*, February 2016 – February 2018

- Supervise five-member team focused on judiciary, technology, and telecommunications issues, including civil rights, criminal justice, immigration, antitrust, bankruptcy, and regulatory reform.
- Design and execute strategies for advancing complex legislative projects, including consulting with academics and experts, working with Senate legislative counsel to draft and finalize legislative text, developing public-facing materials, securing endorsements and supportive statements from key stakeholder groups, soliciting co-sponsorships from members of Congress, and assisting the Communications Team in developing social media content and responding to press inquiries.
- Shepherd process for selecting candidates to recommend to the White House for U.S. Attorney and U.S. District Court vacancies in the District of Massachusetts, including assisting in the selection and launch of a bipartisan nominating committee, coordinating the application process and updating application materials, collaborating with the Communications Team on press releases and media inquiries, developing interview questions, and providing recommendations to Senator Warren on next steps.
- Consult and advise staff on constituent-related issues, and collaborate with team members to develop solutions to resolve those issues, including liaising with contacts in the federal executive branch, writing statements of support, connecting constituents with state and/or federal resources, and designing oversight-related projects.
- Develop and execute strategies for accomplishing policy goals by, among other things, drafting speeches, oversight letters, reports, hearing questions, and social media posts.
- Develop talking points and preparation materials for meetings, calls, and events with high level officials, including administration officials or nominees and key stakeholder groups.
- Research and provide recommendations on upcoming floor votes, including votes on nominations, legislation, and appropriations.
- Co-led hiring of policy counsel, including designing prompts for written evaluation, developing interview questions, and co-leading candidate interviews.
- Consulted on development of office's Diversity & Inclusion policy.
- Senior legislative staff member on President Trump's first impeachment trial, which involved supervising pre-trial preparation; staffing Senator Warren during the trial; and leading the development of various work product, including daily impeachment trial update memos, summaries of the briefings, vote recommendations, and the impeachment trial statement for the record.
- Lead policy staffer on Supreme Court nominations, including nominations of Merrick Garland, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett, which involved researching the candidates' backgrounds, statements, and legal opinions; drafting speeches, talking points, and op-eds; and providing vote recommendations.
- Planned joint forum with the late House Oversight Committee Chairman Elijah Cummings at the U.S. Capitol to examine poverty in America with witnesses from the Poor People's Campaign.

- Co-planned Senator Warren’s trip to the U.S.-Mexico border in response to the child separation crisis, including securing visits to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facilities, and meetings with an Assistant Public Defender and representatives from the Texas Civil Rights Project and the ACLU of Texas.
- Reviewed legal filings in a case filed against the Senator and provided feedback to outside counsel.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Center for Consumer Information & Insurance Oversight, Bethesda, MD

Health Insurance Specialist, November 2014 – January 2016

- Subject matter expert on health insurance issuer engagement, re-enrollment, issuer suppression, issuer decertification, Enrollment casework, terminations of coverage, and data-matching issues related to the Affordable Care Act and the Federally-facilitated Marketplace.
- Provided technical assistance to insurance providers regarding enrollment-related policy and operational guidance for the Federally-facilitated Marketplace.
- Provided written and verbal advice in response to inquiries from members of Congress, insurance providers, and CMS leadership regarding the Affordable Care Act.
- Facilitated and regularly presented on weekly enrollment calls with approximately 200-500 participants, during which subject matter experts discuss policy and guidance related to enrollment in plans on the Federally-facilitated Marketplace.
- Led presentations to insurance providers and represented Enrollment Team in various meetings with insurance providers and health associations on various enrollment-related topics, including terminating Qualified Health Plan coverage due to Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) eligibility, income and citizenship data-matching issues and Special Enrollment Periods, data-matching issues and grace periods, missing passive enrollments, enrollment-blocking system defects, appeals processing, and partial coverage.
- Co-authored enrollment bulletin on 2016 re-enrollment policy and guidance, including a summary and analysis of the Federally-facilitated Marketplace 2016 policy on re-determination for advance payments of the premium tax credit and income-based cost-sharing reductions.
- Co-authored business and operational readiness milestones for issuer engagements.
- Reviewed and provided feedback on technical assistance documents, including appeals bulletin, assister and agent/broker training materials, CMS compliance reports and findings, and Enrollment Operations and Policy Manual.
- Developed, analyzed, and recommended policies to resolve enrollment-related defects in the Federally-facilitated Marketplace.
- Collaborated with Centers for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMCS) staff on draft talking points on residency requirements for Qualified Health Plan coverage.
- Reviewed and edited enrollment-related presentation materials prior to clearance and collaborated with the Office of Legislation and Office of the General Counsel to edit Enrollment-related materials prior to release to the public.

Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, Washington, DC

Staff Attorney and Equal Justice Works Fellow, September 2012 – November 2014

- Led a two-year project to ensure access to quality health care for low-income African-Americans in the District of Columbia through direct representation, policy, advocacy, education, and outreach.
- Represented, advised, or provided brief services to over one hundred (100) individuals in cases involving eligibility and coverage in the Medicaid, Qualified Medicare Beneficiary, and DC Health Care Alliance programs.

- Monitored and analyzed District of Columbia laws, regulations, and policies involving health care coverage for low-income individuals.
- Conducted legislative and policy analyses on various issues in the Medicaid program and authored memoranda, advocacy and policy letters, comments, and other communications identifying administration and operation issues.
- Represented Legal Aid in health insurance marketplace working groups on IT Policy and Plan Offerings and Benefit Standardization.
- Reviewed legislation, authored comments, and testified on behalf of Legal Aid in support of the legislative package for the District of Columbia's health insurance marketplace.
- Served on the District of Columbia Health Insurance Exchange Authority's Consumer Assistance Advisory Committee, and provided recommendations concerning education and outreach for the District of Columbia's health insurance marketplace.
- Represented Legal Aid in Medical Assistance Advisory Committee and Medicaid Eligibility & Enrollment meetings.
- Authored comments in response to proposed regulations regarding Medicaid long-term-care services and supports.
- Collaborated with consumer advocacy groups, legal services organizations, and other stakeholders to identify issues in the operation and administration of the Medicaid and Qualified Medicare Beneficiary programs.
- Participated in business process improvement meetings with senior officials in the District of Columbia's health insurance marketplace, Medicaid, and human services agencies.
- Conducted presentations, trainings, and educational sessions on access to health care in the District of Columbia.
- Testified before the District of Columbia Council at hearings regarding the operation, procedures, and budget of agencies that administer the District of Columbia's health insurance marketplace and the Medicaid and CHIP programs.
- Authored numerous articles on access to health care issues for Legal Aid's online blog, makingjusticereal.org.
- Supervised interns on Medicaid and Social Security disability cases.

Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, New York, NY

Litigation Associate, November 2009 – July 2012

- Researched laws, regulations, and state policies, and drafted legal documents on a variety of issues, including on escheatment of unclaimed property, mail and wire fraud, and insurance-related matters.
- Drafted amendments to settlement agreements between state regulators and life insurance companies and designed and recommended business process enhancements for life insurance companies based on settlement agreements.
- Authored summaries of legal opinions in U.S. courts on matters of international law for reporting in a leading international-law publication.
- Co-directed legal clinic at Knowledge is Power Program ("KIPP") Academy Middle School in Bronx, New York, which involved scheduling and conducting intakes, communicating with school officials on clinic matters, and recruiting attorneys to represent parents and children.
- Represented single-parent mother in case to obtain legal immigration status following the death of her husband.
- Represented indigent defendant in appeal of conviction in criminal case.

EDUCATION

YALE LAW SCHOOL, J.D., 2009

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO, B.A., *cum laude*, 2006