



ELCHC Governance Committee Special Meeting

RFP for Governance Legal Services

Thursday, February 17, 2022 @ 3:00 pm

Hybrid Meeting

6302 E. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Suite 100 Tampa, FL 33619

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86138718813?pwd=bmdVOUZLVDRDQ1B2d1N4bVp5Rk45dz09>

Meeting ID: 861 3871 8813

Passcode: 243697



ELCHC Governance Committee Special Meeting

Thursday, February 17, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

S. Robinson

- A. Roll call/Quorum Verification

II. PUBLIC COMMENT I

Individuals wishing to address the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County Board of Directors must complete a Public Comment Request Card and submit it to the official recorder prior to the noticed start time of the meeting. Said comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per individual on a first-come, first-serve basis, and only at such time as is identified on the official meeting agenda for public comment. All public comment in Public Comment I must pertain to an item on the approved agenda

III. ACTION ITEMS

S. Robinson

- A. Score Proposals for Governance Related Legal Services - 3
- B. Gray Robinson
 - A. Submitted Proposal - 4
- C. Weiss Serota Helfman Cole + Bierman
 - A. Submitted Proposal - 30
- D. Hill Ward Henderson
 - A. Submitted Proposal - 62
- E. CivForge Law, P.A.
 - A. Submitted Proposal - 86
- F. Saxon Gilmore & Carraway, P.A. (sent via email to the Governance Committee)

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

V. ADJOURNMENT

ELCHC GOVERNANCE SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING – FEBRUARY 17, 2022

ACTION

ITEM III.A.

ISSUE:	Score Proposals for Governance Related Legal Services
FUNDING SOURCE:	Florida Department of Education, Division of Early Learning, School Readiness
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Score Proposals and make recommendation to the full Board for Governance Related Legal Services.

NARRATIVE:

The Request for Proposal (RFP) for Governance Related Legal Services was released on January 10, 2022. The Coalition received five (5) proposals:

1. Gray Robinson
2. Weiss Serota Helfman Cole + Bierman
3. Hill Ward Henderson
4. CivForge Law, P.A.
5. Saxon Gilmore & Carraway, P.A. (sent via email to the Governance Committee)

The Legal Services RFP Scoring Sheets for each firm is attached.

Governance Related Legal Services RFP Scoring Sheet Process:

1. Review the RFP for Governance Related Legal Services
2. Review each proposal
3. Each proposal will be scored on seven (7) criteria using a numerical rating scale to 100 (see attached score sheets for criteria).
4. After scoring each proposal, please type or write total score on the line beside "Rater Totals"
5. Sign and date the scoring sheet
6. Submit scoring sheets to Kelley Minney kminney@elchc.org and Kiyana Scott kscott@elchc.org prior to the February 17, 2022, meeting.
7. Scores will be reviewed during the February 17, 2022, meeting.

(4 attachments)

GRAYROBINSON

ATTORNEYS | LOBBYISTS | CONSULTANTS



Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County Request for Proposal for Governance Related Legal Services

November 30, 2021



PRESENTED BY:

Gregory A. Hearing
401 E Jackson St, Suite 2700
Tampa, Florida 33602
813-273-5082
gregory.hearing@gray-robinson.com

www.gray-robinson.com

Boca Raton | Fort Lauderdale | Fort Myers | Gainesville | Jacksonville | Key West | Lakeland
Melbourne | Miami | Naples | Orlando | Tallahassee | Tampa | Washington, D.C. | West Palm Beach

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LETTER OF INTENT

November 30, 2021

Kelley Minney

Manager, Donor Relations

Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County

6302 E. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Ste. 100

Tampa, FL 33605

RE: Request for Proposal for Governance Related Legal Services

Dear Ms. Minney,

The law firm of GrayRobinson, P.A. ("GrayRobinson" or "Firm") is pleased to submit our proposal to provide legal services to the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County ("Coalition").

GrayRobinson is a full-service corporate law firm with more than 250 attorneys and consultants throughout 15 offices across Florida and Washington, DC. Our attorneys, lobbyists, and consultants provide legal and government affairs counsel to Fortune 500 companies, emerging businesses, financial institutions, state and local governments, developers, entrepreneurs, and individuals in Florida and throughout the Americas. We are at the forefront of emerging legal, legislative, regulatory, and market trends and we work closely with clients to help them identify opportunities, overcome challenges, and accomplish their business objectives.

At GrayRobinson we offer not only breadth across a great many legal areas, but also depth and proficiency in each one. We have invented a better brand of law firm, counting creativity as a hallmark characteristic and insisting on ingenuity and innovation. At GrayRobinson, there is no such thing as "business as usual." We are one of Florida's fastest-growing law firms and are proud to be at the forefront of emerging legal issues.

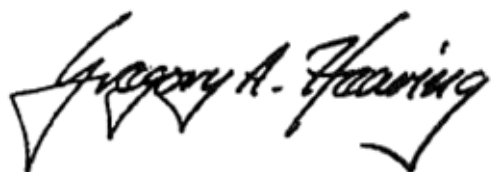
Our strength is built upon the collective histories of our offices across the state. Our roots run deep in each community we serve. As we have expanded across Florida, we have added to the foundations laid by prestigious law firms in Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Key West, Lakeland, Melbourne, Miami, Naples, Orlando, Tallahassee, Tampa and West Palm Beach.

We have forged our own path, creating a firm that best serves our clients and our communities. As we have grown, we have remained committed to keeping small-firm qualities, including the ability to work expeditiously on behalf of our clients and respond quickly to their needs. In addition, we have promised to work with conviction and compassion and to embrace our community as a matter of mission as well as passion. Therefore, we would be honored to assist the Coalition in its mission to care for and educate our community's children.

I am a shareholder in GrayRobinson's Tampa office, and will serve as the lead attorney for the Coalition. In that regard, I will oversee all aspects of the legal services required and will be the Coalition's primary point of contact. Our team includes exceptionally experienced lawyers in the areas of nonprofit and tax exempt organizations, government grants and contracts, labor and employment, and general business operations. In fact, we currently represent the Early Learning Coalition of the Emerald Coast, so we are very familiar with the issues ELCs often face. Besides myself, Julia C. Mandell is also committed to serving the Coalition. Our entire team consents to the Scope of Work and General Specifications as detailed in the Request for Proposal and commits to exceeding the expectations of the Coalition.

As evidenced by the experience and client references listed in this proposal, GrayRobinson has the talent, relationships and resources to address any issue that may arise during the course of providing legal services to the Coalition. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregory A. Hearing". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'G'.

Gregory A. Hearing

GrayRobinson, P.A.

Shareholder

1. LEGAL EXPERIENCE

The Offeror should describe its legal experience, including the names, addresses, contact persons, and telephone numbers of at least three clients, preferably including clients similar to the Coalition. Experience should include the following categories:

A. Experience advising nonprofit organizations;

B. Experience advising clients conducting similar programs and government-funded services

A. General Nonprofit Advisory Experience

GrayRobinson represents nonprofit organizations and clients that conduct similar programs and government funded services, and we are experienced in the legal issues regularly confronted by these organizations. These clients provide a range of services including education, community leadership and development, health care, public health, administrative service organizations, hospice care, promoting the improvement of childcare and well-being, improving the social welfare of others, and assisting manufacturers with integrating technology into their operations. Services we provide these clients that are applicable to the Coalition are described below.

B. Experience Advising Clients Conducting Similar Programs and Government-Funded Services Representation

NONPROFIT AND EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS

The GrayRobinson team has considerable experience advising nonprofit and tax exempt organizations. In addition to addressing taxation, general corporate issues, intellectual property and labor and employment issues, our attorneys provide the necessary guidance to support the development of each organization's vision.

While the overall experience of GrayRobinson attorneys in this area of law would be too great to name in its entirety, the following are specific representative examples:

- **Aspire Health Partners, Inc. FKA Lakeside Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.**, a 501(c)(3) mental health organization.
- **American Association of Physician Specialists**, a nonprofit medical association providing physicians with opportunities to grow in their specialty.
- **Bridges of America, Inc. and Christian Prison Ministries, Inc.** organizations that assist prisoners in transitioning into society.
- **Central Florida High-Tech Corridor**, a group that strives to attract high-tech businesses to the region.
- **Community Education Partners, Inc.** and related charter schools, a charter school management organization and opening of alternative schools.
- **Early Learning Coalition of the Emerald Coast**
- **Florida Hospital Foundation and Florida Hospital Celebration Health**, organizations that promote the growth of health and wellness facilities.
- **Florida Manufacturing Technology Council**, an association to assist manufacturers with integrating technology into their operations.

- **HOPE Worldwide**, an international social welfare organization with affiliates in 80 countries.
- **North Brevard County Hospital District DBA Parrish Medical Center**, a governmental hospital system that is also a 501(c)(3) hospital system operating in North Brevard County Florida.
- **North Central Florida Health Planning Council, Inc., DBA WellFlorida Council, Inc.**, a nonprofit that conducts health planning and implementation activities in the North Central Florida area.

The Firm's nonprofit and exempt organization attorneys also have experience in advising clients regarding the impact of a transaction on an organization's tax-exempt status, representing clients before federal and state tax agencies, examining revenue issues and providing other technical advice. Our attorneys can also assist in the design of employee compensation plans, including qualified deferred compensation plans.

GrayRobinson has been instrumental in the formation and development of, as well as obtaining, the tax-exempt status for numerous tax-exempt organizations (including private foundations) especially in relation to the formation of:

- Tax exempt health care organizations;
- Support organizations for special districts;
- Charter schools;
- Specialty social welfare (IRC 501(c)(4) organizations for cities;
- Private schools; and
- Trade associations.

EDUCATION

GrayRobinson education lawyers recognize the numerous and diverse issues confronting educational institutions today. Our education attorneys provide counsel for universities, community colleges, private and public school systems, and trustee and foundation boards. Our attorneys have experience in every area of substantive law that may be significant, including:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▪ Administration and Government Regulation | ▪ Environmental |
| ▪ Appellate | ▪ ERISA and Employee Benefits |
| ▪ Bond Financing | ▪ Federal and State Contract Compliance |
| ▪ Civil Rights | ▪ Initiation of Charter Schools |
| ▪ Contract Procurement Protests | ▪ Intellectual Property and Technology |
| ▪ Discrimination | ▪ Land Use |
| ▪ Education Law | ▪ Real Estate |
| ▪ Employment and Labor | ▪ Tort and Construction Litigation |

Our experience also includes representation before the U.S. Department of Labor, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Florida Department of Education, Florida Commission on Human Relations, and the Public Employee Relations Commission.

In addition to our knowledge of the substantive areas of law, the firm's education lawyers also have a significant presence throughout Florida and in Tallahassee's political and cultural activities. This experience provides insight and understanding for the varied perspectives that educational systems encounter.

SPECIAL NEEDS LAW AND ADVOCACY

Our attorneys are well versed in federal, state and local laws dealing with special education, employment, trusts and estate planning, and family law. With respect to special education law in particular, these laws include, among others, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), state Exceptional Student Education (ESE) practices and the Americans with Disabilities Act. We employ these laws to assist our clients in compliance with the provision of special education services.

GENERAL BOARD GOVERNANCE

GrayRobinson is general counsel to numerous dependent and independent special districts, cities, school districts, governmental authorities, state agencies, and county constitutional officers. The Firm has extensive knowledge in the areas of law that pertain especially to state and local government, such as Florida's Sunshine Law, Public Records Law, code of ethics for public officers and employees, and legislative and state-agency lobbying. In addition, we have worked with numerous charities and special districts in their grant-making activities.

We regularly advise owners of closely held companies and boards of directors and management of large privately held or public companies on corporate governance matters. Several of our attorneys serve as outside general counsel to privately held companies.

Our corporate and tax groups have assisted our clients in charting pathways through complex reorganizations (including mergers, spin-offs, consolidations and liquidations) and corporate or financial restructurings. We have designed numerous plans to assist our clients to achieve their structure goals in the most expedient manner, taking into account business, regulatory and tax (both federal and state) considerations.

For nonprofit organizations, the firm has assisted in a number of areas, including:

- Advice regarding tax-exempt status and operation
- Corporate transactions
- Initial qualification as a tax-exempt entity
- Contracts
- Formation of operating entities
- Structuring planned giving arrangements
- Intermediate Sanctions
- Drafting conflict-of-interest policies
- Directors' liability issues
- Implementing for-profit subsidiaries
- Structuring and receiving major contributions
- Intellectual Property matters
- Labor and Employment matters
- Special Education issues
- Accommodation issues

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

GrayRobinson offers its clients significant management, labor and employment law experience on a statewide basis through the full course of agency proceedings, litigation and appeals. The Firm has more than 25 attorneys across Florida who handle labor and employment matters for private sector (for profit and not-for-profit) clients across a number of industries, as well as public sector clients.

The attorneys defend claims for discrimination under all federal laws, including by example Title VII (race, sex, gender, color, religion, creed, and national origin); the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act (under all Titles); the Family and Medical Leave Act; the Worker Adjustment Retraining and Notification Act; the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act; the Occupational Safety and Health Act; the National Labor Relations Act; whistleblower and retaliation actions; and other employment related claims under Florida law and local laws. GrayRobinson's labor and employment attorneys defend these matters in court and at the agency level, whether it be with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, the Department of Justice, the Office of Civil Rights, the Florida Commission on Human Relations, or any other federal, state or local entity beginning at the agency investigative stage.

GrayRobinson's labor and employment attorneys also assist in pre-litigation matters by advising clients with in-house investigations. GrayRobinson's labor and employment attorneys are also experienced in handling federal and state employment related litigation and appeals unrelated to agency proceedings, such as whistleblower and other retaliation claims, as well as employment agreement and restrictive covenant enforcement and defense.

In addition to providing representation through the full course of litigation, dispute resolution, and appeal(s), the attorneys within GrayRobinson's labor and employment law department all have significant experience advising employers on preventive measures, consulting on potential claims, providing training, and assisting and guiding employers on internal employment-related complaints. When GrayRobinson's employment attorneys are able to collaborate with the clients pre-charge and pre-suit, our clients often see a significant reduction in the claims filed and costs incurred.

In handling litigation matters, the attorneys within GrayRobinson's labor and employment law department have successfully obtained orders striking claims for relief to which plaintiffs were not entitled, have successfully obtained summary judgments, successful jury verdicts at trial, and have successfully defended them on appeal. The attorneys are well versed in alternative dispute resolution, such as mediations and arbitrations, and have been successful in obtaining favorable settlements in numerous claims. Where cases could not be resolved and instead tried to a verdict, GrayRobinson's labor and employment attorneys have been successful in obtaining numerous defense verdicts.

STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS RELATING TO GRANT AND CONTRACT ISSUES

GrayRobinson has been involved in structuring grant-making activities and procedures and assisting our nonprofit clients in administering such grants. We have served as Special or General Counsel to numerous cities, counties, and public agencies. We have also represented hundreds of clients before governmental entities relating to everything from bidder's protests to DRIs and we have successfully lobbied at all levels of government.

Our government lawyers serve as counsel to the Florida House of Representatives concerning reapportionment issues, and the Florida Citrus Commission. Our lawyers counsel the Department of Management Services on a variety of employee benefits issues and have also represented the state's largest and oldest private children's services agency in negotiating and contracting with the state in the current privatization of child protection services. Our attorneys assist clients in obtaining and maintaining compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements on the state level, as well as providing counsel on how to avoid violation of applicable federal laws. The firm also serves as litigation counsel and/or special counsel to numerous cities, counties and public agencies.

PROPERTY/REAL ESTATE LAW

In negotiating and documenting agreements for real property sales or acquisition, development and infrastructure, GrayRobinson's real estate attorneys provide the sophisticated business person, landowner or developer a team that enables the client to steer a clear course to "make the project happen." Our real estate attorneys also handle a vast array of title insurance and real estate litigation issues that can arise in this complex area.

REAL ESTATE AND FINANCE

Our real estate attorneys handle all types of commercial and residential real estate transactions. We represent developers and landowners in the acquisition, development, sale and leasing of major industrial and commercial projects, industrial parks, office complexes, condominiums, apartments, subdivisions, office and other developments.

Our real estate attorneys have extensive experience in negotiating and preparing the precise documents required to effectively complete complex real estate transactions. With direct computer links to data, we produce prompt and efficient title information and title insurance for clients.

Our firm has served as counsel for a number of banks and savings and loan associations for many years and has developed experience in all aspects of commercial lending, particularly commercial real estate financing.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND LAND USE LAW

Our environmental lawyers and land use law group offers proven ability and experience in dealing with all aspects of local, state and federal land use and environmental rules and regulations, including development-of-regional-impact proceedings. The firm is recognized throughout the state for its experience and ability in representing both public and private clients in all manners of land use law, DRI, zoning, comprehensive planning and environmental proceedings involving new development. Furthermore, the firm's Tallahassee office includes attorneys who are experienced practitioners in state environmental and administrative law.

