

Susan M. Johnson

Principal | Seattle

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Overview

For more than two decades, Susan has advised clients across the alcoholic beverage industry on regulatory compliance, business operations and legislative developments. Producers, distributors, retailers and hospitality companies appreciate her strategic counsel on the business and legal impacts of federal, state and local alcohol regulations.

She works with breweries, wineries, distilleries, grocers, specialty retailers, restaurant and hotel chains, sports facility concessionaires and common carriers to address liquor licensing requirements, tied-house laws and distribution agreements. Her counsel includes structuring compliant sales and marketing strategies, assessing promotional partnerships and advising on corporate ownership changes that require regulatory approval.

Susan also represents clients in administrative enforcement matters, regulatory proceedings and compliance reviews. She has contributed to legislative initiatives that modernize industry regulations, including those affecting licensing structures and business models. By working directly with state and federal agencies, she helps businesses address operational challenges, implement policy-driven changes and anticipate regulatory shifts impacting the alcohol sector.

Areas of Focus

- [Intellectual Property Licensing & Transactions](#)
- [Alcoholic Beverages](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Consumer Brands & Goods](#)
- [Food & Beverage](#)
- [Hospitality, Travel & Tourism](#)
- [Sports & Entertainment](#)

Admissions

- Washington

Education

- J.D., University of Oregon School of Law, 1995
- B.A., Evergreen State College, 1985

Honors & Recognitions

- *Chambers USA (Nationwide)* Leading Individual, Food & Beverages, Alcohol, 2014-present
- Washington State Hotel & Lodging Association, Member of the Year Award, 2007

Professional Activities

- Alliance of Alcohol Industry Attorneys & Consultants, Member
- Brewers Association, Allied Member
- National Association of Licensing and Compliance Professionals, Associate Member
- National Alcoholic Beverage Control Association, Associate Member
- National Conference of State Liquor Administrators, Associate Member
- Washington Wine Industry Foundation, Former Director
- Washington State Bar Association, Member

Experience

- Representation of state hoteliers' association in drafting legislation and implementing rules that created a hotel liquor license in Washington State.
- Representation of luxury theater in passage of legislation to allow in-theater liquor service.
- Participated in Washington State Liquor Control Board process that resulted in relaxation of tied-house laws in Washington State.
- Assisted international brewer in acquisition of craft brewing operations in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.
- Assisted largest U.S. winery with winery facility acquisitions in Washington State.

News & Insights

News

[Foster Garvey Recognized Among Nation's Top Firms in 2026 Chambers USA Guide: 34 Attorneys and 15 Practices Ranked](#)

[06.04.26](#)

[Foster Garvey Recognized Among Nation's Top Firms in 2025 Chambers USA Guide; 26 Attorneys and 13 Practices Ranked](#)

[06.05.25](#)

[Foster Garvey Welcomes Accomplished Alcoholic Beverage Team](#)

[02.12.25](#)

Legal Alerts

[Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board Seeks Feedback on Proposed Rules for Expanded Alcohol Service Areas](#)

[08.08.25](#)

[Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board Announces New Online Licensing Portal](#)

[03.28.25](#)

Connect with Susan

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