

# Michelle L. Christ

Of Counsel

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New York, NY – 504.372.6706

Michelle Christ represents established businesses and individuals in all aspects of data privacy and cybersecurity matters. She has led multidisciplinary teams in the prevention, mitigation, and response to breaches, unauthorized disclosures, and cybersecurity incidents, and has advised on thousands of data security incidents and notification obligations pursuant to law or contract. Michelle also oversees data privacy audits and compliance assessments related to federal, state, and international data privacy obligations.

With an extensive background in privacy and regulatory compliance, Michelle skillfully advises clients on privacy law and policy and excels at building robust data governance frameworks, managing privacy risk, and delivering practical, business-focused legal solutions in complex regulatory environments. A Certified Information Privacy Professional/U.S. (CIPP/US), Michelle empowers clients by providing critical legal and regulatory compliance guidance grounded in a thorough analysis of key international, federal, and state privacy laws.

Prior to joining Wilson Elser, Michelle was the Deputy Executive Director of the Office of Privacy and Disclosure at the Social Security Administration, previously serving as Supervisory Counsel and Assistant Regional Counsel in the Office of General Counsel. Her work included advising high-ranking Social Security Administration (SSA) and other government officials on privacy law and policy involving vast repositories of personally identifiable information (PII), including medical and financial records.

## **Cybersecurity / Incident Response**

Michelle represents clients in actual or suspected cybersecurity incidents or data breaches ranging from unauthorized disclosures to sophisticated ransomware attacks. Michelle regularly advises clients on their legal obligations under data privacy and breach notification laws. She is a member of the firm's 24/7 incident response team for private and public companies, spanning all industry sectors. Additionally, she assists clients in devising crisis communication strategies, drawing on her extensive prior governmental experience, during which she routinely engaged with well-known national, state, and local

## **Services**

- Cybersecurity & Data Privacy

media, briefed high-level government officials, and prepared responses to U.S. congressional inquiries and public governmental hearings on FOIA, privacy, and breach-related matters.

### **Cybersecurity & Data Privacy / Regulatory Compliance**

Michelle routinely provides guidance and advises clients on compliance with federal and state breach and privacy regulations. She also represents clients in regulatory investigations stemming from cybersecurity incidents, including those conducted by federal and state agencies, and by state attorneys general.

### **Education**

- Fordham Law School (J.D., 2007)
  - Associate Editor, Environmental Law Review
  - Amy Reiss Endowed Scholarship
  - Nassau/Suffolk Alumni Scholarship
  - Co-Director, Lincoln Square Neighborhood Children's Law Program
- Fordham University (B.A. History, 2004)
  - Dean's Scholarship
  - Dean's List Outstanding Achievement Award, College Honors Program
  - Outstanding Achievement Award in History
  - Matteo Ricci Society

### **Bar Admissions**

- New York
- Connecticut

### **Court Admissions**

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Western District of New York

### **Professional Affiliations**

International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP)

### **Awards & Honors**

- Award for Excellence in Workforce Development, New York City Federal Executive Board

- Social Security Commissioner's Citation, Social Security Administration
- General Counsel Honor Award for Leadership Excellence, issued by the Social Security Administration Commissioner