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING EXPERIENCE

Our real estate attorneys have practiced before every major federal, state and local permitting authority in Central Florida and indeed many throughout the state. We have not only represented landowners and developers before the agencies but also acted as counsel to counties, cities and special districts throughout Florida in their permitting processes. We have assisted in the conversion, location, permitting, operations and closure of sites for manufacturing plants, utility plants, landfills and other facilities in Florida.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

Our real estate attorneys have extensive experience in shepherding major development projects, bringing to the projects not only our experience as lawyers for the property owner, but also the insights we've gained while serving as lawyers for local governments. In addition, we have the experience and ability to handle all aspects of construction, from contract preparation and bid disputes to contract administration and dispute resolution.

REAL ESTATE LITIGATION

Representing financial institutions, lenders, insurance companies, developers and other sophisticated real estate entrepreneurs in:

- Complex commercial foreclosures
- Receiverships
- Troubled debt restructuring
- Bankruptcy
- Shopping center, office building and multi-family commercial disputes, including related environmental, land use and zoning issues

Our Real Estate Litigation practice encompasses all manners of litigation that might be encountered by your business. Whether your needs include litigation, dispute resolution, restructuring, or title claims, GrayRobinson has the Florida statewide experience and talent to represent your interests in Florida state and federal courts.

PURCHASING AND PROCUREMENT

The Firm provides legal counsel relating to all aspects of procurement, including assistance in the preparation of bids, RFP's and proposals; contract negotiation; bid protests; appellate review and contract disputes.

GrayRobinson has represented a broad range of clients in government purchasing matters over the past ten years, including Citizens Property Insurance Corp., Florida's Executive agencies, and innumerable public and private vendors. Because procurement protests can delay essential vendor services for years, GrayRobinson encourages procuring entities to consult the firm on preparation of procurement documents and on the fairest and most objective means to evaluate and score proposals. Similarly, GrayRobinson has consulted with private vendors in the preparation of bids, in order to avoid disqualifying errors and to ensure the strongest possible case in the event of a protest.

GrayRobinson attorneys have provided counsel in numerable various government purchasing and administrative law matters including various aspects of our clients' procurement policies and procedures and procurement appeals.

CIVIL LITIGATION

GrayRobinson's litigation attorneys are committed to providing powerful representation throughout the state of Florida, from the Panhandle to the Keys and all points in between.

GrayRobinson's litigation attorneys are experienced at every level of the court system, including all Florida state courts and all federal courts up through, and including, the U.S. Supreme Court and the Federal Court of Claims. At GrayRobinson, we seek innovative solutions for our clients. As part of our client-centered approach we evaluate all available options to resolve disputes, including negotiation, arbitration, mediation and other creative yet less obvious solutions. GrayRobinson has built its reputation on efficient, cost-effective, persistent and determined representation of its clients.

When necessary, and with client approval, attorneys from other practices within the firm are consulted regarding specific issues with which they have experience, such as tax and securities matters or environmental and land use issues. Over the years, our litigation attorneys have developed relationships with experts in Florida and throughout the nation to provide added depth and perspective to our legal services. Realizing the importance of controlling litigation expenses, such as the costs of expert consulting, we have developed detailed policies for managing our relationship with experts while working closely with our clients to ensure that the appropriate consultant is chosen to meet their needs.

GrayRobinson's litigation attorneys have the resources and personnel to handle the most complex disputes. Our client service includes a computerized document control system that we developed to efficiently manage complex litigation. Our attorneys

frequently utilize demonstrative graphs, charts, models and the latest cutting-edge technology, when appropriate, to persuasively present our clients' cases and to facilitate comprehension of complicated and technical matters. Our litigation department also employs the latest communication and legal research technology designed to save our clients time and money in research through online document sharing and other information exchange. Our advanced computer system, powered by our highly skilled IT department, works in realtime with our clients and staff to promote a secure extranet sharing of case material.

GrayRobinson's litigation attorneys have the depth and capability to tailor a team to handle any type of civil dispute. Over the years, GrayRobinson's litigators have developed such a strong reputation in certain practice areas that we have formed them into practice-specific teams.

C. Client References

The names, addresses, contact persons and telephone numbers of at least 3 clients, preferably including clients similar to the Coalition.

Beth Brant

Early Learning Coalition of the Emerald Coast, Board of Directors, Chair

P.O. Box 841

Shalimar, FL 32579

850.609.1100

Bbrant1994@gmail.com

Valerie Kendall

Boys & Girls Club of Tampa Bay, Inc., Chief Financial and Administrative Officer

1307 N. MacDill Avenue

Tampa, FL 33607

813.875.5771

vkendall@bgctampa.org

Chris Farkas

Hillsborough County School District, Chief of Operations

901 E. Kennedy Blvd.

Tampa, FL 33602

813.272.4611

2. ORGANIZATION, SIZE, STRUCTURE, AND AREAS OF PRACTICE

If the Offeror is a firm, it should describe its organization, size, structure, areas of practice, and office locations. Indicate, if appropriate, if the firm is a small or minority owned business.

At **GRAYROBINSON**, we are

UNRELENTING in our commitment to
serving our clients' needs,

UNDETERRED by the complexity of the
issues we face, and

UNWAVERING in our support of the
communities where we work.

*From opening doors to closing big deals, we
promise to be where our clients need us.*

GrayRobinson is a full-service law and government consulting firm with 15 offices in Florida and Washington, D.C. Our more than 250 attorneys, lobbyists, and consultants provide legal and government affairs counsel to Fortune 500 companies, emerging businesses, financial institutions, state and local governments, developers, entrepreneurs, and individuals in Florida and throughout the Americas. We are at the forefront of emerging legal, legislative, regulatory, and market trends and we work closely with clients to help them identify opportunities, overcome challenges, and accomplish their business objectives.

Organizational Structure

GrayRobinson, P.A. is a Professional Association of which all 162 Equity Shareholders own equal shares yielding less than 1% per Equity Shareholder. Dean Cannon is the President and Managing Director of GrayRobinson. Byrd F. "Biff" Marshall, Jr. serves as Chairman of the Board and J. Charles "Charlie" Gray serves as Chairman Emeritus and Founding Director of GrayRobinson.

Practice & Industry Groups

GrayRobinson provides legal and lobbying services to Fortune 500 companies, emerging businesses, lending institutions, local and state governments, developers, entrepreneurs, individuals, hospitals and other health care organizations, regulated products clients, resorts, and hotels.

- Administrative & Regulatory
- Admiralty & Maritime Law
- Affordable Care Act
- Alcohol Beverage
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Antitrust & Trade Regulation
- Appellate
- Attorney General Defense
- Aviation & Drone Law
- Banking & Finance
- Bankruptcy & Creditors' Rights
- Business Contingency Litigation
- Cannabis Industry
- Class Action Defense
- Communications, Broadband & New Media
- Construction
- Corporate
- COVID-19 Task Force
- Criminal & White Collar Defense
- Data Privacy & Security
- Education Law
- Elder Law
- Election Law
- Eminent Domain & Condemnation
- Entertainment & Sports
- Environmental & Sustainability Law
- ERISA & Employee Benefits
- ESOPs
- Estate Planning
- Exempt Organizations
- Family Law
- Food Law
- Franchising & Licensing
- Government
- Government Affairs & Lobbying
- Guardianship
- Health Care
- Health Information Technology
- Higher Education
- Hospitality
- Immigration
- Insurance Defense
- Insurance Transactional & Regulatory
- Intellectual Property & Technology
- International
- Labor & Employment
- Land Use Law
- Latin America Capital Flight
- Litigation
- Managed Care
- Media & First Amendment Law
- Medicaid Planning
- Medical Malpractice Defense
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- OSHA
- Patent
- Personal Injury
- Petroleum
- Probate
- Product Liability & Toxic Tort
- Professional Liability Defense
- Public Finance
- Real Estate
- Religious Organizations
- Residential, Resort & Club
- Restaurant
- Securities
- Securities Litigation, Arbitration & Regulatory Practice
- Senior Housing
- Special Needs Law & Advocacy
- Subrogation
- Taxation
- Technology Transactions
- Tobacco
- Trade Secret, Noncompete and Unfair Competition
- Trademark
- Transportation
- Trusts
- U.S. Customs & International Trade Law
- Utilities
- Venture Capital
- Wealth Transfer

GrayRobinson services clients throughout the State of Florida, our nation's capital, across the country, and all over the world from our offices in Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Key West, Lakeland, Melbourne, Miami, Naples, Orlando, Tallahassee, Tampa, Washington, D.C., and West Palm Beach.

LOCATIONS

Boca Raton

Mizner Park Office Tower
225 N.E. Mizner Blvd.
Suite 500
Boca Raton, FL 33432
Phone: 561-368-3808

Fort Lauderdale

401 E. Las Olas Blvd.
Suite 1000
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
Phone: 954-761-8111

Fort Myers

1404 Dean St.
Suite 300
Fort Myers, FL 33901
Phone: 239-340-7979

Gainesville

643 SW 4th Avenue
Suite 110
Gainesville, Florida 32601
Phone: 352-376-6400

Jacksonville

50 N. Laura St.
Suite 1100
Jacksonville, FL 32202
Phone: 904-598-9929

Key West

221 Simonton St.
Key West, FL 33040
Phone: 305-294-0252

Lakeland

One Lake Morton Drive
Lakeland, FL 33801
Phone: 863-284-2200

Melbourne

1795 W. NASA Blvd.
Melbourne, FL 32901
Phone: 321-727-8100

Miami

333 S.E. 2nd Ave.
Suite 3200
Miami, FL 33131
Phone: 305-416-6880

Naples

3838 Tamiami Trail N.
Suite 410
Naples, FL 34103
Phone: 239-598-3601

Orlando

301 E. Pine St.
Suite 1400
Orlando, FL 32801
Phone: 407-843-8880

Tallahassee

301 South Bronough St.
Suite 600
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Phone: 850-577-9090

Tampa

401 E. Jackson St.
Suite 2700
Tampa, FL 33602
Phone: 813-273-5000

Washington, DC

99 M St. SE
Suite 725
Washington, DC 20003
Phone: 202-546-1761

West Palm Beach

515 N. Flagler Dr.
Suite 650
West Palm Beach, FL 33401
Phone: 561-268-5727



3. ATTORNEY QUALIFICATIONS

The Offeror should have experience in the following areas: nonprofit and tax exempt organizations, governance, and general business operations. The Offeror should describe the qualifications of attorneys to be assigned to the representations. Descriptions should include:

- A. Professional and educational background of each attorney**
 - B. Overall supervision to be exercised.**
 - C. Prior experience of the individual attorneys with respect to the required experience listed above. Only include resumes of attorneys likely to be assigned to the representation. Education, position in firm, years and types of experience and continuing professional educations will be considered.**
-

A. Professional and educational background of each attorney

Please see complete biographies beginning on page 17 for the team's professional and educational background.

B. Overall supervision to be exercised

In representations such as those contemplated by this RFP, GrayRobinson typically implements a team approach designed to maximize communication and responsiveness without over-staffing. Gregory Hearing, shareholder in the Firm's Tampa office, will handle oversight of the work done for the Coalition. Gregory will ensure the overall delivery of satisfaction and value to the Coalition. He is an experienced attorney fully capable of addressing all issues that may arise, and has experience representing similar organizations. Along with Gregory, we have a team of attorneys with experience providing services to nonprofit organizations, several of whom physically reside in Tampa. We believe this team approach will allow us to provide high quality legal services, maintain the flexibility necessary to respond swiftly and thoroughly, and facilitate communication and accountability.

Before any new work is undertaken, workloads and schedules of all attorneys and support staff on our Team will be reviewed with the Coalition in accordance with any executed guidelines. We believe in the quality of the work we produce, not the quantity, and will strive to deliver your objectives with the appropriate resources and in a manner that emphasizes efficient and cost-effective service.

To manage communication internally regarding Coalition matters, as well as externally with the Coalition CEO, Board of Directors and senior management team, GrayRobinson leverages the latest advances in e-mail, audio, web and video conferencing, intranet and extranet technologies allowing the group to work as one legal team with instantaneous access to vital data and documents. We extend this same "virtual office" environment to the Coalition - giving you access to your legal team and the information you need from any location in the world. The GrayRobinson extranet provides designated clients like the Coalition secure access to matter-specific documents. The extranet allows our attorneys and clients the opportunity to communicate and collaborate in a secure environment.

Our representation of the Coalition would be of the highest priority to GrayRobinson team members. Upon assignment, Gregory will promptly handle or forward each task to the appropriate attorney in consultation with the appropriate Coalition representatives, oversee its timely completion, ensure the quality of the completed work product, and ensure that the

Coalition has ample communication with the attorneys involved. We can assure the Coalition that completing requests promptly and efficiently, while maintaining the quality of our work, will always be a priority. We will be extremely responsive and available at all times as needed, with Julia Mandell acting as our local liaison attorney to the extent that in person representation is needed on short notice throughout our representation of the Coalition

Finally, GrayRobinson attorneys set performance measurements and metrics based on each client's specific needs and requirements. Not all clients are alike and we will provide counsel and support the way the individuals at the Coalition prefer. Based on the initial orientation meeting with designated Coalition representatives, Gregory will develop performance and reporting metrics to be approved by the Coalition, which will measure the satisfaction of the Coalition moving forward. We will monitor and measure our performance as it relates to the overall client relationship through regular client satisfaction discussions and "off-the-clock" performance meetings between the Coalition and the GrayRobinson team lead.

TEAM LEAD

Gregory Hearing will serve as lead and handle oversight of all matters. He will ensure the overall delivery of satisfaction and value to the Coalition.

Gregory A. Hearing

Shareholder

gregory.hearing@gray-robinson.com

401 East Jackson Street

Suite 2700

Tampa, Florida 33602

Phone: 813-273-5000

Fax: 813-273-5145

Direct: 813-273-5082



Experience

Greg has focused his law practice on management labor and employment for his entire career. He represents local and national management clients in a variety of matters before courts, arbitrators, and state and federal administrative agencies, and has been with GrayRobinson for nearly three years.

Greg became Board Certified in Labor and Employment Law by The Florida Bar the year the board certification became available. He is also Board Certified in Civil Trial as well as Education Law by The Florida Bar. He has earned an AV rating by Martindale-Hubbell, is recognized as a member of the Hall of Fame in Florida's "Legal Elite" by *Florida Trend* magazine and has been named one of the Top 100 Attorneys in Florida by *Super Lawyers* consistently. He has been listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* publication since 2006 and was named their Lawyer of the Year for Management Labor and Employment Law in Tampa in 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017 and 2021. In November 2011, Greg was appointed by the Florida Supreme Court to a 5-year term as a member of the Florida Board of Bar Examiners and served as its Vice-Chair and Chair in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Greg serves on the Executive Council of the Labor and Employment Law Section of The Florida Bar and served as its Chair in 2011-2012.

Greg was inducted into the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers as a Fellow in 2011 and served as Chair of its Eleventh Circuit Credentials Committee from 2018-2020. Greg is a frequent lecturer and has authored many papers on labor and employment related topics.

As an active member of the community, Greg is involved in many civic endeavors. He serves as a Trustee of The University of the South, where he attended undergraduate school. He is also a former member of the St. John's Episcopal Day School Board of Trustees and has been Vice Chancellor of the Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Florida (Labor & Employment) since 1991.

Prior Experience with Respect to the Required Practice Areas

Gregory Hearing has specific experience in representing the interests of another ELC entity in Florida. Mr. Hearing is the lead attorney on two very public matters at the ELC of the Emerald Coast. Summaries of these matters are set forth below:

Ann Leaf v. Early Learning Coalition of the Emerald Coast. Ann Leaf is a former employee of Early Learning Coalition of the Emerald Coast ("Emerald Coast"). On April 27, 2021, Ms. Leaf filed a Whistle-Blower Act Retaliation Charge of Discrimination with the Florida Commission on Human Relations ("FCHR"). She alleged that Emerald Coast discriminated against her in violation of the Public Whistle-Blower Act when Emerald Coast terminated her employment. Emerald Coast filed a position statement denying the allegations in the Charge. The FCHR conducted an investigation and issued a Notice of Termination of Investigation on October 20, 2021. The FCHR found no evidence that Ms. Leaf was subjected to an adverse employment action in retaliation for engaging in a protected whistle-blowing activity.

Katie Looney v. Early Learning Coalition of the Emerald Coast. Katie Looney is a former employee of Early Learning Coalition of the Emerald Coast ("Emerald Coast"). On May 6, 2021, Ms. Looney filed a Charge of Discrimination with the Florida Commission on Human Relations ("FCHR"). She alleged that Emerald Coast discriminated against certain employees in violation of the Florida Civil Rights Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and retaliated against Ms. Looney for speaking out about the alleged mistreatment of the employees based on their race or disability. Emerald Coast filed a position statement denying the allegations in the Charge. The FCHR issued a Notice of Termination on November 2, 2021, in which the agency found no reasonable cause that an unlawful practice occurred. Ms. Looney has until December 7, 2021 to file a Petition for Relief.

