

## DETROIT

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## Services

### Public Finance

- Airports
- Capital Assets and Infrastructure
- Cash Flow and Working Capital
- Distressed Municipalities and Debt Restructuring
- Higher Education Finance
- K-12 Education Finance and Election Law
- Public-Private Partnerships

## Industries

- Government and Public Sector
- Higher Education
- K-12 Education

## Education

University of Michigan Law School,  
J.D. 1979  
Williams College, B.A. 1975

## Bar Admissions

Michigan



Amanda Van Dusen

Of Counsel

After more than 40 years in practice, Amanda Van Dusen continues to distinguish herself as one of the most successful and influential public finance attorneys in the State of Michigan. Amanda has been recognized for her banking and finance law, education law, government relations, municipal law and public finance work by *Best Lawyers in America* every year since 2003, and she was named Detroit Public Finance Lawyer of the Year in 2015, 2017 and 2025, and Education Lawyer of the Year in 2012 and 2021.

Amanda's practice includes a wide array of public law clients including the City of Detroit, school districts (K-12 and higher), airports, counties and solid waste management authorities as bond counsel in financing transactions and special counsel for local governments in connection with intergovernmental agreements, elections, campaign finance compliance, state and federal tax issues, and general finance (budgets, revenue sources and cash flow). The range of Amanda's clients and her extensive volunteer involvement in public policy, education, the arts and community development help Amanda develop creative solutions which balance risks and opportunities and fit her clients' needs and objectives. That wide-ranging exposure has also taught her how to break down complex issues into understandable terms for diverse stakeholders. Amanda has put these skills to use for the City of Detroit as the City's lead public finance lawyer during and after the City's bankruptcy, for the Detroit Public Schools in their efforts to create innovative solutions for struggling schools and students and in the everyday challenges facing local governments in fast-changing times. Service to her clients also requires frequent contact with state officials, who are often central to a successful initiative.

## Amanda Van Dusen

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Amanda has also held numerous leadership positions with the firm and, as a member of a number of nonprofits and their boards, is actively engaged in the arts, public policy and philanthropic efforts across Michigan.

### **Representative Matters**

Amanda's practice ranges from large, complex matters for large clients to smaller transactions for infrequent borrowers. Most recently she and her team assisted the Detroit Public Schools in the transition, under a new state law, of its operations to the new Detroit Public Schools Community District which left most of its liabilities with the old district. Part of that work involved restructuring and refunding some of the old district's debt to avoid a default on the refunded obligations.

#### **City of Detroit Chapter 9 Bankruptcy Restructuring**

Miller Canfield served as local counsel to the City of Detroit in connection with its Chapter 9 bankruptcy case filed in July 2013 and its ongoing restructuring efforts. Since the City confirmed its Plan of Adjustment in December 2014, Miller Canfield has continued to represent the City in connection with many aspects of its Plan implementation, appeals of Plan confirmation, set up of the Great Lakes Water Authority, and a variety of financings.

#### **Detroit Public Schools Bond Refinancing**

Miller Canfield served as bond counsel to Detroit Public Schools (DPS) in connection with a long forward delivery current refunding bond issue refinancing the callable maturities of the School Building and Site Improvement Bonds issued by DPS in 2012.

### **Honors**

Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business, Public Finance (Band 1), 2017-present

2021 Crain's Detroit Business Notable Women in Law

Best Lawyers in America, Banking and Finance Law, Education Law, Government Relations Practice, Municipal Law, and Public Finance Law, 2003-present; Administrative/Regulatory Law, 2026; 2012 & 2021 Detroit Education Lawyer of the Year; 2015, 2017 and 2025 Detroit Public Finance Lawyer of the Year

Michigan Lawyers Weekly, inaugural Hall of Fame class, 2019; Women in the Law, 2015; Leaders in the Law, 2010

DBusiness Magazine, Top Lawyers:

Municipal Law

Public Finance Law

Inforum Woman of Influence, 2008

Michigan Super Lawyers, Top 50 Women Michigan 2007; Bonds/Government Finance, 2006-present

Crain's Detroit Business, One of the Detroit area's "100 Most Influential Women," 2002; Who's Who in Detroit Business - Law, 2005

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Corp! Magazine One of Michigan's Top Businesswomen, 2004

Leading Lawyers, Banking & Financial Institutions Law; Governmental, Municipal, Lobbying & Administrative Law; Public Finance Law; School Law, 2014–present

### **Professional Activities**

American College of Bond Counsel, Fellow

American Bar Association

American Bar Foundation, Fellow

State Bar of Michigan, Past Member, Committee on Professional and Judicial Ethics, Chairperson, 1986-88

Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association

Michigan Women in Finance, Co-Founder; Past President; Board of Directors, 2003-2006

### **Civic, Cultural & Social Activities**

W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, Board of Trustees, 2003-present

Hudson-Webber Foundation, Board of Trustees, 2001-2023

Huron County Community Foundation, Donor Advised Fund Committee, 2018-2022; Chair, 2020-2022

Wayne State University Van Dusen Leadership Forum, Advisory Board, 1993-present

Williams College, Member, 45th and 50th Reunion Committees

Detroit Institute of Arts, Director Emerita, 2013-present; Board Secretary, 2009-2012; Executive Committee, 1997-2012; Board of Directors, 1994-2012; Finance Committee, 1997-2013; Junior Council Advisory Board Member and Past Board Member

Detroit Revitalization Fellows Program, Advisory Board, 2011-present

Citizens Research Council of Michigan, Board of Directors, 1993-2011; Board Chair, 1999-2002; Trustee, 1998-present

Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, Member, 2005-2013

Legislative Commission on Statutory Mandates, Co-chair, 2008-2009

Council of Michigan Foundations, Board Secretary, 2008; Board of Trustees, 2001-2009

Michigan Women's Foundation, Past Trustee, 1998-2001; Grantmaking Committee, 1995-98

## Amanda Van Dusen

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Ferndale Board of Education, Member, 1993-94; Finance Committee, 1989-2014; Bond Issue Planning Committee, 1995

Detroit Regional Chamber, Participant, Leadership Detroit V

City of Detroit, Mayor's Committee, 21st Century, 1993

Gleaners Community Food Bank of Greater Detroit, Past Board Member, 1985-91

### Speeches

Frequent presenter on school finance topics and governmental finance and powers, including security interests and fiscal stress.

