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The McNees Food & Beverage Group



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Businesses in the food and beverage industry face many unique and important challenges. McNees attorneys and government relations professionals are equipped to advise and help our clients manage these challenges with a full spectrum of services specifically tailored to the needs of the industry and the goals of our clients. We represent clients in matters concerning compliance with international, federal, state, and local food and beverage laws and policies, as well as the day-to-day operating issues challenging growers, distributors, entrepreneurs, and retailers.

The Business of Growing, Processing, and Transporting Foods and Beverages

The U.S. food supply is heavily regulated at both the state and federal levels. McNees attorneys and government relations professionals understand these regulations and how the various governmental agencies interpret and apply them. We help our clients develop and implement the policies and procedures they need to comply with regulations on environmental controls, labeling, packaging, and work force. We are the voice of clients who need to interact with regulatory bodies, or with industry groups such as the Institute of Food technologies and the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). Few food industry organizations can accomplish their goals alone; they need partners to supply, process, move, or sell their products. McNees attorneys understanding both the business and legal issues of the industry. We help our clients structure and negotiate beneficial relationships with suppliers, co-packers, carriers, and other business partners.

Crisis Management, Litigation and Conflict Resolution

Problems that arise in the food and beverage supply chain often demand swift action. Whether the health of consumers or the health of a client's brand is at stake, our attorneys and government relations professionals work together as a team so that we can offer sound advice to resolve disputes and crises. While at times there is no alternative, litigation is not always the most effective solution. We have successfully employed a variety of resolution strategies, including alternative dispute resolution procedures such as mediation and arbitration. When a problem calls for a political solution, we have resources to network with government leaders and policy makers. McNees has assisted food industry clients in labor negotiations with unions, contract disputes with suppliers and customers, appeals to regulatory agencies, insurance coverage disputes, food recalls, and more. Our approach to conflict resolution reflects McNees's overarching Clients First mission.

Trademarks, Branding, and Advertising

Effective branding and advertising are essential to the successful marketing of food and beverage products. We assist our food and beverage industry clients with the clearance and registration of trademarks so they can select and protect strong, defensible brands and avoid infringement claims. We also assist with licensing those brands through private-label agreements, franchise agreements, and other forms of licensing. Our clients rely on us to help them craft effective advertising campaigns, including legal analyses of comparison claims and product quality claims.

Liquor Regulations and Licensing

From manufacturing to retailing, dealing with alcohol adds another layer of legal complexity to the beverage industry. McNees attorneys assist clients who need to acquire, sell, keep, move, or expand or restrict the use of liquor licenses. We also advise clients who need to know what they can do with their licenses. We understand the operations of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board ("PLCB") and the Federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau ("TTB"). We routinely interact with personnel at both agencies and are familiar with the decision makers and staff, which helps us foster our clients' goals and establish relationships where and as needed. With the collaborative efforts of our Corporate & Tax and Real Estate groups, McNees assists in creating entities to own liquor licenses and securing properties on which to place liquor licenses. We also regularly represent clients in defending licensees against allegations of liquor license violations issued by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement, a branch of the Pennsylvania State Police.

Government Relations

Our clients often require strategic government relations advice, including lobbying related to specific legislation and navigating state government agencies. At McNees, the legal advice we provide to our clients is complemented by our government relations professionals. This assists our clients in navigating the government regulatory process while fostering relationships with government leaders. We help our clients be known to and understood by those drafting and enforcing the laws that affect their businesses. We help assure that our clients have a meaningful voice in the legislative process.



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