

Champion of COVID Response

Kim Donham

Deputy Chief Counsel

Department of Energy

Years of Service: 24



Summary:

Kim Donham led a team of several lawyers across the United States responding to US National Laboratories' Site Office Managers' emergent requests for COVID-19 legal reviews. Their combined efforts resulted in an astonishing 550 legal reviews completed over a one-year period. Moreover, her team's efforts ultimately ensured the essential legal basis for the US National Labs to conduct critical research leading to the development of vaccines currently on the commercial market. Their efforts also ensured well-coordinated messages to the general public on the critical research and development of those vaccines.

Description: Kim Donham did an outstanding job of leading six DOE Senior Counsel across the US directly responsible for oversight management of seven US National Labs as they responded to emergent COVID-19 consequence mitigation efforts and vaccination development. Through their combined diligence, these Senior Counsel completed an astounding 550 COVID-19 legal reviews ensuring the essential legal basis for the US National Labs to conduct critical research leading to the development of vaccines currently on the commercial market and to conduct communications to the global public consistent with Presidential directives. The Deputy Site Office Manager of Argonne National Lab wrote, "The COVID-19 pandemic led to wide-ranging changes in the operational approach required to conduct the federal management and oversight of Argonne National Laboratory by the Argonne Site Office (ASO). One key aspect of this was a significant increase in COVID related communications, both internal to the laboratory as well as to external stakeholders. All of these communications required input and concurrence from the local office of the General Counsel. In particular, the support provided to by Kim Donham and her staff of attorneys and other legal professionals was exemplary. In addition to her support for communication activities, Kim continued to provide her expertise to ASO in various legal matters at the federal, state and local level. In all cases doing so while maintaining the appropriate safety protocols for her and her staff."