



Laura Carlsen’s practice emphasizes a wide range of family law matters including divorce, child custody, military family law, relocations, child support and parenting plan modifications, domestic violence, and family law appeals.

Laura’s exceptional skills as a negotiator and litigator developed early through national debate competitions. She was a nationally ranked debater (among the top 100 in the United States, ranking as high as #2) who has given more than a thousand public speeches and competed against the country’s top debaters. Since 2007, Laura has used these finely honed abilities to advocate for her client’s personal goals at the negotiation table and in the courtroom.

“In family law, we deal with real people who need help resolving very personal problems during a difficult time of their lives,” says Laura about her approach. “I find out what is important to my clients and create a plan to achieve success. A good lawyer must be able to find an angle that helps her maximize results for her client. There is a lot of strategy and detail that goes into a well-prepared case.”

“I have been extremely impressed with Laura and her entire staff. She has bent over backwards to do everything I’ve asked. Her knowledge and expertise and especially her thoroughness in preparing my cases and representing me in all aspects is outstanding. She has handled three of my cases and I couldn’t have been happier.” —Former Client, R.A.

Laura represents many clients in military family law cases, adept in the practice of the unique blend of federal and state law that applies only to military families. She also practices appellate family law, a complex process that allows clients to have the Court of Appeals or Supreme Court review a decision from the lower court in order to achieve a more just result.

Laura is committed to maintaining the highest standards of client service and professionalism, and she approaches each case with these commitments in mind. “Every client who walks in the door has a different life story, so I never know what the day will bring,” says Laura. “Emotions often run high in family law cases, and it is the responsibility of the attorney to strike the right balance between compassion, empathy, and calm objectivity so that we can ultimately achieve the client’s goals.”

AREAS OF PRACTICE

- Divorce
- Military Family Law
- Child Custody
- Parenting Plans
- Relocation
- Parenting Plan Modifications
- Child Support Modifications
- Domestic Violence
- Family Law Appeals

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LAURA A. CARLSEN

ASSOCIATE, TACOMA

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Oregon
 - Managing Board, *Oregon Law Review*
 - Teaching Assistant, Legal Research and Writing
 - Moot Court
- B.A., Sociology, B.A., Political Science, University of California at Berkeley

MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

- Washington State Bar Association, Family Law Section
- Pierce County Bar Association, Family Law Section
- King County Bar Association, Family Law Section
- Young Lawyers Association

RECENT PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

- “Military Moms and Dads: How to Protect the Rights of Deployed Parents,” Tacoma-Pierce County Bar News, November 2010
- “Military Family Law Practice Tips,” King County Bar Association CLE, November 2010

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- Nationally Ranked Debater, Bay Area Urban Debate League

IN THE COMMUNITY

- Debate Coach, Mercer Island and Auburn High Schools, 1998-2005
- Volunteer, King County Bar Association Legal Clinic

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ABOUT McKINLEY IRVIN

Founded in 1991, McKinley Irvin is the Pacific Northwest's largest law firm focusing exclusively on the practice of family law. Attorneys at McKinley Irvin, who possess more than 240 years of combined legal experience, are acknowledged leaders in a range of traditional and cutting-edge areas of the practice, including divorce matters involving complex financial issues, collaborative law, contested child custody, international family law, relationship agreements, and LGBT family law.



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