

Senior Counsel | Providence, RI | Boston, MA

Christian F. Capizzo

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Overview

Recognized for his ability to unify disparate groups and facilitate change, Christian concentrates his practice in the areas of environmental and energy law, land use and public sector/governmental services. With over 25 years of experience, Christian guides clients through the complex ever-changing world where energy/environmental regulations and business intersect.

Christian handles a diverse range of complex environmental matters including enforcement, regulatory and compliance issues, renewable energy projects including large scale solar and offshore wind projects, real estate development, state and federal environmental enforcement actions, environmental due diligence associated with a variety of corporate mergers and acquisitions and real estate transactions, environmental remediation including brownfields, coastal/waterfront violations, permitting and waterfront property rights. He represents clients before the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission, the Rhode Island Energy Facility Siting Board, as well as before the town/city zoning boards, planning boards and conservation commissions across New England.

Christian also represents commercial and residential landowners and project developers in real estate transactions, renewable energy development deals, and financing transactions associated with these projects. He plays an integral role evaluating and mitigating environmental risks relating to development projects and business transactions, as well as providing key strategy on renewable energy projects.

Prior to joining the firm, Christian served in the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office where he had a proven track record of successfully litigating high profile criminal and civil cases. He created and led the State's Environmental Crimes Task Force, handling litigation on environmental issues impacting Rhode Island. Christian worked closely with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and the Coastal Resources Management Council, serving as outside legal counsel handling civil and criminal enforcement matters, drafting legislation, and negotiating "high stakes" diverse environmental matters. Christian has also worked closely with the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Department of Agriculture and various state agencies and attorney generals throughout the United States.

Christian is nationally recognized for developing and implementing environmental and energy training programs and is a sought-after presenter on a myriad of topics with a focus on emerging and complex energy and environmental issues and trends.

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Experience

- Represented an offshore wind developer before the Rhode Island Energy Facility Siting Board, RI Coastal Resources Management Council, and other state and local agencies in securing state and federal regulatory approvals.
- Represented commercial and private clients, municipalities, financial institutions, and educational institutions before the U.S. EPA, RIDEM, and MADEP in environmental investigations, inspections, audits, regulatory compliance, and enforcement matters involving wetlands, solid waste, hazardous waste, water, and air regulations.
- Represented private waterfront landowners before Costal Resources Management Council in permitting dwellings, complex residential docks, stairs, and seawalls.
- Advised and represented a national and international stainless steel and special metals company on environmental due diligence for the acquisition and expansion of a publicly traded corporation and manufacturing facility.
- Advised commercial clients including but not limited to life science institutions and medical device companies on environmental due diligence and compliance review associated with mergers and acquisitions and real estate transactions.
- Represented Pharmaceutical and Medical Waste companies on environmental due diligence and regulatory compliance reviews associated with permitting approvals and operations.
- Represented renewable energy developers in Massachusetts and Rhode Island before zoning and planning boards in permitting and approval of large-scale solar projects.
- Represented and advised commercial, municipal, educational and institutional clients on Superfund matters and Federal CERCLA claims involving PFAS, PFOS, PFOA.
- Represented landowners and commercial, educational, and municipal clients on land-based and rooftop solar projects, including negotiation of solar leases, easements, and net metering credit agreements.
- Represented renewable energy developers (large scale solar and offshore wind) before the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission and Division, the Rhode Island Energy Facility Sitting Board in connection with renewable energy and transmission projects.
- Represented renewable energy developers in Massachusetts and Rhode Island in structuring and negotiating solar leases, PILOT agreements, interconnection service agreements, net metering financing agreements, and power purchase agreements.
- Represented private commercial developers on large-scale residential, affordable housing and commercial development projects before town councils, planning boards, and zoning boards.
- Represented and obtained approvals for a Transportation Network Company (Lyft) before the R.I. Division of Public Utilities.

Credentials

Practices

- Life Sciences
- Energy & Telecommunications
- Environmental
- Real Estate
- Land Use
- Business & Corporate
- Government Relations

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Education

- Suffolk University Law School, J.D.
- Providence College, B.A.
- Richmond University, Firenze, Italy

Admissions

- Rhode Island
- Massachusetts
- District of Columbia

Honors

- Selected by his peers for inclusion in the 2025 – 2027 editions of The Best Lawyers in America® in the field of Environmental Law, Land Use & Zoning.
- The Best Lawyers in America® 2024-2026 in the following practice areas: Energy Law, Energy Regulatory Law, Environmental Law.
- Professional Excellence in the Law, Environmental and Land Use, *Rhode Island Monthly* 2023 – 2026.
- Americas Top 50 Lawyer, Environmental Law – Rhode Island, 2025.

Seminars/Publications

- Frequent Presenter and Moderator, New England Environmental Business Council
- Financing options and ownership models for microgrids and energy efficiency projects, Distributed Energy Magazine
- R.I. Law Enforcement Guide on Animal Importation
- R.I. District Court Prosecutors Manual on Environmental Crimes

Professional Affiliations

- Vice Chair, New England Environmental Business Council, 2026
- R.I. Leadership Team, New England Environmental Business Council, 2015-Present.
- Former Member of the R.I. Judicial Nominating Commission, 2021-2025.
- Former Executive Board Member and Training Chair of the Northeast Environmental Enforcement Project, 2006-2015.

In The Community

- Unified Soccer Coach/ Player – RI Special Olympics, 2012-Present.
- Member of Council of Advisors, Audubon Society of RI, 2022-Present.
- Foster Forward, Member of Housing Committee, 2025-Present.
- Former Executive Board Member of Audubon Society of Rhode Island, 2013-2022.

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