



Margaret A. (Peggy) Focarino

Commissioner for Patents

Margaret A. (Peggy) Focarino is Commissioner for Patents for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). She was appointed to this position in January 2012.

The functions and duties of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director, United States Patent Office (Under Secretary/Director) and the functions and duties of the Deputy Under Secretary/Deputy Director have been delegated to the Commissioner for Patents for any period when there is no Under Secretary/Director and the Deputy Under Secretary/Deputy Director, and when there is no Acting Director.

In her role as Commissioner, Ms. Focarino manages and leads the Patent Organization as the chief operating officer. She is responsible for the management and direction of all aspects of this organization which affect the administration of patent operations, examination policy, resources and planning, and budget administration. She previously served as Deputy Commissioner for Patents, providing administrative oversight to nine Patent Technology Centers and coordinating the activities of patent application examination and reissues of patents.

Ms. Focarino began her career at the USPTO in 1977 as a patent examiner. She was promoted to the senior executive service in 1997. She received the Department of Commerce Silver Medal for Leadership in 2010 for leading a joint union and management task force that developed and implemented the first significant changes to the patent examiner work credit system in more than 30 years.

In May of 2013, the Partnership for Public Service named Ms. Focarino a finalist for the Service to America Medal in the category of Management Excellence and in 2012, she was named one of Managing Intellectual Property's Most Influential People in the World of Intellectual Property. She was the 2010 recipient of American University's School of Public Affairs Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership.

Ms. Focarino received her undergraduate degree in physics from the State University of New York, and a Certificate in Advanced Public Management from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

About the USPTO

Since 1790, the basic role of the United States intellectual property system has remained the same: to "promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries" (Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution). Today, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is a federal agency in the Department of Commerce, headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia. Through the issuance of patents, the USPTO encourages technological advancement by providing incentives to invent, invest in, and disclose new technology worldwide. Through the registration of trademarks, the agency assists businesses in protecting their investments, promoting goods and services, and safeguarding consumers against confusion and deception in the marketplace. By disseminating both patent and trademark information, the USPTO promotes an understanding of intellectual property protection and facilitates the development and sharing of new technologies worldwide.