Areas of Practice

- Labor & Employment
- Data Privacy & Security
- Education
- Higher Education
- Media & First Amendment Law
- OSHA
- Religious Organizations
- ERISA & Employee Benefits
- Insurance Defense
- Litigation
- Trade Secret, Noncompete and Unfair Competition

Background

Greg graduated, *magna cum laude*, from The University of the South in 1986. In 1989, he graduated, *cum laude*, from Florida State University College of Law, where he served on the *Florida State University Law Review*.

Education

- The University of the South, B.A. (*magna cum laude*, 1986)
 - Phi Beta Kappa
- Florida State University College of Law, J.D. (*cum laude*, 1989)
 - Law Review

Admissions

- Florida
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court

Professional Associations & Memberships

- The Florida Bar
 - Board Certified in Labor and Employment Law since 2000
 - Board Certified in Civil Trial since 2007
 - Board Certified in Education Law since 2012
 - Florida Board of Bar Examiners, 2011-2016
 - Vice Chair, Chair, 2014-2016
 - Labor and Employment Law Section
 - Executive Council, 2001-present
 - Chair, 2011-2012
 - Board Certification Committee, Chair, 2004-2005
 - Practice Management and Development Section
 - Chair, 1998-2000
- American Bar Association, Fellow
- Hillsborough County Bar Association
 - Labor and Employment Section
 - Chair, 1997-1998
- College of Labor and Employment Lawyers, Fellow, Chair of Eleventh Circuit Credentials Committee 2018, 2019, and 2020
- Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel
 - Member, 2018-present

Awards & Recognitions

- AV Preeminent® rated by *Martindale-Hubbell*
- *Chambers Global*, Labor & Employment, 2021
- *Chambers USA*, Labor & Employment, 2007-2021
- *Best Lawyers in America*, 2006-2022
 - Lawyer of the Year, Litigation - Labor and Employment, 2021
 - Lawyer of the Year, Management Labor and Employment, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2021
- *Florida Trend*, Legal Elite, Hall of Fame, 2005-2011, 2013-2021

- *Who's Who Legal*
 - Global Leader, Labour & Employment, 2020
 - National Leader, Labour & Employment, 2020-2021
- Florida *Super Lawyers*, 2006-2021
 - Top 50 in Tampa Bay, 2021
 - Top 100 Attorneys in Florida
- *Lawdragon* 500 Leading U.S. Corporate Employment Lawyers, 2020-2021

Civic

- The University of the South
 - Trustee, 2012-2015 and 2019-2022
- St. John's Episcopal Day School Board of Trustees
 - Chair, 2009-2010, 2014-2016
 - Member, 2004-2010, 2012-2021
- St. John's Episcopal Church, Tampa
 - Vestry, 2018-2021
 - Senior Warden, 2019-2021
- Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Florida, Labor and Employment Law
 - Vice-Chancellor, 1991-present
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay, Inc., Chair 2012-2014
- Bright Horizons of Tampa Bay, Inc., Chair 1995
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay, Inc., Chair 2005
 - Big Brother of the Year, 1993, 2001
- United Way
- YMCA of Greater Tampa
 - Volunteer coach
- Kiwanis Club of Tampa Bay
 - Member, 1990-2020

Julia C. Mandell

Shareholder

julia.mandell@gray-robinson.com

401 East Jackson Street
Suite 2700
Tampa, Florida 33602
Phone: 813-273-5000
Fax: 813-273-5145



Experience

As the former City of Tampa Attorney, Julia is an experienced local government lawyer, specializing in land use, development and general municipal law. She brings more than 20 years of in house and private practice experience to assist clients in regulatory and public policy matters at the local and state level, including the drafting and enforcement of regulations and interacting with governmental agencies, officers and decision making boards and councils. In addition, Julia has been involved in a variety of litigation matters and contract bid disputes. She has been with GrayRobinson for nearly four years.

Board certified by The Florida Bar in City, County, and Local Government Law, Julia counsels clients on land use, zoning, permitting, real estate, environmental, eminent domain, entitlement, telecommunication and litigation associated within these areas. She also handles procurement, RFPs, contract negotiations with government agencies and public infrastructure projects.

Julia has experience in both the private and public sector, having served for more than a decade with the Tampa City Attorney's Office, the last three years as the City Attorney, as an assistant county attorney for Hillsborough County, and in private practice representing government and business clients in a myriad of legal issues relating to real estate and land use, environmental, bankruptcy and real property litigation.

Julia is a sought out thought leader, who works to translate bureaucracy into meaningful action. She has handled litigation matters including constitutional matters, personal injury and property claims, appellate cases, complex business disputes and collections and foreclosure matters.

Prior Experience with Respect to the Required Practice Areas

The majority of Julia's legal career has been spent on governmental matters and has included the review and assistance of applications for grants from the federal and state government regarding historic preservation matters, housing matters and a tree grant for the rewrite of the City of Tampa tree code. Julia has previously served as Assistant Hillsborough County Attorney, Senior Assistant Tampa City Attorney and Tampa City Attorney. During her time in those roles, she reviewed a significant number of contracts, including license and lease agreements, intermodal agreements on a variety of intergovernmental issues, purchasing and construction contracts, real estate contracts and employment and contractor agreements.

She also served as legal counsel to numerous boards and councils including Tampa City Council, Tampa's various land use boards; Hillsborough Area Regional Transit, the Metropolitan Planning Agency and various Hillsborough County Appeals boards.

Areas of Practice

- Environmental & Sustainability Law
- Litigation
- Government
- Real Estate
- Land Use Law

Background

Julia is a third generation Floridian. She was born in Miami Beach and grew up in the Aventura area. She graduated from North Miami Beach Sr. High in 1988. Following in the family footsteps of her mother and father, she attended the University of Florida, receiving her bachelor's degree with high honors in political science in 1992. Julia then received her J.D. from the University of Florida in 1995, serving on the Journal of Law and Public Policy. After graduation from law school, Julia moved to Tampa. Julia now lives in the up and coming Tampa Heights neighborhood with her two children, Morgan and James.

Education

- University of Florida, B.A. *high honors* (1992)
- University of Florida College of Law, J.D. (1995)

Admissions

- Florida
- U.S. Court of Appeals, 11th Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida

Professional Associations & Memberships

- The Florida Bar
 - Board Certified in City, County and Local Government Law
- Mayor Jane Castor, Advisory Team
 - Development Services and Support, Chair

Awards & Recognitions

- *Florida Trend's* "Legal Elite," 2008, 2010-2016

Civic

- Accendo LEADForward Roundtables, 2021

4. PRICE

The Offeror's proposed price should include information on the hourly billing rates of each attorney or other legal staff who are expected to work on this representation and charges for expenses, if any, such as legal research copies. Also include a monthly flat fee that would be charged to advise on routine matters that could be handled over the phone or otherwise without extensive research or other legal work. The Coalition reserves the right to negotiate with the Offeror on the structure of the billing and/or retainer fee.

Like the Coalition, GrayRobinson strives to deliver the highest quality of services while keeping a close watch over the cost incurred to do so. The Firm prides itself in delivering cost effective client service. While understanding that the Coalition is a nonprofit entity, we know that the end-users expect a business approach to services. We are prepared to work for the following hourly rates, which represents a substantial discount from our standard hourly rates:

- \$325 per hour for shareholders;
- \$265 per hour for attorneys with five to nine years' experience;
- \$195 per hour for attorneys with four years or less experience;
- \$125 per hour for paralegals and law clerks; and
- \$95 per hour for administrative support.

Alternatively, and if the Firm and the Coalition deem it appropriate and mutually beneficial in light of the magnitude of certain cases or matters, GrayRobinson will work with the Coalition to develop a blended rate for attorneys.

In addition, GrayRobinson is prepared to discuss with the Coalition a more comprehensive fixed fee arrangement on certain matters. In our experience, to establish a comprehensive fixed fee that is fair to all, the parties need to be very clear about the scope of work, the legal services and lawyer time required. GrayRobinson is confident a meaningful fixed fee arrangement can be achieved through a combined effort to address inequities, which typically plague such arrangements.

The Team agrees to comply with the billing requirements as set forth in the RFP and as required by the Coalition's insurance. The Team has significant experience working with insurance carriers, including serving as EPLI panel counsel for numerous carriers.

5. MALPRACTICE INSURANCE COVERAGE

GrayRobinson maintains insurance coverage and limits as evidenced by current certificates of coverage found on the following pages. Upon award of work to GrayRobinson, custom certificate holder documents will be provided to Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County.

ACORD™

CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE

DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)

8/09/2021

THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OR NEGATIVELY AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW. THIS CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE ISSUING INSURER(S), AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OR PRODUCER, AND THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER.

IMPORTANT: If the certificate holder is an ADDITIONAL INSURED, the policy(ies) must have ADDITIONAL INSURED provisions or be endorsed. If SUBROGATION IS WAIVED, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy, certain policies may require an endorsement. A statement on this certificate does not confer any rights to the certificate holder in lieu of such endorsement(s).

PRODUCER McGriff Insurance Services PO Box 4927 333 S Garland Ave 16th Fl Orlando, FL 32802-4927	CONTACT NAME: PHONE (A/C, No, Ext): 407 691-9600 FAX (A/C, No): 888-635-4183 E-MAIL ADDRESS:														
INSURED GrayRobinson PA P.O. Box 3068 Orlando, FL 32802	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="816 426 1433 447">INSURER(S) AFFORDING COVERAGE</th> <th data-bbox="1433 426 1572 447">NAIC #</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="816 447 1433 478">INSURER A : National Fire Insurance Co of Hartford</td> <td data-bbox="1433 447 1572 478">20478</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="816 478 1433 510">INSURER B : Continental Insurance Company</td> <td data-bbox="1433 478 1572 510">35289</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="816 510 1433 541">INSURER C : Travelers Indemnity Company</td> <td data-bbox="1433 510 1572 541">25658</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="816 541 1433 573">INSURER D : American Casualty Co of Reading PA</td> <td data-bbox="1433 541 1572 573">20427</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="816 573 1433 604">INSURER E :</td> <td data-bbox="1433 573 1572 604"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="816 604 1433 636">INSURER F :</td> <td data-bbox="1433 604 1572 636"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	INSURER(S) AFFORDING COVERAGE	NAIC #	INSURER A : National Fire Insurance Co of Hartford	20478	INSURER B : Continental Insurance Company	35289	INSURER C : Travelers Indemnity Company	25658	INSURER D : American Casualty Co of Reading PA	20427	INSURER E :		INSURER F :	
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INSURER E :															
INSURER F :															

COVERAGES

CERTIFICATE NUMBER:

REVISION NUMBER:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAMED ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.


INSR LTR	TYPE OF INSURANCE	ADDL INSR	SUBR WVD	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY EFF (MM/DD/YYYY)	POLICY EXP (MM/DD/YYYY)	LIMITS
A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> CLAIMS-MADE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUR GEN'L AGGREGATE LIMIT APPLIES PER: <input type="checkbox"/> POLICY <input type="checkbox"/> PRO-JECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOC OTHER:	X	X	6012395102	04/15/2021	04/15/2022	EACH OCCURRENCE \$1,000,000 DAMAGE TO RENTED PREMISES (Ea occurrence) \$1,000,000 MED EXP (Any one person) \$15,000 PERSONAL & ADV INJURY \$1,000,000 GENERAL AGGREGATE \$2,000,000 PRODUCTS - COMP/OP AGG \$2,000,000 \$
D	AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> ANY AUTO OWNED AUTOS ONLY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HIRED AUTOS ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> SCHEDULED AUTOS NON-OWNED AUTOS ONLY	X	X	6012395133	04/15/2021	04/15/2022	COMBINED SINGLE LIMIT (Ea accident) \$1,000,000 BODILY INJURY (Per person) \$ BODILY INJURY (Per accident) \$ PROPERTY DAMAGE (Per accident) \$ \$
B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UMBRELLA LIAB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCESS LIAB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RETENTION \$10000			CUE6012395116	04/15/2021	04/15/2022	EACH OCCURRENCE \$15,000,000 AGGREGATE \$15,000,000 \$
C	WORKERS COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ANY PROPRIETOR/PARTNER/EXECUTIVE/OFFICER/MEMBER EXCLUDED? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y / N (Mandatory in NH) If yes, describe under DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS below		X	UB1R6308612142E	08/09/2021	08/09/2022	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PER STATUTE <input type="checkbox"/> OTH-ER E.L. EACH ACCIDENT \$1,000,000 E.L. DISEASE - EA EMPLOYEE \$1,000,000 E.L. DISEASE - POLICY LIMIT \$1,000,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS / LOCATIONS / VEHICLES (ACORD 101, Additional Remarks Schedule, may be attached if more space is required)

Additional Insured status is granted with respects to General Liability if required by written contract per form "Non-Contractor's Additional Insured Endorsement" form #CNA74857XX 01/15 and General Liability Extension Endorsement, form CNA74879XX(1-15). Waiver of Subrogation status is granted with respects to General Liability if required by written contract per form "General Liability Extension Endorsement", form CNA74879XX(1-15).
 (See Attached Descriptions)

CERTIFICATE HOLDER

CANCELLATION

GrayRobinson PA P.O. Box 3068 Orlando, FL 32802	SHOULD ANY OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED POLICIES BE CANCELLED BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE THEREOF, NOTICE WILL BE DELIVERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY PROVISIONS.
	AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE 

DESCRIPTIONS (Continued from Page 1)

Additional Insured - Primary and Non-Contributory status is granted with respects to General Liability if required by written contract per form "General Liability Extension Endorsement", form CNA74879XX(1-15). Additional Insured status is granted with respects to Auto Liability as it pertains to Non-Owned & Hired Auto Liability coverage if required by written contract per form "Business Auto Coverage Form", form #CA0001 10/13.

Waiver of Subrogation status is granted with respects to Auto Liability as it pertains to Non-Owned & Hired Auto Liability coverage if required by written contract per form "Waiver of Transfer Rights of Recovery", form #CA0444 03/10.

Waiver of Subrogation status is granted with respects to Workers Compensation if required by written contract per form "Waiver of Our Rights to Recover From Others Endorsement" form #WC000313.

Umbrella is Follow Form providing excess liability over General Liability, Automobile Liability, and Employer's Liability limits shown.



Sarah L. Johnston, Esq.
sjohnston@wsh-law.com

November 30, 2021

VIA email to kminney@elchc.org

Kelley Minney
Manager, Donor Relations
Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County
6302 E. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Suite 100
Tampa, FL 33605

Re: Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County Request for Proposal for Governance Related Legal Services - November 30, 2021

Dear Ms. Minney:

On behalf of Weiss Serota Helfman Cole + Bierman, P.L. (the "Firm"), I am pleased to submit this Proposal for governance related legal services to the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County ("ELCHC") in response to ELCHC's Request for Proposal for Governance Related Legal Services.

Our Firm possesses all of the qualifications sought by ELCHC in the RFP. In particular, we provide counsel on strategic development, restructuring of board governance, management of third party or governmental relationships, Sunshine Law, the Freedom of Information Act, Robert's Rules of Order, and board rules and procedures. We also have experience assisting not-for-profits with maintaining awareness of ethical standards and appearance of fairness standards, and counsel on avoiding potential conflicts of interest, prohibited transactions and the appearance of prohibited transactions. Our proposal highlights our extensive experience serving as corporate counsel to not-for-profit and governmental entities on governance, general business operations and labor and employment matters.

For the reasons set forth herein, the Firm is uniquely positioned to provide the type of excellent and cost-effective legal services sought by the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County. Should ELCHC have any questions about the Firm that are not specifically addressed in this Proposal, please feel free to contact me at (786) 380-2554.

The Firm provides the information below in response to the Scope of Services of the Proposal.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'SJD' followed by a horizontal line.

Sarah L. Johnston

1. Legal Experience

Our deep understanding of the complexities of local government, along with our abiding respect for the public sector, combine to make an unbeatable winning formula for our not-for-profit and quasi-governmental clients. Our clients do not waste time having to explain what they do or how they do it to us. We just get it, and contribute innovative strategies and counseling. We provide a comprehensive scope of legal services which are focused upon enabling not-for-profit and quasi-governmental entities to accomplish their missions of providing needed services and facilities to their constituencies in accordance with applicable law. Whether you require legal representation in the boardroom, at city or county hall, in the courthouse, or in the administrative agency or intergovernmental arena, we deliver a diverse array of legal services of both a general and specialized nature.

