

FEDERAL ACQUISITION INSTITUTE



Suspension & Debarment Interview

Catherine L. Kessmeier

Suspension & Debarment Official
Department of the Navy (DON)



Ms. Catherine L. Kessmeier is the Assistant General Counsel (Acquisition Integrity) for the Department of the Navy (DON). As a member of the Senior Executive Service, she is responsible for leading, managing, and overseeing the Department's Acquisition Integrity Program and the Acquisition Integrity Office. This entails coordinating the acquisition integrity efforts of all the major stakeholders, including the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, the Naval Audit Service, the Naval Inspector General, and the acquisition community. Ms. Kessmeier is the DON's Suspending and Debarment Official and has held this position since 2013.

Previously, Ms. Kessmeier served as Deputy Assistant General Counsel (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) for the DON, providing advice and counsel to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy across a broad range of subjects, including civilian human resources, military manpower, clemency/parole, ethics and standards of conduct, equal employment opportunity, investigations, labor-relations, and whistleblower protection. From 2005 until 2009, she managed and directed the provision of legal services for the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) as the Mid-Atlantic Area Counsel and as Counsel for the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Carderock Division. In these roles, Ms. Kessmeier oversaw the provision of legal advice and representation across a spectrum of practice areas, including government contracts/fiscal law, personnel law, environmental law, intellectual property law, and standards of conduct. Ms. Kessmeier joined the DON Office of the General Counsel in 1999 as an attorney at the NAVSEA Headquarters, and later served as the subsection head for Civilian Personnel Law and Special Projects at NAVSEA. Prior to her employment with the DON, Ms. Kessmeier worked as an attorney for the Department of Commerce Office Headquarters, as well as the United States

Patent & Trademark Office. She began her Federal career as a staff attorney to the Chair of the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

Ms. Kessmeier graduated from Chestnut Hill College, Philadelphia PA with a B.A. in Political Science, having completed the Interdepartmental Honors Program. She earned her J.D. from the Widener University School of Law, Wilmington, DE, where she served as an Associate Articles Editor for the *Widener Law Symposium Journal* and as an Executive Board Member of the Moot Court Honor Society.

