



Matthew S. Warner

Partner

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Matthew S. Warner is a partner in Preti Flaherty's Litigation, Government Affairs, and Cannabis Business groups, practicing from the firm's Portland office.

Matt has a wide-ranging practice, which includes commercial litigation, land use planning, and administrative law. He is an experienced trial lawyer, with success in both state and federal court, as well as before numerous state agencies and boards. He is counsel to a number of Maine-based businesses, advising companies on an extensive array of matters, including entities in the cannabis industry on regulatory, compliance, and licensing issues. Matt also helps clients navigate the political process in Augusta.

Prior to joining Preti Flaherty in 2013, Matt worked in government and public affairs. A former speechwriter and grassroots advocate for more than a decade, Matt worked at the White House and the U.S. Department of State.

Matt has a B.A. from Boston University, a J.D. from Columbia Law School, and an LL.M. from the London School of Economics and Political Science, where he specialized in international law, and is a former adjunct professor at University of Maine School of Law.

A native of Holden, Maine, Matt is an avid backcountry skier, regularly participates in mountain bike endurance races, and serves as president of the Greater Portland Chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association. Matt lives in Cumberland with his wife and two sons.

Admissions

- Maine
- U.S. District Court, District of Maine

Education

- Boston University (B.A., 2006)
- Columbia University School of Law (J.D., 2011)
 - Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar
- London School of Economics (LL.M., 2011)
 - Merit

Services

- [Appellate Litigation](#)
- [Cannabis Business](#)
- [Government Affairs](#)
- [Litigation](#)

Professional Activities

- Maine State Bar Association
- Adjunct Professor, University of Maine School of Law
- Board of Directors, New England Mountain Bike Association - Southern Maine Chapter

Honors & Recognition

- Recognized as a Super Lawyers New England Rising Star in the area of general litigation
- *Law360* MVP of the Year in Cannabis, 2021

News

October 12, 2021

Nineteen Preti Flaherty Attorneys Selected for Inclusion in 2021 Super Lawyers

October 4, 2021

Law360 Names Matt Warner 2021 Cannabis MVP

October 13, 2020

Twenty-Two Preti Flaherty Attorneys Selected for Inclusion in 2020 Super Lawyers

October 17, 2019

Twenty-One Preti Flaherty Attorneys Selected for Inclusion in 2019 Super Lawyers

May 21, 2019

Preti Flaherty's Cannabis Business Practice Group Publishes New Blog

January 1, 2019

Preti Flaherty Announces Promotion of Two Attorneys to Partner, Three to Director

October 18, 2018

Twenty-Three Preti Flaherty Attorneys Selected for Inclusion in 2018 Super Lawyers

August 24, 2018

Piscataquis County Commissioners Move to Intervene in State Lawsuit Seeking to Restore Moosehead Mountain Resort

October 17, 2017

Nineteen Preti Flaherty attorneys selected for inclusion in 2017 Super Lawyers

October 21, 2016

17 Preti Flaherty Attorneys Recognized by Super Lawyers

October 19, 2015

16 Preti Flaherty Attorneys Recognized by New England Super Lawyers

July 27, 2015

Matt Warner Panelist on Endangered Species Act at 2015 Timber Talk

June 22, 2015

Matthew Warner Elected to Board of Directors for World Affairs Council of Maine

June 2, 2015

Matthew Warner Presenting Lecture on Data Privacy at University of Southern Maine

June 1, 2015

Matt Warner and Mike Smith Prevail in Federal Jury Trial for Maine Liquor Distillery Equipment Manufacturer

October 27, 2014

14 Preti Flaherty Attorneys Recognized by New England Super Lawyers

September 10, 2014

Matt Warner Named Adjunct Professor at University of Maine School of Law

September 5, 2014

Matt Warner quoted in harassment allegation against Hallowell police chief

July 11, 2014

Hallowell gets documents from DA in police chief sex assault case

October 28, 2013

Attorneys Daniel Sonneborn and Matthew Warner Join Preti Flaherty

Press Coverage

November 5, 2020

Trump Legal Team Pursues Contradictory Strategy

August 18, 2020

Washington Cannabis Company Says Oklahoma Residency Rules Unconstitutional

June 16, 2020

City's Pot Residency Preference Unconstitutional, Co. Claims

May 11, 2020

Maine drops residency requirement for recreational marijuana businesses

November 30, 2016

Darling's wins 10-year legal dispute with Ford; damages could reach millions

July 11, 2014

Hallowell gets documents from DA in police chief sex assault case

April 17, 2014

'Spamalot' could cost a lot in costume lawsuit against Edison High School

Publications

November 1, 2020

The (Legal) Interstate Cannabis Market Is Here to Stay

Cannabis Law Journal

September 2, 2020

It's Time to Fight Back Against Illegal State and Local Cannabis Laws

Cannabis Business Executive

Raising the Bar

RAISING THE BAR

How has your practice evolved from when you started out?

How hasn't it!? When I left law school, pot was widely illegal and now I deal with marijuana (professionally) every week. So there's that. I've also reached a sweet spot where most of my time is spent dealing with public policy issues ranging from very public disputes over the role of hydropower in Maine to unconstitutional marijuana laws around the country. It's an exciting way to be a lawyer, is political to the right degree, and lets me wrestle with some fairly novel (and, depending who you ask, boring) legal issues, which I dig!

What skills, talents, or methods do you think help you excel in this field?

Being practical, admitting what I don't know, leaning on people who do know, and trying to be friendly with everyone. Many of the problems I've solved for clients come from my close relationships with people in state government, relationships that I've worked hard to build and keep.

Where are you most active or visible within your practice area? Is there a specific niche you're known for?

In academic parlance: administrative law. For real people: suing the government, working with the government, or both.

How would your clients describe you?

To the point.

What do you like best about your practice area?

The intersection of law and politics is a comfortable place to hang out. Dealing with public policy issues and disagreements with the state requires creativity and depends equally on relationships and legal argument. Sometimes you can work it out, sometimes you just need to sue somebody, and most of the time there's a middle ground. Finding that happy medium is fun.

How do you start your day?

Usually I put a pillow over my head and hide, hoping my young boys don't notice me so I can sleep for 5 more minutes. More often than not this backfires because they jump on me,

pointy kid limbs and all, until I give up and get up. Then I drink coffee, then more coffee. After the struggle known as trying to dress my 3 year old, I take them to school and am usually forced to listen to a podcast of short nonsensical children's stories on the way. In all truth, it's a delightful way to start the day.

When you're able to sneak in a break during the day, where could you be found?

Mountain biking in the summer, often training for one ultra-race or another, or ice climbing in the winter.

When it comes to reviewing your own peers, what criteria are important? What makes an attorney stand out?

Humility, self-reflection and a lack of pretense all help. Really the same traits that make for a solid person in general make for a kind, and usually good, lawyer.