We have extensive experience in drafting effective and enforceable by-laws, operating rules, board actions and consent documents and helping entities and agencies comply with the many special regulations, contractual requirements and grant conditions that are applicable to them. Many not-for-profits and quasi-governmental agencies are also subject to many of the same laws that govern governmental entities, including open meetings (i.e. Sunshine) laws and public records act requirements. We have unrivalled experience representing cities and government agencies, and we have literally made the law in the area of public records and open meeting laws in Florida. Thus, we have an extraordinarily broad base of knowledge from which to advise our clients on these requirements.

Our attorneys have previously served in city and county law departments, as well as being litigators and practitioners with extensive experience in open meetings and public records law, labor and employment, community redevelopment, affordable housing, communications law and other vital and emerging areas of law relevant to not-for-profits and quasi governmental agencies.

We pride ourselves on responding expeditiously and effectively to each request for legal assistance from every client. Once a request for a legal opinion or other legal product is received by us, it is promptly reviewed and assigned to the person with relevant expertise who is most capable of completing the item in a thorough and cost-effective manner.

We know that it is essential to keep up-to-date with changing legislative and judicial conditions. We monitor judicial decisions, provide in-house training and participate in continued legal education. We are also frequently requested to publish articles and to make presentations on legal matters affecting public sector and not-for-profit entities by The Florida Bar, local bar associations, the Florida League of Cities and other important service organizations.

The Firm runs prompt conflict checks for each new matter when opened. In the unlikely event that a conflict were to arise, we would timely alert ELCHC of the conflict. If the conflict is waivable, we would seek to obtain conflict waivers to do the work. If not, we would work with ELCHC to find suitable conflict counsel to handle the specific matter where the conflict exists. We have performed a thorough conflicts check and have found no conflicts that would limit or prevent us from undertaking this representation. The Firm is also insured for malpractice coverage through Gemini Risk Partners, LLC. Information regarding coverage limits and exemptions is provided in Tab 1.

a. Experience advising nonprofit organizations

WSHC+B regularly provides assistance and counsel to not-for-profit and charitable organizations that provide vital services to the community. The Firm recognizes that not-for-profit organizations deal with unique challenges, and therefore, require a broad array of services including compliance, contracts and agreements, governance and policies and procedures, start-up and tax exemption, and corporate and transactional work, as well as intellectual property protection. Our goal is to ensure that nonprofit organizations realize the full benefits of their status as well as enhance services available to the community.

Our deep government experience gives us a special perspective and comprehensive understanding of its inner workings, laws, and practices that allows us to provide you with a strategic advantage. We know how to navigate through the maze of bureaucratic rules, regulations, and time delays that often stand in the way of successful public/private interactions. Our relationships with elected officials and their staff are built on trust and an understanding that we pursue our clients' interests honestly and ethically.

Our team members are former state, county, and city attorneys, and we advise businesses on public/private partnership transactions, obtaining, maintaining and performing government contracts, seeking legislative relief from burdensome regulations, compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements, and handling administrative proceedings.

For every issue, we start by devising a strategy. Sometimes we are able to resolve matters with a simple phone call, meeting, or letter. Other times we assemble professional teams to complete any necessary projects or transactions. Whatever the situation, we know the government and we bring all of our experience, knowledge, and relationships to every matter we handle to help you successfully gain the government support and confidence necessary to achieve your goals.

Not-for-profit organizations play critical roles in addressing issues of a transformational nature in our local communities but are not immune from the challenges of financial management, board governance, tax compliance, or

navigating inter-governmental relationships. Over the years, our Firm has provided counsel to a number of public charities in the areas of strategic development, restructuring of board governance, management of third party or governmental relationships, protection of intellectual property, Sunshine Law, the Freedom of Information Act, Robert's Rules of Order, and Board rules and procedures. We also have experience assisting not-for-profits with maintaining awareness of ethical standards and appearance of fairness standards, and counsel on avoiding potential conflicts of interest, prohibited transactions and the appearance of prohibited transactions. Our attorneys appear before courts and administrative agencies to represent not-for-profit interests and prepare written legal opinions on behalf of the not-for-profit and its board of directors.

For efficiency purposes, our Firm typically establishes a collaborative relationship with executive staff and board leadership to outline strategic needs for development and sustainability. In articulating strategic goals, our Firm is able to project the scope of anticipated legal needs in any particular fiscal year. These unique challenges and benchmarks may include, but are not limited to:

- Updating of Board governance efficiency and management of conflicts;
- Maintenance of eligibility for tax-exempt status;
- Review of policy considerations;
- Drafting and review of contracts with vendors and other third parties;
- Development of operational policies and procedures for employees;
- Management of any political, lobbying or voter education activities; and
- Risk management for board leadership.

b. Experience advising clients conducting similar programs and government-funded services

Over the past five years, WSHC+B has counseled a number of active nonprofit organizations. These include the following:

- Miami Children's Museum;
- Temple Beth El of Boca Raton;
- Children's Services Council of Broward County;
- Perez Art Museum;
- Institute for Contemporary Art;
- Florida Memorial University and FMU Foundation;
- Florida Grand Opera;
- Norton Museum of Art;
- Gulliver Schools;
- Baptist Health Systems;
- Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce;

- Do Good International;
- Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association;
- Miami Broward One Carnival Host Committee;
- Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA North Miami);
- PRODEV Foundation;
- Miami Lighthouse for the Blind;
- Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator;
- Armour Dance Theater; and
- youngARTS Foundation .

Three (3) client references for which the Firm has provided services similar to outlined in this Request for Proposal includes the following:

Contact Name	Organization	Address	Email	Phone Number
Steve Kaufman	Temple Beth El of Boca Raton	333 SW 4th Avenue Boca Raton, FL 33432	skaufman@tbeboca.org	561-391-8900
Chana Budgazad Sheldon	Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami	770 NE 125th street North Miami, FL 33161	csheldon@mocanomi.org	305.893.6211 x 13301
Joel M. Hoffman	Vizcaya Museum & Gardens	3251 S Miami Ave, Miami, FL 33129	joel.hoffman@vizcaya.org	305-860-8452

2. Organization, Size, Structure and Areas of Practice

The Firm is the product of innovative thinking. In 1991, our founders saw a need in Florida for a high-end, boutique firm dedicated to a small number of integrated practice areas that specializes in providing high end legal services to governmental entities across Florida. Almost 30 years later, we continue to outpace sophisticated market players with focused practice groups, teamwork and a zealous commitment to our clients.

We have grown to almost 80 lawyers across four offices who look to our Unifying Principles to maintain an ethical and people-focused business model that puts our clients' needs at the heart of our practice. We are committed to creative problem solving for our clients while maintaining respect for the finest principles of traditional legal practice. Our lawyers have excelled at top-ranked law schools, trained at large international firms, and cultivated years of integral relationships with Florida's state and local government officials and decision-makers. As leaders in their areas of law, they are frequent speakers, writers, and board members of bar and civic organizations. We are AV

rated by Martindale-Hubbell and, for years, have been ranked as a Tier-1 law firm by the U.S. News Media Group and Best Lawyers® in our core practice areas. Our lawyers are also recognized by Chambers USA as “Leaders in their Field” in several practice areas.

There are few firms in Florida that can match our experience representing government and public entities, Commissioners, City Managers, Mayors and other quasi-governmental entities. Our firm currently serves as City Attorney to 19 municipalities across the State and acts as outside or special counsel to more than 80 public entities. We regularly represent government entities in all facets of local government law, including day-to-day operations, legislative matters, drafting contracts, resolutions and ordinances, right-of-way programs, civil litigation, labor and employment, pension laws, real estate, public finance and contracting, among others.

Of note, the Firm maintains a labor and employment division which focuses exclusively on representing employers of all sizes in all aspects of labor and employment law. Currently the Firm’s labor and employment team includes 11 attorneys who practice exclusively in that area. The Firm also employs several other lawyers assigned to other practice groups within the Firm, but who also handle labor and employment matters. The other practice divisions within the Firm include: business transactions, government, litigation, and property.



We have unrivalled experience representing cities, government agencies and not-for-profits. Because we serve as general counsel for dozens of public entities across Florida, we understand how not-for-profit, quasi-governmental entities and local government works. We are exceedingly respectful of our assigned role in your matters and are accessible through our four office locations throughout Florida, which include Tampa, Miami, Ft. Lauderdale and Boca Raton.

The Firm utilizes several electronic research services that assist its attorneys in providing prompt and efficient advice and has more than sufficient staff and clerical support to respond quickly and efficiently to the needs of ELCHC.

3. Attorneys Qualifications

The Firm brings focused practice groups, teamwork and a zealous commitment to our clients. We believe in efficient staffing, with each lawyer being given principal responsibility for specific areas maximizing the use of their individual expertise and thus ensuring cost effectiveness. Below is a list of our attorneys expected to provide legal services in regard to this RFP. If selected, Ms. Sarah L. Johnston, who is based in the Firm’s Tampa office, will be the primary attorney responsible for ELCHC. Mr. Brett J. Schneider, who is the chair of the Firm’s labor and employment practice group, will also play a key role in the representation. Sarah and Brett will be supported by other team members of the Firm who are well-versed in representing nonprofit organizations, due to the depth and breadth of our team, we have the ability to call upon other members of our

Firm as additional resources as needed. Additional information about the Firm's experience and team's capabilities can be found in their curricula vitae located in Tab 2.

Attorney	Details
 <p>Sarah L. Johnston Of Counsel</p>	<p>A. Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Thomas University School of Law, J.D., 2010 • University of Phoenix, MBA, 2012 • University of Central Florida, B.A. in Public Administration, 2007 <p>B. Supervision of Work: Primary attorney and point of contact for ELCHC</p> <p>C. Legal Experience: Sarah has extensive experience representing government entities in board governance, general business operations, procurement, land use and zoning, public finance, public utilities, real estate, Public/Private Partnerships (P3), Community Redevelopment Agencies, labor and employment and legislative matters, among others. Sarah's unique and varied experience allows her to have an understanding of public sector needs, which is evident in her collaborative approach to working with clients.</p> <p>She has also provided counsel on Sunshine Law compliance, state and local ethics, workplace investigations, day-to-day employment matters, election matters, the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), grant applications, bond issuance, and labor union negotiations, as well as served as counsel to various public advisory boards.</p>
 <p>Brett J. Schneider Partner, Chair of Labor & Employment Division</p>	<p>A. Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Washington University Law School, J.D., cum laude, 1999 • Journal of International Law & Economics • University of Maryland, B.A., Government and Politics, with honors, 1996 <p>B. Supervision of Work: Secondary attorney</p> <p>C. Legal Experience: As a Florida Bar Board Certified attorney in Labor and Employment Law, Brett helps public and private sector employers resolve issues in a prompt and efficient manner. Brett represents public sector employers in negotiating collective bargaining agreements, labor impasse proceedings, unfair labor practice proceedings and labor arbitrations. As workplace issues continue to evolve, he advises clients on employee drug testing</p>

	<p>(particularly with the legalization of medical marijuana in Florida), sexual harassment and employee medical issues. Brett handles employment litigation for public and private employers in matters arising under federal, state and local employment laws such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Florida Civil Rights Act (FCRA).</p>
 <p>Marlon A. Hill Of Counsel</p>	<p>A. Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florida State University College of Law, J.D., with honors • University of the West Indies, Faculty of Law, Barbados, Summer Program • Florida State University, B.S., International Business & Finance, cum laude • Universidad de Costa Rica, Colegio del Comercio, San Jose, Exchange Program <p>B. Supervision of Work: Assist as needed</p> <p>C. Legal Experience: Marlon represents not-for-profit organizations, businesses, entrepreneurs and local and international governments in corporate, intellectual property, and government matters.</p> <p>In addition to serving as outside general counsel to several companies, Marlon advises business owners on all aspects of starting and structuring their businesses and not-for-profit organizations, from drafting contracts and agreements to securing intellectual property, especially across the tourism, hospitality, and media and entertainment industries. Helping his clients grow and scale their companies, he counsels on corporate governance and strategic development. Marlon is also experienced in mergers, acquisitions, and reorganizations.</p>



Eduardo M. Soto
Partner

A. Education:

- University of Miami School of Law, LLM (Taxation), 2003
- University of Tennessee College of Law, J.D., 2002
- University of Florida, B.A., 1999

B. Supervision of Work: Assist as needed

C. Legal Experience: Ed is a problem solver who seeks practical solutions to reach his clients' goals. He works closely with the firm's land use and zoning team to address all matters that may arise during the development process. Ed also advises clients in structuring transactions to minimize federal, state, and local tax liability.

4. Price

If selected by ELCHC, the Firm intends to offer an hourly fee of \$300. The Firm is also willing to negotiate alternative or fixed fee arrangements on a project-by-project basis.

Conclusion

We are very excited about the potential opportunity to work with the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County. Additional information about me and the Firm may be found on the Firm's website (www.wsh-law.com), and I am happy to provide client references upon request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (786) 380-2554 or sjohnston@wsh-law.com.

Tab 1



Endurance American Specialty Insurance Company
Wilmington, Delaware

PREMIER LAWYERS PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY DECLARATIONS

THIS INSURANCE IS ISSUED PURSUANT TO THE FLORIDA SURPLUS LINES LAW. PERSONS INSURED BY SURPLUS LINES CARRIERS DO NOT HAVE THE PROTECTION OF THE FLORIDA INSURANCE GUARANTY ACT TO THE EXTENT OF ANY RIGHT OF RECOVERY FOR THE OBLIGATION OF AN INSOLVENT UNLICENSED INSURER.

SURPLUS LINES INSURERS' POLICY RATES AND FORMS ARE NOT APPROVED BY ANY FLORIDA REGULATORY AGENCY

NOTICE: PLEASE READ CAREFULLY. This is a claims-made and reported Policy. Except as otherwise provided herein, this Policy covers only **Claims** first made against the **Insured** during the **Policy Period**. Please read the Policy carefully.

The Limits of Liability available to pay insured **Damages** shall be reduced by amounts incurred for **Claim Expenses**, unless the Policy is otherwise endorsed. Amounts incurred for **Claims Expenses** and **Damages** shall also be applied against the self-insured retention, unless the Policy is otherwise endorsed.

POLICY NUMBER: LPN30008168600

PRIOR POLICY NUMBER: LPL10003941607

Item 1. **Producer:** Gemini Risk Partners, LLC
Address: 39572 Woodward Avenue
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304

Item 2. **Named Insured:** Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman, P.L.
Address: 2525 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Ste. 700
Coral Gables, FL 33134

Predecessor Firm(s) Weiss Serota Helfman Pastoriza Cole & Boniske, P.A.
Weiss, Serota & Helfman, P.A.
Weiss, Serota, Helfman, Pastoriza & Guedes, P.A.
Weiss Serota Helfman Pastoriza Guedes Cole & Boniske, P.A.
Weiss Serota Helfman Pastoriza Cole & Boniske, P.A.

Item 3. **Policy Period:** From: June 24, 2021 To: June 24, 2022
(12:01 AM Standard Time on both dates at the address of the **Named Insured**.)

Policy Issuance Date: July 27, 2021
Policy Issuance Office: New York, NY

Endurance American Specialty Insurance Company
LPL 0013 0815

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- Item 4. Limits of Liability: (Including **Claims Expenses**)
- (A) Each **Claim**: \$3,000,000 part of \$5,000,000
- (B) Maximum Total **Policy Period** Aggregate: \$3,000,000
- Item 5. Self-Insured Retention: \$150,000 Each **Claim**
- Item 6. Premium: \$130,831 part of \$218,052
- Minimum Earned Premium \$32,708
- Item 7. Prior & Pending Litigation Date: 4/24/2013
- Item 8. **Retroactive Date**: Full Prior Acts
- Item 9. Forms and Endorsements Applicable to Coverage at Inception of Policy:
See attached Forms and Endorsements Schedule, Form Number: IL 0101
- Item 10. Address Notice of Claims or Potential Claims To:
- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <u>E-Mail</u> | <u>Mail</u> |
| Insuranceclaims@sompo-intl.com | Sompo Pro
Attn: Claims Department
1221 Avenue of The Americas
New York, NY 10020 |

Submission of Notice of Claims by email is preferred.

- Item 11. **Disciplinary Proceeding** Coverage:
- (A) Each **Disciplinary Proceeding**: \$25,000
- (B) **Policy Period** Aggregate: \$50,000
- Item 12. Choice of Law and Jurisdiction: This insurance shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, U.S.A., and each party agrees to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of any competent court within the United States of America.

These Declarations, the completed and signed **Application**, and this Policy with Endorsements shall constitute the contract between the **Insured** and the **Insurer**

The **Insurer** hereby causes this Policy to be signed on the Declarations page by a duly authorized representative of the **Insurer**.

