
Catherine L. Kessmeier



Deputy General Counsel Office of the General Counsel of the Navy



Ms. Catherine L. Kessmeier is the Deputy General Counsel for the Department of the Navy (DON). Her responsibilities are similar to those of the managing partner of a very large, international law firm representing clients with business lines worth over \$179 billion. Together with the General Counsel of the Navy and the Principal Deputy General Counsel, she is a member of the Office of General Counsel's (OGC's) senior leadership team. Ms. Kessmeier is responsible for establishing and implementing policies for the recruitment, hiring, promotion, and professional development of approximately 750 attorneys. She oversees OGC's Freedom of Information Act Program, the DON Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, and the provision of legal advice to the Auditor General of the Navy and the DON Assistant for Administration.

Previously from 2017 until 2019, Ms. Kessmeier served as the Assistant General Counsel (AGC) (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (M&RA), the principal legal advisor to the DON Secretariat for matters concerning military and civilian personnel policy, as well as the coordination of efforts worldwide in labor and employment litigation. Appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 2013, Ms. Kessmeier oversaw the DON's efforts to pursue criminal, civil, contractual, and administrative remedies in all significant investigations of acquisition fraud or corruption as the AGC (Acquisition Integrity) and the DON's Suspending and Debaring Official. She served as the Deputy AGC (M&RA) from 2009 until 2013. Ms. Kessmeier joined the DON OGC in 1999 as an attorney assigned to the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), where she later served as a subsection head for civilian personnel law and special projects, Counsel for the Naval Warfare Center Carderock Division, and ultimately, as the NAVSEA Mid-Atlantic Area Counsel. Ms. Kessmeier worked for the Department of Commerce and began her legal career as an attorney for the Chair of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA).

Ms. Kessmeier graduated from Chestnut Hill College in 1991 with a B.A. in Political Science. She earned her J.D. from the Widener University School of Law in 1995, having served as the Associate Articles Editor for the *Widener Law Symposium Journal* and an Executive Board Member of the Moot Court Honor Society. She is the recipient of a DON Superior Civilian Service Award, two DON Meritorious Civilian Service Awards, and a Superior Accomplishment Award from the FLRA.