



Brandon K. Essig
Partner

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Brandon Essig is a veteran litigator with a robust civil, white-collar and investigations practice.

A seasoned courtroom lawyer, Brandon has tried dozens of high-profile jury cases in his career. His courtroom experience includes both civil and criminal trials in state and federal courts, and multiple appellate arguments. Brandon also has a wide-ranging internal investigations and compliance practice, advising both corporate clients as well as college and university athletics programs, coaches, and athletes. In addition, he handles a diverse docket of civil cases for the firm's clients in state and federal courts and in arbitration forums.

As a former federal prosecutor, Brandon uses his experience in his white-collar practice to defend clients facing criminal charges through trial, and to guide his clients through federal and state grand jury investigations, state ethics matters, regulatory enforcement actions, and Title IX and NCAA infractions matters. Prior to joining Lightfoot, Brandon worked for nearly eight years at the Department of Justice. As an assistant U.S. attorney, he investigated and prosecuted a variety of crimes including public corruption, fraud, money laundering, violent crime, organized drug trafficking, environmental crimes and child exploitation.

As a civil litigator, Brandon now defends high-profile Fortune 100 clients in bet-the-company matters, including leading manufacturers, medical device companies, large-scale retailers and pest control services. Brandon has handled a variety of complex civil matters on the plaintiffs' side as well.

Prior to his time at the DOJ, Brandon was a captain in the U.S. Marine Corps. His service included time as a prosecutor and 10 months assigned to a Marine Corps infantry unit, including a seven-month deployment to Fallujah, Iraq. A former college athlete, Brandon played football at the University of West Alabama where he was twice selected as an Academic All-Conference tight end.

PRACTICE AREAS

Commercial Litigation
Healthcare
International Disputes
Media & Communications Law
Complex Government Litigation & Investigations
NCAA Compliance & Investigations
Product Liability
Professional Liability
White-Collar Criminal Defense & Corporate Investigations
Consumer Claims Defense

EDUCATION

University of Alabama School of Law (J.D.)
George Peach Taylor
Excellence in Trial Advocacy
Award
University of West Alabama
(B.A., *cum laude*)

BAR ADMISSIONS

Alabama

As a member of the firm's Hiring Committee, Brandon participates in the committee's efforts to bring only the best talent to Lightfoot. His time outside of compensated work is devoted to helping his wife Ashleigh, a full-time kindergarten teacher, control the unbound energy of their two sons and daughter. When time permits, he also likes to read, workout and spend time in the woods. Brandon and his family are members of the Cathedral Church of the Advent.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Alabama Bar Association, White Collar Section

Alabama White Collar Group

Business Counsel of Alabama

Cambridge Forum 2021, 2022

AWARDS

Benchmark Litigation, "Future Star" (2024)

The Best Lawyers in America® by BL Rankings — White-Collar Criminal Defense (2020-26)

Birmingham Business Journal, "Veteran of Influence" (2017)

Birmingham Magazine, "Top Attorney," — White-Collar Defense (2020)

Lawdragon, "500 Leading Lawyers in America" (2026)

Mid-South Super Lawyers by Thomson Reuters — White Collar Criminal Defense (2020-23)

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Author, "Yates Memo Thoughts for Compliance Professionals: The Scope of Risk May be Broader Than You Think," LinkedIn (2017)

Guest, "FCPA Compliance Report," podcast (2017)