NOTE: SEE ENCLOSED NOTICE FOR SURPLUS LINES NOTIFICATION

Policy Issuance Date: July 27, 2021
Policy Issuance Office: New York, NY

Endurance American Specialty Insurance Company
LPL 0013 0815

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Authorized Representative

July 27, 2021

Date

Policy Issuance Date: July 27, 2021
Policy Issuance Office: New York, NY

Endurance American Specialty Insurance Company
LPL 0013 0815

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Tab 2

Complete Attorney Biographies

SARAH L. JOHNSTON

OF COUNSEL

Tampa
(786) 380-2554
sjohnston@wsh-law.com



Sarah is Of Counsel practicing in the Firm's Government and Labor & Employment Divisions. She has extensive experience representing government entities in board governance, general business operations, labor and employment, procurement, land use and zoning, public finance, public utilities, real estate, Public/Private Partnerships (P3), Community Redevelopment Agencies, and legislative matters, among others. Sarah's unique and varied experience allows her to have an understanding of public sector needs, which is evident in her collaborative approach to working with clients.

Prior to joining the Firm, Sarah served as City Attorney and Assistant Town Attorney for two coastal cities in Miami-Dade County. Sarah has advised on a wide range of labor and employment matters, including high-profile matters involving executive employees, workplace investigations and outsourcing departments involving union employees. She has served as the lead attorney on numerous procurement matters and P3's, including negotiating a P3 with an internationally branded soccer academy and charter school and a \$400M contract for the maintenance, operations, and capital projects program for the second largest water utility in Miami-Dade County.

She has also provided counsel on Sunshine Law compliance, state and local ethics, workplace investigations, day-to-day employment matters, election matters, the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), grant applications, bond issuance, and labor union negotiations, as well as served as counsel to personnel appeal boards and various public advisory boards.

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Florida Municipal Attorneys Association
- The Florida Bar, City, County, and Local Government Law Section

PRACTICE AREAS

- [Code Enforcement](#)
- [Governmental Affairs and Procurement](#)
- [Municipal Counsel](#)
- [Public Sector Land Use and Zoning](#)
- [Special Counsel to Local Government](#)
- [Community Redevelopment Agency \(CRA\)](#)
- [Bonds and Public Finance](#)
- [Capital Improvement, Infrastructure Development & Project Management](#)
- [Elections](#)
- [Ethics](#)
- [Labor and Employment](#)
- [Solid Waste Management](#)
- [Special Governmental Districts](#)
- [Utilities](#)
- [Public/Private Partnership \(P3\) Transactions](#)

ADMISSIONS

- Florida, 2011
- California, 2018

EDUCATION

- St. Thomas University School of Law, J.D., 2010
- University of Phoenix, MBA, 2012
- University of Central Florida, B.A. in Public Administration, 2007

Sarah L. Johnston

<https://www.wsh-law.com/team/of-counsel/sarah-l-johnston/>

BRETT J. SCHNEIDER

PARTNER

CHAIR OF LABOR & EMPLOYMENT
DIVISION; BOCA RATON OFFICE
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Boca Raton
(561) 835-2111
bschneider@wsh-law.com



Brett Schneider is the Managing Director of the Boca Raton office and Chair of the firm's Labor and Employment Division. As a Florida Bar Board Certified attorney in Labor and Employment Law, Brett helps public and private sector employers resolve issues in a prompt and efficient manner.

Brett represents public sector employers in negotiating collective bargaining agreements, labor impasse proceedings, unfair labor practice proceedings and labor arbitrations. As workplace issues continue to evolve, he advises clients on employee drug testing (particularly with the legalization of medical marijuana in Florida), sexual harassment and employee medical issues. Brett provides pragmatic advice in line with his clients' business objectives.

Brett handles employment litigation for public and private employers in matters arising under federal, state and local employment laws such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Florida Civil Rights Act (FCRA). Brett defends employers in wage and hour suits brought under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and has successfully guided clients through Department of Labor Wage & Hour Audits. He also represents employers before federal, state and local administrative agencies such as the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the Florida Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC).

Certified by the HR Certification Institute and by the Society for Human Resource Management, Brett advises employers on human resources issues including personnel policies and procedures, discipline and discharge matters, drug and alcohol testing, employee privacy rights and educational and training programs for managers and supervisors. He works closely with employers to ensure that their practices comply with federal, state and local laws.

Brett is a frequent speaker on labor and employment law and human resources matters, including the impact of the legalization of medical marijuana on Florida employers, the #metoo movement, and workplace violence.

Brett previously practiced labor and employment law at large national law firms in Washington D.C. and New York.

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Human Resource Association of Broward County, 2008-present; Past-President, 2015; President, 2014; President-Elect, 2013; Legislative Affairs Director, 2011-2012
- The Cooperative Feeding Program, Board Member, 2010-2014
- Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County, Young Adult Division, Board member, 2012-2014
- University of Maryland South Florida Alumni Association, 2010-Present
- Anti-Defamation League, Glass Leadership Institute, 2008
- Leadership Broward Foundation, Class XXIV, 2005-2006
- South Florida Touchdown Club Foundation, Board Secretary, 2005-2006

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- Top Lawyer, *Palm Beach Illustrated*, 2021
- Best Lawyers in America®, Litigation - Labor and Employment, 2022
- 2021 Daily Business Review Florida Legal Awards Honoree as 2021 Innovator
- South Florida Legal Guide, Top Lawyer, 2020-present
- *Palm Beach Illustrated*, Top Lawyer- Labor & Employment, 2019 - present
- Florida *Super Lawyers*, 2018-present
- *Florida Trend's* Florida Legal Elite, 2018-present
- AV Preeminent Rating, Martindale-Hubbell, 2017-present
- South Florida Business Journal, Power Leaders in Law & Accounting, 2017
- Florida *Super Lawyers*, Rising Star, 2011-2014
- South Florida Legal Guide, Top Up and Comer, 2009

REPORTED CASES

- *Aristyld v. City of Lauderhill*, Case No. 543 Fed.Appx. 905 (11th Cir. 2013)
- *Blanco v. Monique & Me, Inc.*, 116 So. 3d 639 (Fla. 3d DCA 2013)
- *Amunraptah v. City of Deerfield Beach*, 93 So. 3d 1040 (Fla. 4th DCA 2012)
- *East Coast Karate Studios, Inc. v. LifeStyle Martial Arts, LLC*, 65 So. 3d 1127 (Fla. 4th DCA 2011)
- *World Rentals and Sales, LLC v. Volvo Constr. Equip. Rentals, Inc.*, 517 F.3d 1240 (11th Cir. 2008)
- *Goldberg v. Chong*, 2007 WL 2028792 (S.D. Fla. Jul. 11, 2007)

- *Kaptan v. Danchig*, 796 N.Y.S.2d 706 (N.Y. 2nd Dept., 2005)

PRACTICE AREAS

- [Labor and Employment](#)
- [Accessibility and Accommodations](#)
- [Administrative Claims and Hearings](#)
- [Agreements and Handbooks](#)
- [Collective Bargaining](#)
- [Counseling and Risk Management Services](#)
- [Drug Testing](#)
- [Employee Training](#)
- [Labor Arbitrations and Related Administrative Hearings](#)
- [Litigation](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health](#)
- [Restrictive Covenants](#)
- [Unemployment Claims](#)
- [Wage and Hour Claims and Audits](#)
- [Workers Compensation](#)
- [Workplace Investigation](#)
- [Labor and Employment Litigation](#)

ADMISSIONS

- Florida, 2005
- New York, 1999
- District of Columbia, 2000
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, 2005
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida, 2006
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, 2001
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, 2002
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of New York, 2003
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit, 2005

EDUCATION

- George Washington University Law School, J.D., cum laude, 1999
- Journal of International Law & Economics
- University of Maryland, B.A., Government and Politics, with honors, 1996

PRESS MENTIONS

- [Can your employer insist you get a COVID-19 vaccine? We asked a lawyer.](#), WPLG Local 10 News, April 28, 2021
- [Weiss Serota Bolsters Employment Practice With New Partner](#), Law360, September 9, 2020
- [The Road Toward Reopening](#), South Florida Business Journal, July 10, 2020
- [Bringing Them Back: Questions for HR from Returning Workers](#), Society for Human Resource Management, May 6, 2020
- [How to Recruit When Hiring is on Hold](#), Society for Human Resource Management, April 9, 2020
- [Legal Alert: Paying Police Employees: Eleventh Circuit Rules Certain Prep And Travel Time Is Not Compensable](#), July 20, 2018
- [Midsize and Small Law Firms Skip the Lockstep Pay Dance](#), Daily Business Review, June 20, 2018
- [Avoiding an Ageism Suit](#), Human Resource Executive, April 17, 2018
- [Zero Tolerance: Be Proactive About Sexual Harassment Policies](#), Construction Today, February 2018
- [Employers Reinforce Anti-Harassment Policies](#), Sun Sentinel, December 10, 2017
- [Attorney Brett Schneider Presents at Three Conferences](#) - (1) 36th Annual Florida Municipal Attorneys Association Seminar - "Medical Marijuana from the Municipal Employer's Perspective", (2) Florida League of Cities' Center for Municipal Research & Innovation (CMRI) Summer Research Symposium - "Medical Marijuana and Your City: Facts, Fiction and Moving Forward", (3) 7th Annual TSG Labor & Employment Law Conference - "Drug Alert - Medical Marijuana in the Work Place", Attorney At Law Magazine, 9/1/2017
- [Delivery Dudes expands despite growing pains](#), Sun Sentinel, August 1, 2016
- [New OT rules to hit Retail Hospitality Cos. hardest](#), Law360, May 19, 2016
- [Will Gay Weddings Lead to Fewer Domestic Partnership Benefits?](#) Sun-Sentinel, January 22, 2015
- [Medical Marijuana Could Cost Employees Their Jobs](#), Sun-Sentinel, October 30, 2014
- [Weiss Serota Helfman Attorney Brett Schneider Becomes Board Certified in Labor & Employment Law](#), CityBizList, June 19, 2013
- [Bills Would Reform Government Pension Plans](#), Daily Business Review, March 29, 2011

PRESENTATIONS

- [Business Strategies for Addressing Impacts of Coronavirus on the Workplace](#), Business Development Board of Palm Beach, May 4, 2020
- [What Every Small & Mid-Sized Business Needs to Know in the Era of Coronavirus](#), March 27, 2020
- [Inside the Plaintiff's Employment Attorney's Mind](#) FPHRA July 24, 2019
- [Medical Marijuana and the Employer](#) FMAA July 13, 2019
- [Hiring Practice Compliance Issues](#), HFTP Gold Coast Chapter, 10/17/18

- *Me Too and Harassment Panel Discussion*, Florida Public Human Resources Association, July 2018
- *Sexual Harassment Policies and Training*, 2018 Florida Municipal Attorneys Association Annual Conference, 2018
- *Medical Marijuana and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace*, Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals Gold Coast Educational Breakfast, April 2018
- *2018 HR Insights 2018: HR in a #Metoo World*, GMCC, April 2018
- *Employer Drug Testing in the Era of Legal Medical Marijuana*, 2018 Connect Business & Leadership Conference
- *Minimizing Employer Liability for Sexual Harassment Claims & Employer Drug Testing in the era of Medical Marijuana*, [HFTP Gold Coast Chapter](#) Educational Breakfast, February 26, 2018
- *Medical Marijuana from the Employer's Perspective*, Palm Beach County League of Cities General Membership Meeting, October 25, 2017
- *Medical Marijuana from the Municipal Employer's Perspective*, 36th Annual Florida Municipal Attorneys Association Seminar, July 27, 2017
- *Medical Marijuana and Your City: Facts, Fiction and Moving Forward*, Florida League of Cities' Center for Municipal Research & Innovation (CMRI) Summer Research Symposium
- *Medical Marijuana from the Municipal Employer's Perspective*, Florida Municipal Attorneys Association, July 27, 2017
- *Overcoming the Haze of Medical Marijuana in Florida*, Human Resource Association of Broward County's Legal Seminar, May 11, 2017
- *Legislative Changes – Medical Marijuana*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), December 1, 2016
- *Overtime Payment Rules & ADA Accommodations*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), September 13, 2016
- *New Overtime Rules Mean HR Professionals Will Be Working Overtime!!!*, Human Resource Association of Broward County, May 6, 2016
- *What Should You Do If Something Pops Up In A Background Check That Makes You Reconsider Hiring Them*, Florida Public Human Resources Association, May 4, 2016
- *What You Should Know About Collective Bargaining Before You Get There*, Palm Beach Counties League of Cities Newly Elected Officials Workshop, April 27, 2016
- *Legal Considerations in Performance Management*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), April 5, 2016
- *Conducting Harassment Investigations*, Florida Public Employer Labor Relations Association, February 23, 2016
- *Issues & Pitfalls Associated with Negotiating & Drafting Employment Contracts for Municipal Officials, what Every City Attorney Needs to Know*, Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Lunch Seminar, February 18, 2016

- *Planning for Employees Social Gatherings*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), September 9, 2015
- *Solving the ADA/FMLA Compliance Mystery*, Florida Public Human Resources Association, August 4, 2015
- *EEOC & FLSA Overview*, Florida Public Human Resources Association, August 1, 2015
- *What Non-Union Employers Need to Know About the NLRA*, Human Resource Association of Broward County, May 1, 2015
- *Medical Marijuana – Workplace Impact*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), April 7, 2015
- *Got Wellness? Labor Relations Trouble & Legal Pitfalls*, Florida Public Employer Labor Relations Association, February 9, 2015
- *Newsworthy HR Caselaw*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), December 9, 2014
- *Labor Rights and How They Impact Your Crew*, Florida Public Employer Labor Relations Association 39th Annual Training Conference, January 29, 2013
- *Hiring and Terminating Employees in the Current Economy*, Fundamentals of Employment Law (Sterling Education Seminar), November 13, 2012
- *FLSA/Wage and Hour Critical Issues*, Fundamentals of Employment Law (Sterling Education Seminar), November 13, 2012
- *FLSA 101*, Florida Public Personnel Association Annual Conference, July 29, 2012
- *Legal Updates*, Florida Public Personnel Association Annual Conference, July 29, 2012
- *HR Case Update*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), June 28, 2012
- *Avoiding Liability for overtime under the FLSA*, Certipay HR Seminar, May 15, 2012
- *HR Update*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), March 15, 2012
- *EEOC Investigations*, Florida Public Employer Labor Relations Association 38th Annual Training Conference, February 6, 2012
- *What's Up with the Supremes and other Must-Know Legal Developments for HR Professionals*, Human Resource Association of Broward County, October 14, 2011
- *Conducting Investigations from A to Z*, Florida Public Personnel Association Annual Conference, July 25, 2011
- *How to Effectively Redesign Benefit Plans*, Florida Government Finance Officers' Association, June 27, 2011
- *What Constitutes an Enforceable Past Practice*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), May 12, 2011
- *Mandatory vs. Permissive Subjects of Collective Bargaining Negotiations*, Florida Public Employer Labor Relations Association 36th Annual Training Conference, February 9, 2010
- *Labor Relations Update*, Miami-Dade County City Manager's Association Luncheon, November 20, 2009

- *The Specifics of Ricci v. DiStefano*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources, South Florida Regional Meeting, August 25, 2009
- *Recent Legal Developments Affecting Florida Public Employers*, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (South Florida Chapter), April 28, 2009
- *What is New with Labor Law*, Miramar / Pembroke Pines HR Consortium, April 16, 2009

PUBLICATIONS

- *Preventing and Responding to Workplace Violence*, Daily Business Review, June 10, 2019
- *Bills Would Reform Government Pension Plan*, Daily Business Review, March 29, 2011
- *How Employers Can Keep Themselves From Being You-Tubed*, Workforce Management, May 11, 2009
- *Acting Affirmative Against Harassment*, New York Law Journal Corporate Counsel, February 4, 2002
- *Employee Privacy 2001 A Review for Employers*, Lawyer Pilot's Bar Association Journal, Fall, 2001

Brett J. Schneider

<https://www.wsh-law.com/team/partner/brett-j-schneider/>

MARLON A. HILL

OF COUNSEL

Miami
(305) 854-0800
mhill@wsh-law.com



Marlon A. Hill represents local governments, businesses, and entrepreneurs in corporate, intellectual property, and government matters.

In addition to serving as outside general counsel to several companies, Marlon advises business owners on all aspects of starting and structuring their businesses, from drafting contracts and agreements to securing intellectual property, especially across the tourism, hospitality, and media and entertainment industries. Helping his clients grow and scale their companies, he counsels on corporate governance and strategic development. Marlon is also experienced in mergers, acquisitions, and reorganizations.

For international entrepreneurs, Marlon manages the filing of business immigration visa petitions for investor entrepreneurs (EB-5), specialty occupation professionals (H1-B), intra-company transferees (L-1A), and entertainers, artists, and media talent (P/O).

Born in Kingston, Jamaica, Marlon has served as a civic leader in a number of roles across South Florida, especially with African-American and Caribbean-American communities. He has been featured as one of the “outstanding members of the emerging generation of South Florida business and professional leaders” by the Daily Business Review. He is also a past recipient of numerous awards, including the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Bill Colson Leadership Award, M. Athalie Range Foundation Bridge Builder Award, and the inaugural Miami Foundation Ruth Shack Community Leadership Award.

