



McKINLEY IRVIN

FAMILY LAW

SARAH HOVLAND

SENIOR ATTORNEY



AREAS OF PRACTICE

- Divorce
- Child Custody
- Child Support
- Domestic Violence
- LGBT Family Law
- Legal Separation
- Unmarried Couples

CONTACT SARAH

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Sarah began her legal career with an eye toward international human rights and development law, earning her Master of Law degree in England before returning to the U.S. in 2008. As the legal job market shifted, she found herself working in family law and quickly discovered that this was where she was meant to be.

"Family law is boots on the ground, helping one family at a time. I realized that making a tangible difference in people's lives, especially survivors of domestic violence, was the most fulfilling work I could do."

For over a decade, Sarah has focused on child custody, parenting plans, child support, and domestic violence protection orders. She is passionate about helping clients navigate difficult transitions with clarity and purpose, ensuring they have the legal support they need to move forward. With a frank and practical approach, she believes in setting realistic expectations from the outset.

Her dedication to the legal community extends beyond her clients. She serves as a Pro Tempore Commissioner in King County, presiding over civil protection order and family law motion calendars. This judicial experience has strengthened her litigation skills by giving her a deeper understanding of how courts evaluate cases and improving her ability to advocate effectively.

"Credibility is everything in family law. Understanding both sides of a case makes me a better attorney and helps me guide my clients toward the best possible outcomes."

One of the most rewarding moments of her career came early on when she represented a survivor of extreme domestic violence in a relocation case. After securing custody and a 10-year protection order for her client, she later learned that her client had started a nonprofit to help other DV survivors.

"Knowing that I played a small part in helping her reclaim her power and, in turn, help others is what this work is all about."

Outside of the office, Sarah stays active with yoga, weightlifting, and hiking with her dog, Kylo, a Rat Terrier-Basenji mix. Despite Kylo's city roots, he happily joins her on the trails where he has an unfortunate habit of eating anything he finds. She also enjoys paddle boarding and traveling, with past adventures taking her to the Galápagos Islands and beyond.

"She demonstrated not only deep legal expertise, but also compassion and understanding. Sarah guided me through every step of the divorce process, ensuring I was informed and confident in my decisions. Her negotiation skills ultimately helped me achieve a fair outcome. "

– STEPHEN, FORMER CLIENT



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EDUCATION

L.L.M., University of Warwick School of Law
J.D., Gonzaga University School of Law
B.A., University of Washington

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Commissioner Pro Tempore, King County

MEMBERSHIPS

Washington State Bar Association
Domestic Relations Attorneys of Washington (DRAW)

"I had a positive experience working with Sarah Hovland and her team for my divorce case. What I appreciated most was her direct honesty—she didn't shy away from giving feedback that was sometimes hard to hear, but it was always in my best interest and necessary for making informed decisions. Her clear communication and dependable follow-through gave me confidence and peace of mind during the most challenging time in my life."

– JAMES, FORMER CLIENT

ABOUT MCKINLEY IRVIN

McKinley Irvin is the Pacific Northwest's premier law firm dedicated exclusively to family law. For over thirty years, our attorneys have been recognized for their leadership in a wide range of traditional and innovative family law matters, including high-conflict divorces, complex property division, collaborative law, contested child custody, international family law, military family issues, and LGBTQ+ family law.



Super Lawyers®

