



Wilka V. Toppins

Of Counsel

Houston | 713.286.7182 | wtoppins@bakerdonelson.com

Wilka V. Toppins is an international business attorney with more than 30 years of experience counseling clients in areas of corporate immigration, international and cross border transactions, general corporate and commercial matters, and labor and employment law.

Ms. Toppins represents domestic and international companies in legal interests in the U.S. and has represented hundreds of individual investors and entrepreneurs from all over the world. Her client base extends across the globe, including Mexico and Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia. She also supports foreign companies and entrepreneurs seeking inbound legal services as they establish business operations in the U.S.

Prior to joining Baker Donelson, Ms. Toppins worked for several prominent companies, including Exxon Company, where she handled litigation matters in federal and state courts, and SBC Communication Inc., where she focused on business transactions, mergers, and acquisitions.

Ms. Toppins helps clients understand the often-complex processes involved with U.S. immigration. Her decades of experience provide clients with informed guidance, helping them to move forward with confidence and to make fully informed decisions that accomplish their short-term and long-term goals. Her immigration practice includes the following services, among others:

- **Family-based immigration**
- Naturalization
- **Employment-based visas**, such as EB-2/EB-3 labor certification and aliens of extraordinary abilities and outstanding professors and researchers
- L-1A executive transfers
- **Investor visas, such as EB-5 and E-2**
- Visas for professional athletes, artists, and performers
- Visas for health care professionals

Ms. Toppins' services also include counseling clients on how to approach business matters so that they are able to minimize risks and maximize profit. Her experience includes the following:

- Formation of business entities
- Contract drafting and review
- Contract dispute/breach of contract litigation
- Unfair competition disputes
- Tax matters
- Compliance issues
- Business transactions
- Business succession plans
- Liability concerns
- Comprehensive services for businesses of all sizes and structures (e.g., partnerships, LLCs, corporations, and more)

As a native Spanish speaker, Ms. Toppins personally provides services in both English and Spanish.



Representative Matters

- Serve as U.S. corporate counsel for a large Mexico-based rubber manufacturer in its U.S. activities.
- Represented a Houston-based medical facility and practice in its acquisition by a national firm.
- Represented a Houston-based engineering firm in its acquisition by an international London-based firm.
- Represented a San Antonio-based refinery group with a permanent residency application for its top-level vice president.
- Obtained O1 approval for four highly-specialized chemical engineers working at the largest fertilizer plant being built in U.S.
- Represented over 100 EB-5 investors seeking U.S. lawful permanent residence through direct and indirect investments in the U.S.
- Provided counsel and helped design an immigration program for a U.S. EB-5 Regional Center.
- Obtained O1 approval for performers and supporting crew of the most popular children's performing group in Australia for its 2019 U.S. Tour.



Professional Honors & Activities

- Member – American Immigration Lawyers Association
- Adjunct Professor – Master of Law Program, Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Houston, Texas (2019 to present)
- Graduate – Leadership Houston Class (2012)
- Named as a "Women in the Fast Lane," by Greater Houston Women's Chamber of Commerce (2012)
- Named as a "Women on the Move," by Texas Executive Women, Houston, Texas (2011)
- Named as one of "Houston's Top 25 Women," by *Rolling Out Magazine*, Houston, Texas (2010)
- Recipient – League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Corporate Advocate of the Year Award, Cincinnati, Ohio (2009)
- Listed in "Houston's Top Lawyers," *H Magazine*, Houston, Texas (2006)
- Recipient – Emerging 10 Business Award, Houston Minority Business Council, Houston, Texas (2006)



Webinars

- Navigating the New U.S. International Entrepreneur Parole Program: The U.S. Immigration Program for Foreign Startup Founders (July 2021)
- Navegando la Nueva Opción Migratoria de los Estados Unidos Enfocada en "Emprendedores Internacionales" (June 2021)



Education

- Tulane University Law School, J.D., cum laude
- University of Massachusetts, B.A., cum laude



Admissions

- Texas, 1990