Marlon currently serves as a board member of the Miami Parking Authority, Kozyak Minority Foundation, and BMe Community. He recently served as a member of the board of directors for The Miami Foundation, Miami Book Fair International, and the Orange Bowl Committee, and is a past president of the Caribbean Bar Association. He is also one of the Inaugural Fellows in the Miami Foundation’s Miami Fellows Initiative, a signature local leadership development program. Marlon keeps the community engaged through his weekly civic commentary, “*The People’s Politics*”, on Caribbean Riddims, WNMA 1210AM, every Saturday at 4 p.m., has penned op-ed articles in the Miami Herald and Sun-Sentinel covering issues of civic interest, legal

concern, and social or cultural impact, and has made recurring contributions to WPLG Local 10's *"This Week in South Florida"* Roundtable.

Beyond his law practice, Marlon occasionally serves as MC/DJ host for local bar associations and special events in South Florida and as a host of countless weddings for colleagues in and out of the profession. He also volunteers in the Emmaus Ministry of St. Louis Catholic Church.

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Miami Dade County Charter Review Task Force, District 9 Appointee, 2017-2018
- Miami Parking Authority, Board member, 2003-present
- Orange Bowl Committee, Active Member and Board of Directors, 2009-present
- Miami Book Fair International, Advisory Board member, 2013-present
- Florida Caribbean Student Association, Advisor, 1995-present
- The Miami Foundation, Board of Trustees, 2010-2016
- Florida Bar (Entertainment, Arts & Sports and Business Law Sections)
- Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. Bar Association
- Florida Association of Volunteer Action for Caribbean and Americas (FAVACA), Board member
- Kappa Alpha Psi Richmond-Perrine Alumni Chapter
- Caribbean Bar Association, President, 2001-2003
- Jay Malina International Trade Consortium, (Past) Board member
- Jamaican Diaspora Advisory Board Member, Southern United States, 2006-2011

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- Caribbean Media Exchange #CMEx Leadership Award, 2019
- Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. Bar Association, Community Champion Award, 2018
- Florida Super Lawyer, Law & Politics, 2015-2018
- Catholic Legal Services, New Americans Award for Pro-Bono Service, 2016
- American Friends of Jamaica, Vanguard Leadership Award for Service, 2016
- Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Bill Colson Leadership Award, 2016
- Caribbean Bar Association, President's Award for Service, 2013
- Athalie Range Foundation, Bridge Builder Award, 2012
- Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund, Young Leader Award, 2010
- Leave A Legacy/Miami Foundation, Ruth Shack Community Leadership Award, 2010
- Miami Herald Top 20 Under 40 Business Leaders, 2010
- ICABA Most Accomplished Blacks in Law, 2009
- SUCCESS South Florida Magazine, 50 Most Influential Black Professionals, 2005
- Miami Herald's Black History Profiles, 2002
- Daily Business Review's "Leaders 2000 – Faces to Watch" Issue Miami Foundation's Miami Fellows Initiative, 1999-2001

- National Philanthropy Day Outstanding Young Leader Award, 2000 United Way Essie Silva Community Builder Award, 1999
- United Way Essie Silva Community Builder Award, 1999

PRACTICE AREAS

- [Code Enforcement](#)
- [Governmental Affairs and Procurement](#)
- [Municipal Counsel](#)
- [Elections](#)
- [Ethics](#)
- [Hospitality](#)
- [Public/Private Partnership \(P3\) Transactions](#)
- [Business Organizations, Acquisitions and Conveyances](#)
- [Corporate Affairs and Governance](#)
- [Sports, Arts and Entertainment](#)

ADMISSIONS

- Florida, 1995

EDUCATION

- Florida State University College of Law, J.D., with honors
- University of the West Indies, Faculty of Law, Barbados, Summer Program
- Florida State University, B.S., International Business & Finance, cum laude
- Universidad de Costa Rica, Colegio del Comercio, San Jose, Exchange Program

LANGUAGES

- Spanish
- Patois

PRESS MENTIONS

- [Meet Marlon Hill](#), VoyageMIA, September 23, 2021

- ["Marlon A. Hill: Lawyer by Chance, Community Leader by Choice", Florida State Law Magazine, 2019](#)
- ["The Key to Making Impact In Our Communities With Marlon Hill", Carry On Friends, Caribbean American Perspectives, April 2019](#)
- ["Jamaican Attorney Marlon A. Hill makes historical 2020 run for Miami-Dade District 9 County Commission Seat", Caribbean National Weekly, February 2019](#)
- ["How Miami Lawyer Marlon Hill Helps Children See a Future in Law", Law.com, DBR, November 2017](#)
- ["Interview with Marlon Hill", UM Mediaspace, July 2016](#)
- ["Marlon Hill Focuses On Community", South Florida Times, June 2009](#)
- [St. Vincent La Soufriere Volcano Relief Update, CaneRadio.com, April 2021](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Represented a Caribbean multinational food manufacturing company in an equity acquisition transaction to expand its ethnic food product manufacturing and distribution footprint in the United States.
- Represented an international aviation parts broker in the drafting of corporate governance and financing transaction documents in multiple purchase, sale and financing transactions.
- Represented a closely held multi-corporation conglomerate engaged in maritime bio-technology and specialized medical services on all aspects of maritime medical operations.
- Represented an airport concessionaire in the review and negotiation of franchise and concession agreements.
- Advised a governmental tourism agency in connection with various multinational joint ventures, intellectual property transactions, and other general corporate agreements.
- Represented an international regional food chain in the establishment of U.S. operations.
- Represented an international environmental engineering firm in establishing U.S. operations, including the drafting of corporate governance, procurement of licensing, assessing immigration options, and other general counsel.
- Represented various tourism, entertainment, and technology industry companies in their formation, governance development, and corporate transactions.

PRESENTATIONS

- *The Global Legal Landscape of the Hospitality and Tourism Industry in 2021*, Florida International University, November 18, 2021
- *New Americans in Miami-Dade County*, Miami-Dade County's Office of New Americans, August 2021

- *Celebrating Caribbean-American Influence in the Legal Profession*, Weiss Serota Helfman Cole + Bierman, June 2021
- *Caribbean Heritage Month*, Office Depot Associate Resource Group, June 2021
- *Miami's Caribbean History and its Impact on Our Future*, University of Miami Employee Resource Group, June 2021
- *Start, Grow and Bring Your Business to Florida, Scaling Your Business Through Export & International Trade*, Enterprise Florida Caribbean American Business Summit, June 2021
- *Scholarship Gala: Black Excellence Uninterrupted*, T.J. Reddick Bar Association, June 2021
- *Breaking Barriers: Celebrating Pioneers in the Community*, Weiss Serota Helfman Cole + Bierman, February 2021
- *Substantive Law Series: Municipal Law*, Wilkie D. Ferguson Jr. Bar Association, February 2021
- *Global Supply Trends*, FSMSDC 34th Annual Business Expo, April 2019
- *The Age of Political Incorrectness: How to Adjust Your Practice and Maintain Professionalism in Today's Climate*, Dade County Bar Association Annual Bench & Bar Conference, April 2019
- *Covering all your bases: Are you ready for the next crisis? Hospitality Crisis Management*, Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum Conference, June 2018
- *Identity Therapy: Analyzing Your Business' Branding Strategy*, Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum Conference, June 2017

Marlon A. Hill

<https://www.wsh-law.com/team/of-counsel/marlon-a-hill/>

EDUARDO M. SOTO

PARTNER

Miami

(305) 854-0800

esoto@wsh-law.com



Ed Soto practices in the area of commercial real estate, commercial lending and transactional matters. He has substantial experience in all aspects of real estate-secured and asset-based loans, including construction loans, permanent financing, public-private financing, and borrowing base financing. He has substantial experience in representing both lead and participant lenders in syndicated transactions and other co-lending arrangements. He also regularly represents developers and investors in the purchase, sale and development of real property.

Ed is a problem solver who seeks practical solutions to reach his clients' goals. He works closely with the firm's land use and zoning team to address all matters that may arise during the development process. Ed also advises clients in structuring transactions to minimize federal, state, and local tax liability.

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Cuban American Bar Association (CABA), 2006-present
- Executive Director, South Florida Association of Financial Professionals, 2019
- Member, South Florida Executive Roundtable, 2019-present
- Dade County Bar Association, Real Property Committee, 2006-present
- The Florida Bar, Real Property, Probate and Tax Sections, 2002-present

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- *Best Lawyers in America®*, Real Estate Law, 2021-present
- Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Ratings: AV Preeminent
- Daily Business Review, Dealmaker, 2008

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Represented lender with respect to real estate financing secured by 45 South Florida gas stations. Advised on the extension of new credit facilities, the

refinancing of existing credit facilities, and the purchase of existing notes and mortgages to minimize transaction costs.

- Represented lender with respect to financing the simultaneous acquisition of over 30 gas stations from ExxonMobil in a transaction valued at over \$55 million.
- Represented client in the \$25 million purchase of vacant land in Central Florida.
- Advised local university in a \$44 million bond refinancing secured by University property.
- Represented lead lender with respect to real estate construction financing secured by a ground lease for the construction of a luxury apartment building, including mezzanine financing and multiple participant lenders.
- Represented a local non-profit corporation with respect to construction financing and ground lease to a charter school, together with the subsequent refinancing to permanent tax-exempt financing, the issuance of tax exempt bonds, and New Market Tax Credits.
- Continuing representation of prominent South Florida developer in the acquisition, sale and financing of real property.

PRACTICE AREAS

- [Bonds and Public Finance](#)
- [Public Sector Land Conveyances](#)
- [Affordable Housing](#)
- [Public/Private Partnership \(P3\) Transactions](#)
- [Business Organizations, Acquisitions and Conveyances](#)
- [Banking and Financial Institutions](#)
- [Real Estate](#)

ADMISSIONS

- Florida, 2002

EDUCATION

- University of Miami School of Law, LLM (Taxation), 2003
- University of Tennessee College of Law, J.D., 2002
- University of Florida, B.A., 1999

LANGUAGES

- Spanish

Eduardo M. Soto
<https://www.wsh-law.com/team/partner/eduardo-m-soto/>



HILL WARD
HENDERSON

RESPONSE TO

**EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR LEGAL SERVICES –
CORPORATE COUNSEL**

February 7, 2022

Matthew F. Hall, Esq.
Hill Ward Henderson
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813-227-8479

Matthew.Hall@hwhlaw.com

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Section A: Legal Experience

Hill Ward Henderson is in a unique position to provide governance related legal services to the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County (the Coalition). Since March 2020, we have been working with the Coalition in multiple areas as special counsel, including negotiating third party contracts (such as with the School Board of Hillsborough County and Tampa General Hospital) and advising in high profile provider review hearings and termination of provider contracts. Therefore, we possess a level of “institutional knowledge” regarding the needs and practices of the Coalition that is unmatched by any other law firm or lawyer that may submit a proposal. Our strong working relationship has afforded us the ability to anticipate needs and opportunities on behalf of the Coalition.

Responsiveness, timeliness and accessibility are pillars of our service standards. Our attorneys are available to attend meetings in person on short notice and are available to be reached promptly by telephone, cell phone, and email.

Client satisfaction is of utmost importance to Hill Ward Henderson. We will provide time estimates for project completion, and keep the Coalition apprised of any delays or special considerations as necessary. Our goal is to exceed our clients’ expectations and we believe open communication works best.

Our firm has significant experience representing and advising non-profit organizations and governmental agencies in a broad scope of legal matters. Some of the entities that our attorneys have assisted include, but not limited to, Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas; WorkNet Pinellas; Florida Council on Aging; Hillsborough Education Foundation; Florida Humanities Council; Success 4 Kids & Families; Hillsborough County Aviation Authority; Seminole County Housing Authority; and Hillsborough County Public Schools. Many of these agencies provide similar government-funded services as the Coalition, including education and care to young children.

Client References

Chris Torrioni, President & Co-Founder
Sensible Micro Corporation
13520 Prestige Place, Tampa, FL 33635
Phone: 813-926-6700
Email: ctorrioni@sensiblemicro.com

LaNita Battles, AINS
Director – Department for Ministry Protection (Risk Management)
Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church
450 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33815
Phone: 800-282-8011 x.199
Email: lbattles@flumc.org

Neftali (Nef) Rodriguez
Chief Executive Officer
Camaraderie Foundation
2488 E. Michigan St., Orlando, FL 32806
Phone: 407-841-0071
Email: nrodriguez@camaraderiefoundation.org

Section B: Firm Overview

Hill Ward Henderson started with a vision of a unique law firm — one that would combine the expansive talent, resources, capabilities and technologies of a larger firm with the responsiveness and personal attention of a smaller firm, to deliver powerful, personal service to every client. This idea for an innovative, client-focused firm grew out of the longstanding relationships and collective experience of three of the area's leading attorneys, Benjamin H. Hill, III, David E. Ward, Jr., and Thomas N. Henderson, III. Acting on this vision, on May 1, 1986, these three and four others established Hill Ward Henderson.

With over 100 attorneys in offices in Tampa, our attorneys provide legal counsel and services in many diverse fields and provide general counsel services for a variety of clients. The firm and attorneys are supported by more than 100 administrative and clerical staff who perform a broad scope of research and administrative functions.

In its 2022 ranking of the nation's "Best Law Firms," U.S. News – Best Lawyers® named Hill Ward Henderson to its "Best Law Firms" designation with rankings in 35 of the firm's practice areas. The U.S. News – Best Lawyers® "Best Law Firms" are recognized for professional excellence with consistently impressive ratings from clients and peers. Rankings are based on a rigorous evaluation process that includes the collection of client and lawyer evaluations, peer review from leading attorneys in the field, and review of additional information provided by law firms as part of the formal submission process.

Section C: Attorney Qualifications

When appropriate and with the goal of never over-staffing cases, Hill Ward Henderson employs a team approach to the practice of law which encourages collaboration among attorneys. Our team approach ensures prompt, efficient and economical service without duplicative efforts that can dramatically increase the cost of legal services. The team's breadth of experience results in increased efficiencies in both time and cost in handling matters. As a result, Hill Ward Henderson is uniquely qualified to deliver legal services in a manner that cannot be matched.

Roles and responsibilities would be determined on an ongoing basis, with an eye toward making sure that each task is accomplished by a person who is well qualified to effectively handle it, while minimizing the cost of the service to the Coalition.

We propose the following attorneys to participate as core members of the team:

Matthew F. Hall, shareholder, has enjoyed a solid working relationship with the Coalition, including with CEO Gordon Gillette, and we propose that he continue to serve as the primary point person and lead counsel on matters. Matthew primarily focuses in complex commercial litigation, insurance coverage disputes, management-side employment matters and federal court practice. The diversity of Matthew's practice is reflected in the diversity of the clients he represents: from Fortune 100 companies and large insurance companies to small and up-and-coming businesses, nonprofit organizations, and individuals. Matthew has worked to obtain six-figure recoveries on behalf of his clients in breach of contract and insurance coverage actions and successfully defended other clients from multi-million dollar claims of negligence. With his experience as clerk with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, Matthew also assists the firm's Appellate Practice Group with high-profile federal court appeals. Matthew has represented the Coalition as special counsel at provider review hearings and has advised the Coalition in negotiating positive resolution of disputes with highly public providers.

Prior to attending law school, Matthew served as an infantryman in the U.S. Army, deploying to Iraq in 2003 with the 4th Infantry Division. He knows the importance of service and continues to try to give back to the military veteran community and the community at large. He played instrumental roles in creating and leading the military and veterans affairs committees in Ybor City and the Hillsborough County Bar Association. Matthew also created the first endowed scholarship for military veterans at University of Florida School of Law. He is also a life member of both the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and he is accredited to represent veterans' benefits claims and assists veterans at no cost to secure their disability benefits.

Matthew has served as the Judge Advocate or the general counsel for the VFW Post 4321 in Tampa, Florida since 2015. Hill Ward Henderson has specifically represented the VFW Post 4321 in zoning and other compliance issues. Matthew has also provided legal advice including general counsel and employment advice to other non-profit organizations, such as the Ybor City Chamber of Commerce, the Hillsborough County Bar Association, and Camaraderie Foundation. He has also represented the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church in insurance and employment disputes.

Matthew received his J.D. *magna cum laude* from the University of Florida College of Law, and his B.A. *cum laude* from the University of Massachusetts – Amherst.

Ryan M. Angel, shareholder in the firm's Corporate Group, will also assist with Coalition matters. Ryan's practice focuses on general corporate advice. His experience includes advising privately-held companies and their owners with respect to mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, entity formation and various other corporate matters. Ryan has assisted the Coalition with drafting and revising contracts as the Coalition's special counsel, including contracts with the School Board of Hillsborough County and Tampa General Hospital.

