

Counsel for a Fresh Start

Well-versed in a variety of practice areas, a boutique family law firm keeps clients focused on a fresh start and the future.



Family law cases can be stressful, drawn-out experiences for both parties involved. Or they can be copacetic and efficiently executed. It all depends on the approach taken.

At Fresh Start Family Law, partners Kathy Lucas and Catherine Bailey prefer to spare clients the headache and expense of a lengthy, high-conflict case. With over 30 years of combined experience and insights into niche areas of family law, the boutique firm treats all clients like family while tailoring its counsel to an individual's circumstances.

"Our philosophy is to protect the best interests of our clients while handling each case as delicately and quickly as possible," Lucas says. "We're there to help clients through a tough time but also try to prevent them from spending an excessive amount of money in the process."

Managing Expectations

A critical first step to any family law case—no matter how emotionally charged it may be—is adopting the

right perspective. A cheating spouse is cause for anger, but is it really worth draining them for every penny when they're also expected to pay child support? Likewise, demanding sole custody just to spite an ex might seem gratifying—until the pressures of single-parenting prove overwhelming. There are consequences to every action, which is why Fresh Start makes sure its clients understand the long-term effects stemming from a separation.

"What clients initially want out of the case might not be what's best for them," Lucas says. "It's important to talk through possible outcomes early on and manage expectations moving forward."

Not all cases are clear-cut. In fact, some require an expert touch few firms can provide. Fresh Start is well-versed in family law for military families, including issues related to custody during deployment, retirement benefits, and child support. Even if not in the military, assisting clients in dividing their marital estate can be complicated when they have a

family business, retirement assets, stock options, or large amounts of debt. Determining spousal support can also be a delicate balance of the needs of now two households, debt, and other financial obligations.

Additionally, Lucas and Bailey have experience tackling uniquely complicated custody cases, representing clients struggling with substance abuse or a history of criminal convictions. A priority for the firm is setting expectations about the impact of a client's health or criminal record at the outcome of the case. "We fight for them to maintain a relationship with their kids, but it has to be done in a safe way," Lucas says.

With years of experience comes generations' worth of insight. By keeping in touch with clients long after their cases have closed, Lucas and Bailey have watched outcomes unfold in real time. They've seen parents rebuild relationships with children and spouses heal after nasty divorces. Lucas recalls one father who was apprehensive about sharing a 50/50 custody schedule with his ex, who made no effort to conceal her loathing. "I told him to stay strong and that we'd get through it," Lucas recalls. "There's no reason his son shouldn't be with him equally. In the end, it worked out favorably, and I enjoy seeing his son grow each year when I receive a Christmas card."



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