

## James I. Cohen

Partner

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Jim practices at the intersection of law and politics. Based on decades of experience as a regulatory lawyer, mediator, and elected official — including as Mayor of Portland, Jim helps clients in heavily regulated industries achieve their legal and policy goals before state and local regulatory agencies and legislative bodies.

Jim's unique background allows him to provide clients not only with insightful legal advice, but also with creative solutions involving public relations, facilitation, and outreach to key government, business, and community leaders. His experience in public service and leadership positions on multiple business and nonprofit boards gives him a deep understanding of government and a broad range of connections within Maine's business and political community.

Applying these skills across a wide range of regulated industries, Jim has helped craft or modify laws and regulations, represented clients in adjudicatory proceedings before government agencies and the courts, assisted clients in complex business transactions, facilitated stakeholder groups, and provided a wide range of legal and public policy advice.

Jim is an avid runner, biker, skier, "golfer" (quotes intentionally added), and sometimes guitar player.

In addition to Jim's main services and industries, he also focuses on the following unique areas:

- [Water and Wastewater Systems](#)
- [Banking and Financial Services](#)
- Municipal Law
- Procurement
- Transportation
- Substance Use Disorder Treatment
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- [See additional Practice Area background here.](#)

### Services/Industries

- Telecommunications
- Energy
- Government & Public Relations

## Education

- Columbia University School of Law (J.D.)
- Princeton University, Princeton School of Public and International Affairs (A.B., *cum laude*)
- University of Southern Maine (Certificate Program in Mediation)

## Public Service

- Mayor, City of Portland (2005-06), Portland City Council (2002-08)
- Portland Charter Commission, Vice Chair (2009-10)
- Cumberland County Budget Committee (2003-05)(Chair, 2005)
- Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, Chair (2012-14), Trustee (2008-present)
- Portland Community Chamber of Commerce, Board President (2019-present)
- Maine State Chamber of Commerce, Trustee (2009-present)
- Portland Trails, President (1997-98), Advisory Trustee (2002-present)
- Project Green Schools, Advisory Trustee (2017-present)
- [See More Public Service](#)

## Bar Admissions

- Maine

## Court and Other Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the District of Maine

## Memberships

- Maine State Bar Association: Consumer and Financial Institutions Section, Chair (1999-2000), Member (1996-present)
- Maine Association of Mediators, Board of Governors (2008-2010), Member (2007-present)
- Federal Communications Bar Association, New England Chapter, Steering Committee Member
- Maine State Bar Association, ADR Section, Member (2009-present)
- Court Appointed Dispute Resolution Service, [Roster of Mediators](#) (2011-2014)

## Honors

- AV® rated by *Martindale-Hubbell*
- Recognized in *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business* under Energy & Natural Resources Law
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® for Administrative/Regulatory Law, Government Relations Practice, Energy Regulatory Law in Portland, Maine

- Selected by peers for inclusion in *New England Super Lawyers*® under Utilities, Banking and Government Relations
- Recognized by Best Lawyers® as the 2020 Portland, Maine Energy Law Lawyer of the Year
- Neal W. Allen Award for Leadership in the Public Sector (2009)
- Ruth M. Shaper Memorial Award, Maine Public Health Association (2008)
- Public Service for the Environment Award, Sierra Club, ME Chapter (2006)

To learn more about third-party ratings and rankings, and the selection processes used for inclusion, [click here](#).

## Blog Posts: Environmental and Energy Law Update

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The Environmental and Energy Law Update blog provides an analysis and discussion of the most critical and timely legal issues and announcements environmental, natural resource, and energy sectors.

April 22, 2021

### **Task Force Releases Report on Modernizing Maine's Electric Grid**

On April 14, 2020, the Nature Conservancy and The Great Plans Institute announced the final report of the Maine Utility Regulatory Reform and Decarbonization Initiative (MURRDI) which outlines a series of steps Maine can take to modernize its electric...

March 24, 2020

### **COVID-19 Alert: State of Maine and City of Portland Issue Orders to Close Non-essential Businesses; Utility Services to Continue**

On Tuesday March 24, 2020, both the City of Portland and the State of Maine issued comprehensive new limitations on business establishments in order to further limit the spread of the coronavirus. Both actions were aimed at limiting the...

March 24, 2020

### **COVID-19 Alert: Massachusetts Closes "Non-essential" Businesses; Utility Services to Continue**

The response to COVID-19 by states across the U.S. has continued to evolve rapidly. In Massachusetts, due to growing concerns over the spread of coronavirus, Governor Charlie Baker issued a "shelter in place" order that went into effect...

March 20, 2020

### **Maine's COVID-19 Response Impacts Utility Services and Other Business Activities**

Like many states, Maine is quickly imposing a wide range of measures designed to protect the public in response to the spread of the coronavirus, COVID-19. Almost daily, Maine Governor Janet Mills and other state agencies have

announced new...

February 27, 2020

### **Maine PUC Issues Report Analyzing the Costs and Benefits of “Public Power” in Maine**

Last week, the Maine PUC submitted to the Maine Legislature its Report , authored by London Economics International (LEI), on the costs and benefits of requiring the State of Maine to take over Central Maine Power and Emera Maine...

June 7, 2018

### **At NECPUC: Takeaways from the Annual Symposium**

At the end of May, Verrill Dana attorneys James Cohen , William Harwood , Geoffrey Why , Katie Gray, and Brian Marshall attended the 71 st New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners (NECPUC) Annual Symposium at the Cliff...

November 7, 2017

### **Microgrids: The Next “Big” Thing?**

There has been a lot of conversation lately about "microgrids." And, given the significant power outages experienced in Maine and the Northeast this past week due to extreme weather events, these conversations are bound to increase. But, what exactly...

June 23, 2017

### **Energy Startups: Opportunities, Challenges, & Considerations**

In a presentation during Maine Startup & Create Week , Verrill Dana partner Jim Cohen , a utilities and energy lawyer with more than 25 years of experience, moderated a panel focused on the question, " How can tech...

June 20, 2017

### **How Can Tech Disrupt Energy?**

On Wednesday, June 21, as part of Maine Startup & Create Week , Verrill Dana partner Jim Cohen , a utilities and energy lawyer for more than 25 years, will moderate a panel entitled " How Can Tech Disrupt...

July 28, 2016

### **Verrill Dana Hosts E2Tech Networking Event**

On Tuesday, July 26, more than a hundred professionals gathered outside in Verrill Dana's courtyard in Portland, Maine for the E2Tech Summer Networking Reception . Attendees included numerous area businesses, government officials, professionals, and non-profit leaders from across the...