Ryan is the co-founder and member of the Board of Directors of Cure Kids' Cancer Now! Foundation, Inc. a not-for-profit organization that provides support to families fighting pediatric cancer. He also serves on the St. Joseph's Hospital Parent Advisory Council.

Ryan received his J.D. *cum laude* from Stetson University College of Law, his LL.M. from the University of Florida College of Law, and his B.S. from the University of South Florida.

Jeffrey J. Wilcox, shareholder in the firm's Employment Group, will also serve on the team. Jeff represents employers in litigation involving claims of employment harassment, discrimination, retaliation, leave laws, wage and hour laws, whistleblower laws, enforcement of and defense against non-solicitation and non-competition agreements, background check laws, and other employment-related claims. He represents numerous industries, including clients within the automotive, retail, hospitality, health services, transportation, manufacturing, and construction industries.

In addition to litigation, Jeff counsels and advises employers on various employment issues. He creates new and reviews current employment-related documents, including personnel policies and handbooks, executive employment agreements, confidentiality and restrictive covenant agreements, compensation plans, background check authorizations and disclosures, arbitration agreements, severance agreements, and advises employers on applying and enforcing such documents. He also routinely advises employers on issues within the workplace, including issues involving hiring, termination,

medical leave, compensation, employment classifications, retaliation, harassment, loss of confidential information, and contract disputes. Jeff also has experience guiding employers through employment-related agency investigations, including investigations by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Department of Labor.

Jeff has experience working with non-profit organizations, and is currently advising Florida Humanities Council and Success 4 Kids & Families in employment-related matters.

Jeff received his J.D. with honors from Florida State University College of Law, and his B.A. with honors from Florida State University.

Joshua T. Gehres, associate in the firm's Corporate Group, will also assist. He focuses his practice on mergers and acquisitions, private equity, and general corporate advice. He has represented both public and private companies in connection with mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, entity formation and securities reporting and compliance matters. Joshua also has a history of serving the Coalition as special counsel, assisting in drafting and negotiating contracts on behalf of the Coalition.

Joshua earned his J.D. *cum laude* from the University of Florida College of Law, and his M.B.A. and B.S. *magna cum laude* from Florida State University.

Jacob Z. Coates, associate in the firm's Litigation Group, will also serve on the team. He focuses his practice on general and complex commercial litigation matters in federal and state court, with experience representing clients in a wide variety of business disputes. While in law school, he also gained valuable experience as a judicial intern to the Honorable Jonathan D. Gerber of the Florida Fourth District Court of Appeal.

Jacob received his J.D. *magna cum laude* from the University of Florida College of Law, and his B.A. *cum laude* from the University of Florida.

Jerron R. Wheeler, associate in the firm's Litigation Group, may assist. Jerron is a first year associate who gained valuable experience as a Federal Judicial Intern for the Honorable Patricia D. Barksdale in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida. While early in his legal career, Jerron has already served many valuable roles to clients including providing general legal advice and addressing topics such as compliance, contractual requirements, and employment issues.

Jerron received his J.D. *cum laude* from the University of Florida College of Law, and his M.S., M.B.A., and B.A. degrees from the University of South Florida.

Lauren S. Ayers, associate in the firm’s Litigation Group, may also assist. She is a first year associate who has experience with interpreting contracts and resolving contract disputes. Lauren has a specific interest in the Florida Sunshine laws and compliance.

Lauren received her J.D. *cum laude* from the University of Florida College of Law and her B.S.B.A. from the University of Florida.

Full bios for the proposed team members are included under Section F.

Section D: Proposed Rates

Billing rates of our attorneys are based upon their years of experience, level of legal knowledge, and expertise within various legal disciplines. Our proposed hourly rates are set forth in the below table:

Name	Classification	Years of Experience	Rate
Matthew F. Hall	Shareholder, Lead Counsel	10	\$375
Ryan M. Angel	Shareholder	9	\$375
Jeffrey J. Wilcox	Shareholder	12	\$350
Joshua T. Gehres	Associate	5	\$310
Jacob Z. Coates	Associate	3	\$265
Jerron R. Wheeler	Associate	1	\$255
Lauren S. Ayers	Associate	1	\$255

The Coalition has requested a monthly flat fee that would be charged to advise on routine matters that could be handled over the phone or otherwise without extensive research or other legal work. We feel the most equitable arrangement to bill the Coalition is by the hourly rates set forth above. However, a flat rate that would be available is \$1,875 per month. This is essentially five shareholder hours per month. Again, Hill Ward Henderson is committed to providing quality services at a fair rate and we are happy to discuss the Coalition’s budgetary goals to arrive at an agreeable flat monthly rate.

Section E: Insurance Coverage

Hill Ward Henderson has Professional Liability Coverage with Attorneys’ Liability Assurance Society (ALAS) with an annual limit of \$30,000,000 per claim and \$60,000,000 in the aggregate. The self-insured retention under such Policy is \$250,000 each claim up to an aggregate of \$500,000 and \$100,000 each claim thereafter. The Policy effective date is from January 1, 2022 to January 1, 2023.

Section F: Attorney Bios

Full bios for the attorneys are attached.



MATTHEW F. HALL

Shareholder

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PRACTICE FOCUS

Insurance Coverage Litigation
Litigation
Employment Law
COVID-19 Response Team

EDUCATION

University of Massachusetts -
Amherst, B.A., 2008, *cum laude*
University of Florida College of
Law, J.D., 2011, *magna cum*
laude; Order of the Coif

BAR ADMISSIONS

American Bar Association
The Florida Bar
Hillsborough County Bar
Association Federal Bar
Association

Tampa Bay Hispanic Bar
Association

Matthew Hall primarily focuses in complex commercial litigation, insurance coverage disputes, management-side employment matters and federal court practice. The diversity of Matthew's practice is reflected in the diversity of the clients he represents: from Fortune 100 companies and large insurance companies to small and up-and-coming businesses and individuals. Matthew has worked to obtain six-figure recoveries on behalf of his clients in breach of contract and insurance coverage actions and successfully defended other clients from multi-million dollar claims of negligence. With his experience as clerk with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, Matthew also assists the firm's Appellate Practice Group with high-profile federal court appeals. He has also served as a guest lecturer on various topics at the University of Florida Levin College of Law and the University of Tampa.

Prior to attending law school, Matthew served as an infantryman in the U.S. Army, deploying to Iraq in 2003 with the 4th Infantry Division. Accordingly, Matthew knows the importance of service and continues to try to give back to the military veteran community and the community at large. He played instrumental roles in creating and leading the military and veterans affairs committees in Ybor City and the Hillsborough County Bar Association. Matthew also created the first endowed scholarship for military veterans at University of Florida School of Law. He is also a life member of both the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and he is accredited to represent veterans' benefits claims and assists veterans at no cost to secure their disability benefits.

MATTHEW F. HALL

Out of the office, Matthew enjoys spending time on the water, watching sports, and enjoying time with his two children. And, while not as fast as he used to be, Matthew still participates in a few distance races each year.

HONORS

- Florida Super Lawyers Rising Star (2019-2021)
- Law Clerk to Hon. Peter T. Fay, Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- Tampa Bay Business Journal Heroes At Work (2018)
- Tampa Bay Business Journal Up & Comers Under 40 (2017)

EXPERIENCE

- Publicly traded insurance company in various insurance coverage matters
- Publicly traded manufacturer in federal lawsuit over insurance coverage under a general liability policy
- Veteran-owned start-up company in dispute with vendor over services provided
- Publicly traded technology company in dispute with former employees over theft of intellectual property
- National retailer in high-profile dispute with former employee

COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL

- Leadership Tampa, Class of 2022
- Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 4321: Commander (2019-2020)
- National MS Society, Mid-Florida Chapter: Chair (2017-2018)
- Ybor City Chamber of Commerce
 - Military Affairs Committee - Chair (2019-2021)
 - Treasurer (2020-2021)
- Camaraderie Foundation: Board of Directors (2020-Present)
- The Florida Bar, Federal Court Practice Committee (2014-2020): Chair (2018-2019)
- Hillsborough County Bar Association
 - Military & Veterans Affairs Committee, Co-Chair (2015-2017)

MATTHEW F. HALL

- Board of Directors (2017-Present)
- University of Florida Law Alumni Council
- Eleventh Circuit Historical Society
- Defense Research Institute
- Florida Defense Lawyers Association
- The Florida Bar, Military Affairs Committee (2020-2023)

MILITARY SERVICE

- Combat Infantryman Badge
- Expert Infantryman Badge
- Army Achievement Medal 4th Award
- Army Good Conduct Medal



RYAN M. ANGEL

Shareholder

101 East Kennedy Boulevard
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T: 813.222.3195

PRACTICE FOCUS

Automotive
Mergers & Acquisitions
General Corporate Advice
Joint Ventures & Partnerships
ADA Accessibility
Automotive Corporate & Tax
Corporate & Tax

EDUCATION

University of South Florida,
B.S., 2009
Stetson University College of
Law, J.D., 2012, *cum laude*
University of Florida College of
Law, LL.M., 2013

BAR ADMISSIONS

American Bar Association
The Florida Bar
Hillsborough County Bar
Association

Ryan Angel's calm and optimistic approach allows him to connect with clients when advising them on complex corporate issues.

Ryan's practice focuses on general corporate advice and mergers and acquisitions. His experience includes advising privately-held companies and their owners with respect to mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, entity formation and various other corporate matters. As part of his practice, Ryan has represented clients in the sale or acquisition of automobile and recreational vehicle dealerships and groups, marine manufacturers, physician and dental practices, engineering firms and other professional service providers.

Ryan is the Co-Founder and member of the Board of Directors of Cure Kids' Cancer Now! Foundation, Inc. a not-for-profit organization that provides support to families fighting pediatric cancer. He also serves on the St. Joseph's Hospital Parent Advisory Council.

Prior to joining the firm, Ryan worked in the Orlando, Florida office of Broad and Cassel, where he focused on mergers and acquisitions, the formation of partnerships, joint ventures and other business entities, and federal tax planning for business transactions.

Outside the office, Ryan enjoys spending time with his wife and daughter. He also enjoys fishing and boating.

HONORS

- Florida Super Lawyers Rising Star (2020-2021)

RYAN M. ANGEL

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®: Ones to Watch (2022)

EXPERIENCE

- Represented certain subsidiaries of Asbury Automotive Group, Inc. in their acquisition of 12 new vehicle franchises, an auto auction and two collision centers from the Park Place Dealership Group.
- Represented Maverick Boat Group in its sale to Malibu Boats.
- Represented Chris Craft in its sale to Winnebago Industries, Inc.
- Represented a recreational vehicle dealership group in six acquisitions since 2018 of certain RV dealerships throughout the United States.
- Represented a medical manufacturer of its acquisition of two related companies specializing in the provision of wound care supplies.

COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL

- St. Joseph's Children's Hospital Parent Advisory Committee, Member
 - St. Joseph's Children's Hospital, Heroes Ball Young Professionals Committee (2018)
- Cure Kids Cancer Now! Foundation, Director and Founder
- HCBA Bar Leadership Institute (2021-2022)



JEFFREY J. WILCOX

Shareholder

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T: 813.222.8725

PRACTICE FOCUS

Automotive
Employment Law
Noncompete Litigation
Litigation
Insurance Coverage Litigation
Personal Injury
Cybersecurity, Data Breach & Protection
COVID-19 Response Team

EDUCATION

Florida State University, B.A.,
2006, Honors
Florida State University
College of Law, J.D., 2009,
Honors

BAR ADMISSIONS

American Bar Association
The Florida Bar
Hillsborough County Bar
Association

Jeff Wilcox helps clients navigate difficult employment and workforce issues to reach practical solutions that reduce future risk and liability.

Jeff represents employers in litigation involving claims of employment harassment, discrimination, retaliation, leave laws, wage and hour laws, whistleblower laws, enforcement of and defense against non-solicitation and non-competition agreements, background check laws, and other employment-related claims. He represents numerous industries, including clients within the automotive, retail, hospitality, health services, transportation, manufacturing, and construction industries.

Jeff also represents clients in litigation involving complex commercial and consumer claims, including complex business disputes, contract disputes, cybersecurity and data breach claims, automotive compliance, and claims under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act. He has experience litigating and resolving complex state and federal class and collective action lawsuits.

In addition to litigation, Jeff counsels and advises employers on various employment issues. He creates new and reviews current employment-related documents, including personnel policies and handbooks, executive employment agreements, confidentiality and restrictive covenant agreements, compensation plans, background check authorizations and disclosures, arbitration agreements, severance agreements, and advises employers on applying and enforcing such documents. He also routinely advises employers on issues within the

JEFFREY J. WILCOX

COURT ADMISSIONS

All Florida State Courts

Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals

U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida

U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida

U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida

workplace, including issues involving hiring, termination, medical leave, compensation, employment classifications, retaliation, harassment, loss of confidential information, and contract disputes. Jeff also has experience guiding employers through employment-related agency investigations, including investigations by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Department of Labor.

Outside the office, Jeff enjoys travelling with his wife, Britney, and following Florida State University sports.

HONORS

- Florida Super Lawyers Rising Star (2014-2021)
- Florida Trend's Legal Elite - Up and Comers (2019, 2020)
- Hillsborough County Bar Association: Outstanding Young Lawyer Award (2014)
- The National Law Review: 2021 Go-To Thought Leader for Florida COVID Legislation

EXPERIENCE

- Represented hospitality employer in a collective action lawsuit defending claims of misclassification and unpaid overtime
- Represented hospitality employer in lawsuit prosecuted by Equal Employment Opportunity Commission defending claim of retaliation
- Represented automotive dealership in drafting all pay plans
- Represented energy provider in lawsuit enforcing non-compete, non-solicitation, and confidentiality restrictions against former employees
- Represented beverage supplier in Fair Labor Standards Act classification audit of entire workforce
- Represented medical provider in collective action lawsuit defendant claims of misclassification and unpaid overtime
- Represented automotive manufacturer in lawsuit defending claims of Family and Medical Leave Act retaliation and interference
- Represented retailer in Department of Labor audit and investigation regarding claimed misclassification of assistant managers and unpaid overtime
- Represented temporary staffing agency in Fair Credit Reporting Act compliance review

JEFFREY J. WILCOX

- Represented entity in class action lawsuit defending against claims of improper marketing text campaigns under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act
- Represented automotive dealership in Telephone Consumer Protection Act compliance review
- Represented mergers and acquisition purchasers and sellers in employment-related due diligence analysis

COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL

- Leadership Tampa, Class of 2021
- Defense Research Institute
 - Employment and Labor Law Committee, Membership Vice Chair (2020-Present)
- Hillsborough County Bar Association
 - Young Lawyer's Division
 - President (2019-2020)
 - Board Member
- Success 4 Kids & Families
 - Treasurer (2018 to Present)
 - Executive Committee (2018 to Present)
 - Board of Directors (August, 2015 to Present)

EVENTS

Webinar: Return to Work Issues and Other COVID-19 Related Implications - [Click here to view recording.](#)
Event, 5.20.21

ARTICLES & PUBLICATIONS

- Return to Work Issues and Other COVID-19 Related Implications, Hill Ward Henderson Webinar, May 20, 2021 (co-presenter Robert Shimberg)
- Employment Issues for Small Businesses, Tampa Bay Chamber Minority Business Accelerator Legal Program, March 12, 2021
- Restrictive Covenant Enforcement and Defense in the New Normal, 2020 HR Florida Conference (co-presenter Greg Brown)
- Property Tax Impact of Disney Decision and Navigating Issues Related to Employee Exposure to COVID-19, Indian American Business Association and Chamber, August 27, 2020 (co-presenter

JEFFREY J. WILCOX

Patrick Risch)

- Planning Options and Considerations for Employers Navigating COVID-19 in the Workplace, Hill Ward Henderson Webinar, April 2020 (co-presenters Gordon Hill and Kirsten Vignec)
- Hiring and Separations When Restrictive Covenants are in Play, 2019 HR Florida Conference (co-presenter Greg Brown)
- Issues with Halloween costumes at the workplace, Newsradio 970 WFLA AM Tampa Bay, October 30, 2019
- Arbitration Agreements for Dealerships, Hill Ward Henderson Webinar, August 2019
- 7 Wage and Hour Mistakes Seasoned Employers Still Make, Florida Law Alliance Fall Employment Law Conference, October 2017
- 7 Questions to Ask When Establishing Cause for Disciplining and Terminating Employees, Lorman Education Services Webinar, August 30, 2017
- The New Fair Labor Standards Act Regulations: Optimizing Implementation Costs to Fit Your Culture, August 26, 2016 (co-presenter CBIZ)
- A Lawyer's Update: Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Litigation. (J. Logan Murphy, Ethen Shapiro, co-authors). (October 2011). *For The Defense*, 53, 41.

