BUILDING SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE

The life sciences value chain

Life sciences companies are navigating sustained supply chain disruption driven by geopolitical uncertainty, regulatory divergence, cost volatility, rising Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) expectations, and accelerating technological change. Supply chain resilience is no longer just an operational concern – it is a strategic enterprise priority, affecting innovation, compliance, patient access, and long term value.

DLA Piper helps life sciences clients design, strengthen, and future proof their supply chains through an integrated legal and commercial approach that aligns strategy, regulation, contracting, taxation and trade, and execution across the full value chain.

From operational risk to enterprise strategy

Supply chain resilience sits at the intersection of corporate strategy, regulatory compliance, and commercial execution. Disruptions can trigger manufacturing delays, regulatory exposure, enforcement risk, missed launches, reputational harm, and increased tax and trade costs.

A holistic approach

To address these challenges, we deliver an end to end, cross functional approach that connects upstream decisions with downstream outcomes.

End-to-end support

We work with pharma, biopharma, medical device, diagnostics, animal health, and healthtech companies to address supply chain risk and opportunity at every stage of the product lifecycle.

Leading Firm
Nationwide - Life Sciences
Chambers USA 2026

Leading Firm
Life Sciences & Pharmaceutical Sector (International and Cross-Border)
Chambers Global 2026

Leading Firm
Healthcare: Life Sciences
The Legal 500 USA 2026

Leading Firm
Healthcare: Pharmaceutical/ Medical Products Regulatory
Chambers USA 2026
District of Columbia

Top Ranked
Multi-Jurisdictional 2026 – Tax
Chambers Global

CFIUS Experts
International Trade
Chambers USA 2026 Nationwide

A full value chain approach to resilience

True resilience requires an integrated view across the life sciences value chain. Decisions made early – during development, sourcing, and manufacturing – directly affect commercialization, regulatory posture, cost structure, and continuity of supply later.

Research, development, and early stage partnerships

Early development and partnering decisions can create long term constraints if not structured thoughtfully.

Structuring early partnerships for flexibility

Our team advises on R&D collaborations, Contract Research Organization (CRO) relationships, early manufacturing arrangements, and technology transfer strategies designed to preserve flexibility as products scale, and plan for tax and trade efficiency.

Aligning IP and commercialization strategy

We align IP, data, and licensing frameworks with anticipated manufacturing and commercialization pathways to reduce dependency risk, avoid downstream bottlenecks, and reduce costs.

Manufacturing, sourcing, and supplier strategy

Manufacturing and sourcing are increasingly shaped by geopolitical exposure, capacity constraints, pricing volatility, and regulatory pressure. We help life sciences companies translate supply chain strategy into enforceable commercial frameworks, including:

- Global and regional manufacturing strategies such as dual sourcing, nearshoring, and onshoring
- Negotiation of Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization (CDMO), Contract Manufacturing Organization (CMO), Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API), and other critical supply agreements
- Contractual protections addressing shortages, allocation risk, pricing volatility, tariffs, and change in law exposure
- Quality, audit, ESG, and termination rights across supplier networks

The result is greater continuity, transparency, and control across complex, multi tier supply arrangements. By also considering tax and trade impacts at the outset, companies can avoid costly restructurings later.

Regulatory, quality, and compliance integration

Life sciences supply chains operate in a dynamic and highly regulated environment, where misalignment across functions can quickly disrupt operations.

A coordinated approach across the value chain

We provide coordinated support across global regulatory strategy, Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Good Distribution Practice, Good Documentation Practices, pharmacovigilance, and quality system oversight – particularly where activities are outsourced across jurisdictions.

Embedding compliance into contracts and governance

Our approach integrates regulatory obligations into contracts and governance structures, helping clients respond to inspections, recalls, shortages, and enforcement actions while protecting supply continuity.

Commercialization, distribution, and market access

Downstream resilience is essential to patient access, revenue stability, and brand integrity. We advise on:

- Structuring global and regional distribution, logistics, warehousing, third-party logistics provider (3PL), and last-mile delivery arrangements, including cold-chain and specialized handling requirements for vaccines, radiopharmaceuticals, and other sensitive technologies
- Managing supply allocation and performance risk in constrained markets
- Drafting distributor and wholesaler agreements that balance compliance, flexibility, and accountability
- Supporting product launches and cross border market entry

Our focus is on enabling commercial execution while managing legal and operational risk and optimizing tax and trade opportunities.

Corporate strategy, transactions, and transformation

Supply chain resilience is increasingly central to corporate strategy and investment decisions across the life sciences sector.

Supporting transactions and strategic investments

Our leading practitioners advise on M&A, joint ventures, and strategic investments involving manufacturing assets, IP, platforms, and critical suppliers, including supply chain focused diligence and post transaction integration.

Driving value through operating models and governance

We help design tax- and trade-optimized operating models that drive scalable, sustainable outcomes, and advise boards and management teams on governance, disclosure, and enterprise risk oversight related to supply continuity and resilience.

Global trade

Life science companies face significant economic pressure from new tariffs on cross-border goods, prompting consideration of onshoring, nearshoring, and other changes to supply chains to mitigate rising costs.

Reducing dutiable value and import costs

Increasing tariffs are also driving companies to explore strategies to reduce the dutiable value of their products upon importation and manage overall cost exposure.

Supporting strategic tariff planning

Our team helps assess the tariff impacts across current supply chains and evaluate near-term, mid-term, and long-term strategies to reduce incremental tariff costs.

Global taxation

Since the value chains of many life science companies span multiple jurisdictions, tax considerations not addressed during the design phase can lead to inefficiencies. Profits may also be subject to double taxation, resulting in extended and costly tax controversy.

Unlocking value through early tax planning

Taking a proactive approach to tax during supply and value chain design can uncover incremental cash savings. These efficiencies may then be redeployed to support other strategic or operational initiatives.

Aligning operational change with tax strategy

When navigating disruption and building more resilient supply chains, it is important to consider the link between operational decisions and tax outcomes. A coordinated approach can help avoid unexpected tax liabilities while identifying planning opportunities.

Building tax-efficient value chains

We provide support across the lifecycle – from early- to commercial-stage – in establishing global, regional, and local tax-efficient value chains and supply chains, enhancing tax efficiency and cash flow.

A global platform for a global industry

We deliver coordinated, local law advice across the Americas, EMEA, and Asia Pacific, drawing on deep experience across corporate, regulatory, commercial, IP, ESG, tax and trade, and dispute resolution disciplines. Our globally integrated teams help ensure consistency, speed, and execution when supply chain issues span multiple jurisdictions.

From risk management to competitive advantage

Supply chain resilience is not only about mitigating disruption. Done well, it enables faster innovation, greater regulatory agility, stronger partnerships, improved cost predictability, and sustained patient trust.

DLA Piper partners with life sciences leaders to move beyond reactive risk management toward strategic supply chain design – helping organizations build compliant, resilient, and adaptable supply chains that support growth, protect enterprise value, and are ready for what's next.

About us

DLA Piper is a global law firm with lawyers located in more than 40 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia Pacific, positioning us to help companies with their legal needs around the world.

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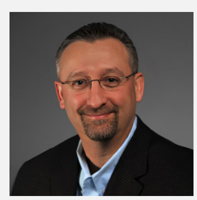

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