



Archer

Offering a client-driven approach to family law

EXPERIENCING A FAMILY CRISIS – involving divorce, custody, support, adoption or domestic violence issues – can be a highly emotional matter. When these situations arise, it is important to have an experienced attorney who has earned their reputation for delivering personalized, client-driven and aggressive representation by your side. With over a hundred years of combined legal experience between them, the Family Law Department at Archer continues to provide their New Jersey clients the clear-headed representation needed to resolve legal matters so as to allow them to move on with their lives.

As the gold standard solution for family legal situations, Archer is a well-known presence throughout the state. With the ability to meet with clients virtually since the start of the pandemic as well as in multiple offices throughout the State, Archer attorneys are available to assist throughout New Jersey.

“Our State-wide experience allows us to present clients with a realistic picture of what their experience is going to be,” says Stephanie Zane, Department Chair and a 21-year veteran of the firm.

A blueprint for happily ever after

Since March 2020, wedding planning has been fraught with obstacles, including delays caused by Covid outbreaks, wed-

ding venue closures and more. According to Archer partner Drew A. Burach, the extra time between engagement and walking down the aisle has allowed couples/individuals to have open discussions with Archer attorneys about prenuptial agreements.

“People want the wedding day to be a special day with family and friends,” says Burach, who has been with the firm for the entirety of his 17-year career. With a prenuptial agreement in place, he says, particularly in cases where the accumulation of assets is unbalanced between partners, people can head into that important day at ease.

“People who are waiting longer to get married, who have accumulated wealth

or have significant incomes, are looking to make sure that there’s a plan in place,” says Burach. “It’s a hope-for-the-best, plan-for-the worst kind of mentality.”

And if the worst occurs, Archer attorneys are skilled at having the nuanced legal conversations required. Just as no 2 families are the same, no 2 cases are the same. For every case, Archer attorneys put their collective experience together to craft a personalized solution for each client. For many issues there is no easy formula for resolution or cookie-cutter answer, says Zane.

Any attorney dealing with these highly sensitive and personal issues must take the time to understand complex issues like family dynamics and marital lifestyle – Archer attorneys do just that. Every client is provided with likely outcomes and potential issues based upon the Department’s extensive experience. “We pride ourselves on making sure our clients are provided with all relevant information to make informed decisions that are best for them and their family,” says Zane.



Stephanie Zane, Esq.
PARTNER



Drew Burach, Esq.
PARTNER



Jennie Owens, Esq.
PARTNER



Tara Hanna, Esq.
ASSOCIATE

Keeping families together

In addition to resolving disputes involving families that are separating, Archer also helps bring families together. Archer Partner Jennie Owens has experience in family formation, including adoptions (agency, private, and step-parent), gestational-carrier agreements (more commonly known as surrogacy), or confirmatory or second parent adoptions for LGBTQ parents. Many same-sex couples do not realize they may need an extra step to confirm parentage for parental rights to be later recognized, says Owens.

It is important to consult with an experienced attorney to assist through the process. “We want all families to be recognized appropriately under the law, so that they can move forward without any concerns” says Owens.

Keeping Up with the Changing Family Dynamics

Archer attorneys are also skilled at negotiating and modifying parenting time agreements when the existing agreement is no longer functional. In many instances, an agreement that was reached years ago may no longer be “working” for the family. When circumstances change, agreements need to change and be updated to be a functional arrangement and to prevent future disputes, says Burach.

“Our team conducts an in-depth assessment of what is going on in each specific case,” adds Zane. “Knowing the right questions to ask, which only comes with years of experience, can make a sig-

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nificant difference in the outcome.”

Burach reiterated that trying to resolve these issues amicably between the parties, with the assistance of skilled counsel, is always the preferred route prior to litigation. “Keeping the client’s expectations realistic and focused on the best interests of the child is essential to a positive account, Baruch says. “Guiding our client to pragmatic solutions which focus on the best interests of the child is essential in achieving a positive outcome.”

Anatomy of a consultation

When Archer attorneys embark on an hour-long initial consultation with a client, “we try to lay out what we believe to be the path their case is going to take, and the options they have available,” says Zane.

During a consultation, both litigation through the court and alternative dispute

options such as mediation and/or arbitration are addressed. A decision of which route is best for a particular case is made only after all significant issues are identified and options are discussed.

No matter what needs to be resolved, Archer has the skill and breadth of experience to help clients navigate any legal issues that come their way. “Our experience and our ability to work together as a group,” says Zane, “allows us to get the best possible result for our clients.”

Experienced Mediators offering an option to litigation

Archer also has two very experienced mediators who are available to assist on limited/specific issues or to resolve a matter in its entirety. With State-wide reputations for reasonableness and the ability to think “outside the box”, the Hon. Marie E. Lihtoz, P.J.A.D. (ret.) and William J. Thompson, Esquire can facilitate discussions to bring even the most complex matters to an amicable conclusion in a timely fashion.

Archer truly can meet the needs of any family. ■

ARCHER
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
856-795-2121

archer-family-law.com

Voorhees, NJ | Hackensack, NJ | Princeton, NJ | Red Bank, NJ
Harrisburg, PA | Philadelphia, PA | New York, NY | Wilmington, DE | Houston, TX