



Polly Wilkins

Lawyer

LONDON

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Polly Wilkins focuses her practice on representing ultra-high-net-worth individuals and their families in both international civil and criminal disputes and investigations involving allegations of fraud and misconduct. She has extensive experience working with international private clients and their advisors to develop cross-border litigation and reputation management strategies aimed at mitigating business and reputational risks involving their global business interests, including in Cyprus and across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Australia, key offshore financial jurisdictions (including the Cayman Islands and British Virgin Islands) and the Americas.

Ms. Wilkins has been recognized by leading industry organizations and publications. She and Kobre & Kim have been recognized in *Legal 500* 2023 for Reputation Management, where it is noted that “Kobre & Kim LLP’s reputation management and defense strategy department boasts an impressive client list of UHNWIs, who trust the team of experienced lawyers to handle cross-border civil and commercial litigation.” Ms. Wilkins was a finalist in the Lawyer of the Year Reputation category at the *Spear’s Awards* 2023, featured in the *Spear’s* Reputation Management Index 2022, honored as *Citywealth’s* “2020 Lawyer of the Year – Partner” at their Future Leader Awards and listed in the *Private Client Global Elite* 2022 directory. Ms. Wilkins is recommended for her experience in “[helping] businesses and successful individuals to understand and deal with the reputational and privacy issues that have the potential to put them in the spotlight,” particularly in matters arising from high-profile cross-border investigations, complex civil and commercial litigation, white-collar crime, asset forfeiture defense and the publication of INTERPOL Red Notices. She is frequently quoted in publications like *The Wall Street Journal* and invited to speak at external events on issues related to private client litigation and crisis management.

She is particularly accustomed to coordinating legal strategy and working closely with a range of stakeholders including crisis communications and public relations firms, investigators, private family offices and transactional wealth advisors to formulate holistic strategies to preserve reputation and mitigate privacy concerns, as well as defend assets and liberty when clients are engaged in litigation or are the subject of an investigation.

Before joining Kobre & Kim, Ms. Wilkins practiced at Schillings and Squire Patton Boggs.

Admissions

- Solicitor, England & Wales

Education

- ICA International Diploma, Anti Money Laundering
- BPP Law School, LPC
- University of Salzburg, LLM
- University of East Anglia, LLB, *honors*

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Accolades

Spear's Awards 2023, Finalist: Lawyer of the Year Reputation
STEP Private Client Awards 2023/24, International Legal Team of the Year (midsize firm), Shortlist
Magic Circle Awards 2022, Gold in "Reputation Management Law Firm of the Year" (as head of reputation practice)
Legal Week Private Client Global Elite Directory for 2021 & 2022, "Private Client Global Elite"
Citywealth Magazine, Top 100 Private Client Lawyers 2021
Spear's Magazine, Reputation Management Index 2021 and 2022
Citywealth Magazine, Lawyer of the Year (Partner) 2020
Magic Circle Awards 2021, Bronze in "Reputation Management Law Firm of the Year" (as co-head of reputation practice)
Legal Week Private Client Global Elite Directory for 2018 & 2019, "Ones to Watch"
Citywealth Magazine, Leaders List
Citywealth Magazine, Future Leaders Top 100

Select Engagements

International Private Client

- Representation of an international businesswoman in advising on strategies relating to global reputation issues arising out of attempts to link her to the alleged criminal conduct of third parties.
- Representation of a UAE-based businessman to undertake select reputation management projects following a series of defamatory news stories alleging business ties to a high-net-worth family embroiled in corruption allegations globally, as well as defamatory statements questioning the client's source of wealth and business activities.
- Representation of an EMEA-based businessman and politician in various proactive reputation projects attempting to distance the individual from incorrect allegations in the global press of association with certain individuals and entities with similar names.
- Representation an international businessman in global legal matters arising out of the "1MDB" matter, which involve criminal charges and civil asset forfeiture proceedings brought by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), as well as additional legal action from authorities located in Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Singapore and various other countries, involving several billions of USD in controversy. We have resisted ongoing forfeiture and confiscation efforts for several years, and engaged in counter-offensive litigation in the Cayman Islands and New Zealand to secure more favorable positioning for the family's assets.
- Representation of a prominent European businessperson in exploring offensive litigation strategies against adversaries conducting a derogatory public relations campaign by alleging the client's involvement in a money laundering investigation being conducted by Spanish authorities, as well as deploying various reputation management efforts to aid the client's factual and legal defenses.

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- Representation of two South American individuals in providing reputation management strategies including challenging their designation as politically exposed persons (PEPs) on public risk management databases.
- Representation of an Asian businessman in asset forfeiture defense matters and in providing reputation management strategies in advance of the potential filing of a U.S. asylum application with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in light of potential U.S. extradition proceedings requested by an Asian government alleging the perpetration of a large-scale fraud scheme.
- Representation of a European individual in defending against the enforcement of a foreign judgment entered in the New York Supreme Court for approximately US \$378 million in relation to allegations of both civil and criminal fraud.
- Representation of a European individual in defending against litigation brought against Cyprus-based trusts for which our client is a beneficiary as a result of their being linked to allegations of fraud.
- Representation of a European ultra-high-net-worth individual in defending against extradition and deportation proceedings as a result of politically motivated allegations of financial crime in the client's home country.

Professional & Community Involvement

- Co-Chair of the Women's White Collar Defence Association Young Professional's Committee – London Chapter

Publications & Presentations

- Co-author, "Social Tokens and Reputational Risk" (*Family Office Global*, September 2022)
- Speaker, "Two Years on From the First COVID-19 Lockdown: The Privacy and Reputation Implications of Working Remotely For Family Offices" (*Digitalis*, March 2022)
- Speaker, "Developments in Defamation and Privacy – Reputational Risks and Planning for Private Clients" (STEP City of London, July 2021)
- Speaker, "Reputation Management for International Families" (Private Client Dining Club, June 2021)
- Speaker, "Women in Disputes – Resilience and Leading in Adversity" (Raedas, February 2021)
- Speaker, "Reputation Risk: Avoiding Rumours from Becoming Reputation" (3rd Cyprus Anti-Fraud Conference, December 2020)
- Speaker, "Reputation Matters" (Chartered Institute of Public Relations International AGM, December 2020)
- Speaker, "Building a Factual Narrative and Managing Reputation for European Private Clients" (*Family Wealth Report*, November 2020)
- Co-author, "Trapping Interpol Misuse: Inside the Proposed TRAP Act" (*Law360*, May 2020)

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- Speaker, "Managing High-Stakes International Private Client Litigation" (The Private Client Global Elite, April 2020)
- Author, "Succession Planning - Reputation and Privacy" (*The Lawyer* and *Spear's Wealth Management Magazine*, December 2016)
- Author, "Stronger Client Privacy; Stronger Reputation" (*Fiduciary Focus*, August 2015)
- Author, "Correlate your Business Decisions with Reputation Risk" (*The Lawyer*, August 2015)
- Speaker, "IRights - The Legal Framework" (The Royal Society of Arts, July 2015)
- Author, "Video as a Publishing Tool: the Reputational Menace - Coming to a Screen Near You" (*The Lawyer*, October 2014)
- Author, "What does the first judicial interpretation of the serious harm threshold tell us?" (*The Lawyer*, August 2014)

"Polly Wilkins is an expert in her field and personable to boot... Very thorough and hard-working and always available. Attention to detail is amazing" - *Legal 500 2023*

"Advice is second to none. Highly recommend" - *Citywealth 2020*

"She is incredibly well versed at putting in place strategies to help clients better protect themselves." - *Citywealth 2018*