

ARIONA JEAN-JOHNSON

ASSOCIATE

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Ariona advises clients on the day-to-day realities of governing and operating across California.

Much of Ariona's work sits at the intersection of legal compliance, public process, and practical decision-making. Ariona counsels public agency clients on issues including code enforcement, public records requests, open meetings law, conflicts of interest and ethics, public contracts and procurement, and revenue and tax enforcement. The work often involves helping councils, boards, and agency staff navigate difficult or high-stakes issues in real time, researching complex legal questions, drafting ordinances and policies, and turning legal requirements into workable guidance for decision-makers.

Ariona's approach is grounded in the understanding that legal questions rarely exist in a vacuum. Public-facing entities are balancing operational demands, political realities, community expectations, and legal risk all at once. Clients value Ariona's ability to evaluate problems within that broader context and provide advice that is practical, thoughtful, and built to hold up under public scrutiny.

Before joining Meyer's Nave, Ariona served as an Attorney in the U.S. Department of Justice's Special Litigation Section, where she worked with state and local government agencies nationwide on investigations, compliance matters, and systemic reform efforts involving federal law and the U.S. Constitution. This experience continues to inform Ariona's work on questions facing public agencies today, including: First Amendment limits on regulating public employee speech; the eligibility of public grant recipients; limits on imposing zoning or landmarking laws that affect religious practice; due process standards related to public takings; and compliance with federal civil-rights obligations.

It also shapes how Ariona approaches a problem. Ariona weighs legal risk against the operational, political, and community realities in which decisions get made, on the principle that just because a course of action is legally available doesn't make it the wisest or most sustainable path forward.

Ariona's work spans beyond general public agency governance into advising on the

EDUCATION

The Howard University School of Law, JD, cum laude, 2020

Mills College, BA, 2016

ADMISSIONS

California, 2021 – Bar No. 340400

PRACTICE AREAS

Land Use & Environmental

creation of a tourism improvement district to support a major arena development project, and assessing the governance and operational future of a regional transportation network.

Ariona also keeps current in the field. In addition to client work, Ariona contributes to the California Land Use Practice, the Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB) treatise (widely regarded as the state's leading practitioner resource), by editing chapters related to code enforcement, land use regulation, and nonconforming uses.

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- The State Bar of California, Member (2021–Present)

PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- Co-editor, "California Land Use Practice, Chapters 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, and 20" – *Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB)* (2026)

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- **City of Rancho Cordova – Municipal Governance, Economic Development & Revenue Recovery re: SB 707/Brown Act Compliance, T-BID Amendment & TOT Enforcement.** Advising across a range of municipal governance, economic development, and revenue matters, including: guiding the City through the overhaul of California's open-meeting rules under SB 707, such as drafting the new technology-disruption policy the law now mandates for certain legislative bodies; advising on amending an existing tourism business improvement district (T-BID) to support a major sports and entertainment arena; and advising on raising and protecting public revenue by developing enforcement strategies and enforcing remittance of the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) from hotel operators (a challenge many cities face).
- **City of Anaheim – Restructuring a Regional Transportation Network.** Advising the City on the governance, operational, and policy options for the Anaheim Transportation Network, a non-profit transit operator working under a franchise with the City, as it confronts financial pressure, rising labor costs, and shifting service demands.
Proposition 218 Compliance. Counseling on the state's constitutional requirements related to raising local taxes, assessments, and property-related fees.
- **Public Records and Use-of-Force Disclosure.** Counseling on Public Records Act

obligations governing the disclosure of law enforcement related records, including personnel and use-of-force records.

- **First Amendment Review of Employee Speech Rules.** Providing constitutional analysis on the First Amendment limits of regulating public employee speech.
- **Pre-Litigation Preparation.** Working with experts in preparing cases for litigation.