- "Women in Public Finance Leadership," Michigan Women in Finance (MWIF) Conference, Panelist, May 16, 2025
- "Municipal Bankruptcy Fallout: Statutory Liens & Rethinking Appropriation Risk," National Federation of Municipal Analysts Annual Conference, Panelist, May 2016
- "Exploring Solutions to the Pension Dilemma," Women in Public Finance Annual Conference, Panelist, October 2015
- Speaker, "When Worlds Collide-Municipal Finance & Bankruptcy: Has the Dust Settled?," MAMA & PCLS Summer Education Conference, June 2015
- "Inside the Detroit Bankruptcy: How the City Was Saved," Miller Canfield/Conway MacKenzie, Inc./Ernst & Young LLP/Chicago Bar Association, May 6, 2015
- "Exploring Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies in the Era of Emergency Managers and Limited Resources," MPELRA, September 19, 2013
- "Insights from the Detroit Bankruptcy," Miller Canfield Before the Bell Breakfast Forum, February 19, 2015
- "The SEC's New Focus on the Municipal Market," Miller Canfield Before the Bell Breakfast Forum, June 20, 2013
- "Municipal Debt - Crisis or Business as Usual? Myths and Realities Act 4: Michigan's New Emergency Manager Act," Miller Canfield Before the Bell Breakfast Forum, June 16, 2011
- "Government Obligations," National Association of Bond Lawyers Bond Attorneys Workshop, Panelist, 2006, 2007

### Publications

"Saved But Not Forgotten," Michigan Super Lawyers Magazine, August 13, 2025

"Capital Improvement Financing for Michigan Public Schools," co-authored with Kristen Howard and James Crowley, Michigan Bar Journal, February 2021

"Back to School: Detroit attorney spearheads pair of legal practice groups," Detroit Legal News, November 1, 2011

## Amanda Van Dusen

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Author of chapter on "Special Assessments and User Charges," in Local Government Law and Practice in Michigan, published jointly by the Michigan Municipal League and the Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys, 2000

### Articles

Operating Cash-Flow Borrowing Options for Michigan Public Schools

School Building and Site Sinking Fund for Michigan Public Schools

Operating Cash-Flow Borrowing Options for Michigan Public School

Operating Cash Flow Options for Michigan Public Schools

Michigan Adopts New Prevailing Wage Requirements for Public School Construction Projects

Expanded Permitted Uses for School District Sinking Funds

Operating Cash-Flow Borrowing Options for Michigan Public Schools

Are Public Schools Subject to Sales Tax?

Public Sector Application of CMS' COVID-19 Health Care Vaccination Rule

Operating Cash Flow Borrowing Options for Michigan Public Schools

Michigan Governor Signs Open Meetings Act Amendment Extending Sunset for Electronic Public Meetings

Michigan Governor Signs Open Meetings Act Amendment Allowing Electronic Public Meetings

Operating Cash-Flow Borrowing Options for Michigan School Districts

COVID-19: Continuity of Learning for K-12 Students under Executive Order 2020-35

COVID-19: Contributing School District Equipment and Supplies to Local Health Care Providers

Designation of Public Education Employees as Critical Infrastructure and Essential Employees Pursuant To Governor Whitmer's Executive Order No. 2020-21 (COVID-19)

GASB 84: Legal Considerations for Public Schools in Michigan

2019 School Election Update

What Do the SEC's New Continuing Disclosure Requirements Mean for Governmental Borrowers?

Sinking Fund and Other Capital Improvement Financing Options for Michigan Public School Districts

Election Do's and Don'ts for School Districts

Standard & Poor's Increases Credit Rating for the State of Michigan from AA- to AA

Recent Legislation Further Limits School District Options in Connection with the Sale of Excess Property

**Amanda Van Dusen**

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Sinking Fund Legislation Approved by Senate, November 2, 2016

Miller Canfield Secures Court Order Stopping Enforcement of Law Barring Objectively Neutral Speech by Public Officials

New Law Limits Ability of Local Governments and School Districts to Communicate Regarding Ballot Questions

Michigan Governor Signs Early Warning Legislation for Financially Distressed School Districts with Immediate Effect

Michigan Governor Signs Law Eliminating February Regular Elections

Legislature Passes Early Warning Bills for Financially Distressed School Districts

Significant Changes to Michigan FOIA Laws Coming In July

Community Colleges Must Report Debt Revenue Loss By Friday Under Michigan Personal Property Tax Reform

How Michigan's New Personal Property Tax Law Will Affect School Districts

New SEC Regulations of Municipal Advisors and Underwriters Take Effect in July

Proposed New MSRB Rule on Standards of Conduct for Municipal Advisors

Michigan Election Law Amendments Will Require Ballot Language to be Certified Two Weeks Earlier than Previously Required