CLIENT ADVISORIES

CDC Updates COVID-19 Mask Guidance for Fully Vaccinated Individuals - Learn More about What This Could Mean for Your Business
Advisory, 8.4.21

PUBLISHED DECISIONS

- FusionStorm, Inc. v. Presidio Networked Solutions, Inc. F.Supp.2d, 2012 WL 1854277 8:11-CV-1969-T-33AEP
United States District Court, M.D. Florida, Tampa Division. May 21, 2012



joshua.gehres@hwhlaw.com

JOSHUA T. GEHRES

Associate

101 East Kennedy Boulevard
Suite 3700
Tampa, Florida 33602
T: 813.222.3199

PRACTICE FOCUS

Mergers & Acquisitions
General Corporate Advice
Venture Capital & Private Equity
Joint Ventures & Partnerships
Securities & Corporate Governance

EDUCATION

Florida State University, B.S. in Finance, 2012, *magna cum laude*

Florida State University, M.B.A., 2013

University of Florida College of Law, J.D., 2016, *cum laude*

- Editor, Florida Law Review

BAR ADMISSIONS

American Bar Association
The Florida Bar
Hillsborough County Bar Association

Joshua Gehres focuses his practice on mergers and acquisitions, private equity, as well as general corporate advice. He has represented both public and private companies in connection with mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, entity formation and securities reporting and compliance matters.

Joshua earned his *Juris Doctorate* from the University of Florida Levin College of Law in 2016. While in law school, Joshua served as an editor for the Florida Law Review. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Finance and Master's Degree in Business Administration (*MBA*) from Florida State University, where he played wide receiver. While playing, he was awarded the Golden Torch Award and Matt Schmauch Academic Award.

EXPERIENCE

- Representing an orthodontist in the purchase of his first practice.
- Representing a local construction company on multiple occasions involving both the internal and external sale of equity.
- Representing a national publicly traded insurance company in multiple acquisitions varying in value from \$10 million to \$300 million throughout the country including California, Washington, Texas, and Georgia.
- Representing a national RV Dealership in multiple acquisitions throughout the country including Tennessee, Mississippi, and Nevada.

JOSHUA T. GEHRES

- Representing a private equity fund in the purchase of a Senior's Association.
- Representing a national automobile dealership in a near-billion dollar acquisition.



JACOB Z. COATES

Associate

101 East Kennedy Boulevard
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Tampa, Florida 33602
T: 813.506.5189

PRACTICE FOCUS

Litigation

EDUCATION

University of Florida, B.A., 2015,
cum laude

University of Florida College of
Law, J.D., 2018, *magna cum
laude*

- Florida Law Review
- Order of the Coif
- Book Awards (Corporations,
First Amendment Law,
Legal Writing, Labor Law,
Agricultural Law, Mental
Health Law, Introduction to
Lawyering)

BAR ADMISSIONS

The Florida Bar

Hillsborough County Bar
Association

Jacob Coates focuses his practice on general and complex commercial litigation matters in federal and state court, with experience representing clients in a wide variety of business disputes.

While in law school, he also gained valuable experience as a judicial intern to the Honorable Jonathan D. Gerber of the Florida Fourth District Court of Appeal.

In his free time, Jacob enjoys running, nature, spending time with friends, and closely following the University of Florida Gators and the Miami Heat.



JERRON R. WHEELER

Associate

101 East Kennedy Boulevard
Suite 3700
Tampa, Florida 33602
T: 813.227.8477

PRACTICE FOCUS

Automotive

Cybersecurity, Data Breach & Protection

Litigation

Professional Liability

EDUCATION

- University of South Florida, B.A., 2015
- University of South Florida, M.B.A., 2017
- University of South Florida, M.S., 2017
- University of Florida Levin College of Law, J.D., 2021, *cum laude*
 - Journal of Law and Public Policy, Editor-in-Chief (2020-21), General Editor (2019-20)
 - Book Award: Gator TeamChild Juvenile Law Clinic
 - Dean's Leadership Award
 - Teaching Assistant for Legal Writing, Appellate Advocacy, Sports Law

Jerron Wheeler's practice focuses on general and complex commercial litigation.

Jerron earned dual Master's degrees in Business Administration and Sports Management from the University of South Florida.

While in law school, Jerron served as Editor-in-Chief for the University of Florida Journal of Law and Public Policy. He was also the recipient of the Dean's Leadership Award and was awarded the Book Award for the Gator TeamChild Juvenile Law clinic. In addition, he served as a research assistant to his constitutional law professor and as a teaching assistant for Sports Law, Legal Writing, and Appellate Advocacy.

Jerron also gained valuable experience as a Federal Judicial Intern for the Honorable Patricia D. Barksdale in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida.

Outside of the office, Jerron enjoys spending time with his wife, Sybil, and two sons, Caleb and Cameron.

COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL

- George Egdecomb Bar Association

JERRON R. WHEELER

BAR ADMISSIONS

- The Florida Bar



LAUREN S. AYERS

Associate

101 East Kennedy Boulevard
Suite 3700
Tampa, Florida 33602
T: 813.227.8463

PRACTICE FOCUS

Commercial Landlord/Tenant
Probate, Trusts & Fiduciary
Litigation
Real Property Litigation
Zoning & Land Use Litigation

EDUCATION

- University of Florida, B.S.
B.A., 2018
- University of Florida Levin
College of Law, J.D., 2021,
cum laude

BAR ADMISSIONS

- The Florida Bar

Lauren Ayers is an associate in the firm's Litigation Group. Her practice includes real estate, land use, and zoning issues, general commercial matters, and trust and estate disputes.

Lauren graduated *cum laude* from the University of Florida Levin College of Law where she was a member of the Florida Moot Court Team and served as a Certified Legal Intern in the Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Clinic at Levin College of Law. While in law school, Lauren was a judicial intern for the Honorable Mary S. Scriven in the Middle District of Florida.

Outside the office, Lauren enjoys spending time outdoors, traveling and cheering for the Gators.



**HILLSBOROUGH
COUNTY EARLY
LEARNING
COALITION**



Proposal for Governance Related Legal Services for the Hillsborough County Early Learning Coalition

CivForge Law, P.A.



ADDRESS

CivForge Law, P.A.
55 W. Church St.
#2912
Orlando, FL 32801



PHONE & FAX

Phone: (850) 270-8194
Fax: (850) 889-1298



EMAIL & WEBSITE

Email: procurement@civforgelaw.com
Website: civforgelaw.com

Cover Letter

February 7, 2022

Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County
Attn: Kelley Minney
6302 East Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Suite 100
Tampa, Florida 33619

Re: Request for Proposal for Governance Related Legal Services

Dear Ms. Minney, Mr. Gillette, and Members of the Board:

Thank you for providing CivForge Law, P.A., the opportunity to submit this proposal to serve as corporate counsel for the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County. As a former educator and career local government attorney, the firm's managing shareholder, Jamy Dinkins, is prepared to address the Coalition's unique needs and coordinate delivery of legal services.

Why CivForge Law? Jamy has over a decade of experience working with local governments throughout the state of Florida and is a board-certified attorney in City, County, and Local Government Law. He is an expert in governance structuring, such as city and county charters and nonprofit articles of incorporation and bylaws, and has represented diverse clients in his legal practice.

Not only has Jamy successfully managed governance processes for various clients and served as general counsel for a large public entity with over 300 employees, he has successfully represented local government and private clients before the Florida Supreme Court on local government structuring and revenue matters. Jamy has extensive research abilities and has developed successful legal theories for issues ranging from complex real property cases to annexation to special assessments—including creation and structuring of interlocal entities and providing prompt, efficient everyday service to ongoing clients.

We think CivForge Law is an ideal partner for the ELC because of Jamy's service on the boards of and providing legal services to a

number of education-focused nonprofits such as the Florida Association of YMCAs and the Florida Odyssey of the Mind Association. Within the city, county, and local government law field, Jamy has focused on partnerships between local governments and private entities, including nonprofits, and entities that perform quasi-governmental functions like the ELC. His perspective is informed both by the local government work he's focused on in his career and the nonprofit work he's done both personally and professionally.

We want to be your partner in good governance, and we look forward to hearing from you about working with the ELC.

Sincerely,
CivForge Law, P.A.



Jamy Dinkins,
Managing Shareholder

01. Introduction

FIRM OVERVIEW

CivForge Law was founded as James C. Dinkins, PA in 2013. Our name changed to reflect our partial focus on supporting the governance work of CivForge, Inc., a public benefit organization that provides governance improvement solutions to local governments and the entities that work with them. CivForge Law supports this work and does independent work that furthers the shared mission of improving public-sector and public-adjacent governance.

CivForge Law's office is located at 55 West Church Street, #2912, Orlando, Florida 32801, in Orange County. We can be reached via email at [**procurement@civforgelaw.com**](mailto:procurement@civforgelaw.com) and by telephone at **(850) 270-8194**.

Our firm currently employs one attorney, Jamy Dinkins. We focus on city, county, and local government law, both directly working with local governments and working with entities that work with local governments. Within that specialty, our firm's focus is on general governance, public funding, and project structuring. We are a small business.

CONTACT PERSON

The contact person and attorney assigned to this matter is **James C. ("Jamy") Dinkins**. His background and qualifications are discussed in Section 2. He can be reached as follows:

jamy@civforgelaw.com
(239) 810-2682

DOMAIN-SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE

Jamy has worked with Florida local governments since prior to law school, where he taught at a public school and first came to understand Florida's sunshine laws and public records laws. In addition to authoring academic papers about the sunshine law in law school, Jamy was a clerk at a firm specializing in local government representation and participated on litigation teams defending municipalities from allegations of sunshine law violations. As a board certified expert in

City, County, and Local Government Law, Jamy regularly advises clients on the implications of Florida's sunshine and public records laws and assists with avoiding violations or curing them if they occur.

Jamy also has extensive parliamentary procedure experience in the public and nonprofit sectors. In addition to teaching legislative procedure and Robert's Rules of Order to high school students for nearly two decades, Jamy serves on statewide and national nonprofit boards, chairing meetings and providing parliamentary procedure advice. For public sector clients, Jamy regularly advises governing bodies on procedural matters, including notices, public hearing conduct, and technical adoption requirements for complex tax or property assessment matters.

02. Legal Experience

QUALIFICATIONS

We have included Jamy's curriculum vitae on the following pages. We can also provide the following highlights.

Jamy is Board-Certified in City, County, and Local Government Law, earning that distinction at the earliest possible time he was qualified by years in practice following his admission to the Bar and service at the First District Court of Appeal. His practice has focused on governance structuring from the inception; even prior to graduating law school, Jamy worked with a team of attorneys to write a charter agreement establishing an interlocal agency to operate an assessment program statewide.

Particularly, Jamy excels in his ability to understand complex local government and constitutional law questions, arrive at solutions to the problems they present, and explain those questions and solutions to local government decisionmakers. He has an understanding of governance issues that only comes from focusing full-time for many years on local governance problems and the experience derived from teaching and working with elected officials for even longer to translate legalese into something that local legislators and local administrators are comfortable working with.

These skills have helped numerous local governments craft intelligent, custom solutions that solve the unique challenges facing each community. This ranges from renegotiation of a community development agency to find a sustainable source of revenue that dramatically reduced impact on the county treasury to amending the special act governing a multijurisdictional water and wastewater utility to solve ongoing problems with board member appointment. Assisting in reviewing the legality of proposed charter amendments fits squarely within Jamy's experience and skillset.

02. Legal Experience

Curriculum Vitae | Jamy Dinkins

Attorney with successful Florida Supreme Court experience focusing on City, County, and Local Government law and governance innovations throughout Florida

CIVFORGE, INC. & CIVFORGE LAW, P.A.
co-founder

2020-Present
Tallahassee, FL

Co-founded parallel law & governance design practices that blend innovative technical and legal approaches to solve local government challenges



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW
juris doctor summa cum laude, 2012



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
bachelor of science in interdisciplinary sciences, 2007



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
associate of arts, 2006

JAMES C. DINKINS, P.A.
managing shareholder

2013-2020
Tallahassee, FL

Founded a solo practice focusing on city, county, and local government law and emphasizing governance structuring, non-tax revenue, and appeals

CREATIVE CUSTOMIZED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURING

- Participated in creation and amendment of constitutional documents for various categories of local governments
- Worked on the creation and development of a local government of statewide jurisdiction that funds and finances renewable energy, energy efficiency, & wind resistance improvements to private property
- Consulted with various cities on the creation of a consolidated regional water & wastewater utility

SYSTEMS FOR NON-TAX REVENUE DEVELOPMENT

- Created numerous non-ad valorem revenue systems for funding essential services such as stormwater management & fire protection
- Represented private and public clients in New Markets Tax Credits applications and transactions, placing millions of dollars in tax credits into underserved communities

GOVERNMENT-FOCUSED APPELLATE REPRESENTATION

- Represented private clients before the Florida Supreme Court in bond validation cases, securing positive outcomes
- Wrote amici curiae briefing on behalf of public clients in a case resulting in conceptual approval of non-ad valorem fire assessments

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Successful representation of clients before the Florida Supreme Court
- Board Certified in City, County, and Local Government Law
- Bond closings in excess of \$2,000,000,000 total
- Statewide representation of local government clients

STRENGTHS

- Client communication & follow-up
- Creative solutions to challenging legal issues & governance dilemmas
- Appellate advocacy
- Governance structuring
- Use of technology to enhance law practice and client outcomes
- Concise drafting for effectiveness and readability

AFFILIATIONS

- Florida State Odyssey of the Mind Association, Board Member and International Problem Captain
- Florida State University Order of the Coif
- The Florida Bar, City, County, & Local Government Law and Government Lawyer Sections

FIRST DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL

law clerk for Judge Scott Makar

2012-2013

Tallahassee, FL

Reviewed and drafted recommendations and proposed opinions for appellate cases across all legal practice areas

EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO JUDICIAL EFFICIENCY & CASE DISPOSITION

- Provided office leadership and organization, including supervision of interns, in the absence of a traditional judicial assistant
- Analyzed cases for multiple judges at the court when traditional resources were insufficient to meet judicial needs
- Developed analysis leading to opinions setting precedent in criminal and civil law, particularly related to Fourth Amendment searches

CAPE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

teacher

2005-2009

Cape Coral, FL

Taught 3rd and 4th grade students to state standards in reading, mathematics, writing, science, and social studies

INNOVATIVE TEACHING TECHNIQUES AND CLASSROOM SUPPORT

- Designed curriculum for creative and informative writing used across 3rd and 4th grade levels from evidence-based methods
- Provided classroom support for students with various disabilities

STUDENT ENRICHMENT AND PROFESSIONAL FUNCTIONS

- Earned endorsement to teach gifted learners
- Responsible for extracurricular arts education, including student theater & summer camps
- Organized creativity-based extracurricular activities; coached two Odyssey of the Mind teams at World Finals

02. Legal Experience

Reference List

Professional References

These references attest to Jamy's diverse experience in a professional context, including governance and general counsel services.

- 01. Michael Moran**
Executive Director, Florida PACE Funding Agency; Chair, Sarasota County Commission
 Florida PACE Funding Agency
Program counsel services including litigation, assessment structuring, contract negotiation & drafting, and charter drafting and amendment
Performance Period: 2013-2022
 6650 Professional Pkwy STE 102
 Sarasota, FL 34230
 T: (850) 400-7223
 F: None Provided
info@floridapace.gov
- 02. Fred Reilly**
City Attorney, City of Haines City; District Attorney, Haines City Water Control District
 Reilly International Law Firm, P.A.
Legal and technical services related to creation and implementation of fire protection and stormwater management programs
Performance Period: 2013-2021
 33 North Sixth Street, No. 2
 Haines City, Florida 33844
 T: (310) 927-3954
 F: (863) 421-3626
fredreilly@attorney-solicitor.com
- 03. Amy Myers**
City Attorney, City of Panama City Beach
 Hand Arendall Harrison Sale
Legal and technical services related to structure, imposition, & administration of community redevelopment programs, funding program creation and validation
Performance Period: 2016-2021
 304 Magnolia Ave
 Panama City Beach, FL 32401-3125
 T: (850) 769-3434
 F: (850) 769-6121
amyers@handfirm.com

03. Costs

We provide service at an hourly rate of **\$315**. For legal assistant work, if required, the hourly rate is **\$75**. Other actual expenses will be billed with a receipt attached or with mileage documentation, if appropriate, at the IRS rate. We will not bill expenses associated with traveling to regular Board meetings, if in-person attendance is requested.

If desired, we can provide general services, including attending full board meetings, administrative matters, notice matters, and questions that can be resolved by short email or telephone conversation for a flat fee of **\$1750 per month**, with billing for more complicated matters or additional meetings at our hourly rate.

We are also happy to engage in negotiating the scope and cost of flat-fee representation.



Legal infrastructure for modern governance.

CivForge Law, P.A.

RFP for Governance Related Legal Services
civforgelaw.com