

4th Edition



A Guide to
Dealing with Substance Use,
Mental Illness, and Eating
Disorders

By Mark G. Astor, Esquire
Founder of Astor Simovitch Law

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(3rd Edition)

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A concierge service for families and individuals in crisis because of
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FOREWORD

First and foremost, this book is dedicated to my father, Lionel Astor, who passed away on January 15, 2017. I did not know how much I had learned from him until he was gone. He also taught me that the older we get, the faster time goes by. I didn't believe it until the time had already passed.

Second, this book is dedicated to all the moms, dads, brothers, sisters, and spouses who have trusted us to save their loved ones when all hope seemed lost. Thank you for believing in us during your darkest hours.

Third, thank you to Palm Beach County State Attorney Dave Aronberg, Chief Assistant State Attorney Alan Johnson, and the Palm Beach County Sober Homes Task Force for looking to our team for answers about facilitating treatment.

INTRODUCTION

As a young certified legal intern at the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office in 1993, I was convinced that all criminals in the justice system were bad people and should be locked up. The legislative mandate in Florida was, and still is, to punish individuals, not rehabilitate them.

By the time I left the State Attorney's office in 1999, I had come to realize that my initial conclusion was very wrong. In fact, the majority of people who find themselves mired in the criminal justice system are suffering from a substance use and/or mental health disorder. Many of those individuals will not get the help they need and will become a fixture in the revolving door to the courthouse.

On January 15, 2017, just eight days after my 50th birthday, my family was bereaved by the loss of my father. He had been sick for the previous two years, suffering recurrent strokes and enduring multiple surgeries. Wherever one goes after death, I truly believe that my father was ready to go to that place.

During his time of sickness, we were optimistic about his recovery despite the fact that he was hospitalized under emergency circumstances so many times that I lost count. As my father was laying in one of his many different hospital beds, I began to realize that we, as a family, were in emotional crisis. While I cannot say exactly

how this affected my mother and siblings, I know that I couldn't sleep, I had trouble focusing at work, and I was depressed. I am certain that my clients did not get 100 percent of my attention. My father's illness was very much a personal problem for me, permeating my entire life.

When a client comes to see us, they are usually going through a tumultuous phase in their life; they cannot sleep at night or focus at work, their relationships are in shambles, and they may well be suffering from depression. The typical lawyer views a client as someone with a "legal

problem" and attempts to provide a "legal solution," as determined by the number of legal issues that can be identified and resolved. Yet the diseases of addiction and mental illness are never just a legal problem, they are a personal problem, too.

One of the things I've learned since dedicating the focus of our practice to helping families and individuals who are in crisis because of substance use, mental illness, and eating disorders, is that they, too, are dealing with a personal problem.

TRIAGING THE CASE

When a family or individual comes to us for help, we start with an initial 15- minute telephone consultation. We will figure out if we can help, and if we can't we'll say so. If our prospective client doesn't want to work with us, we encourage them to tell us. When a loved one cannot make a decision for themselves, taking action to get a loved one the help they need requires a serious commitment of time, energy, and money. This path isn't for everyone, and we recognize and respect that.

Once we've figured out that we can help, and our prospective client has decided to accept our help, the next step is for us to triage the case. Much like a doctor, we want to get to the root cause of the problem. We determine whether it is substance use, mental illness, or both. When we figure out what's really going on, then we can counsel our client as to the best course of action. We will never shoehorn a case into a Marchman Act when the goal can be accomplished with a guardianship, and vice versa. Triageing the case usually takes about an hour.

An illustration of a typical triage is a family based in another state that called several years ago. (Most of our clients are not in Florida, but their loved one is.) They told us that their 30-year-old daughter had been addicted to drugs for many years, had been in multiple treatment centers, had experienced multiple relapses, and was posting photos of herself on social media with an assault rifle. During our triage of the case, the family disclosed that the daughter had significant mental illnesses, including anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, and multiple personality disorder. The root of the problem was revealed to be a sexual assault that had occurred when their daughter was 14 years old, disclosed when she was 16 years old, and thereafter treated with medication and years of psychiatry. The perpetrator was alleged to be a schoolteacher, and he was never held accountable for his actions. His victim suffered for many years, self- medicating with drugs, until her anger began to boil to the surface. This was a classic guardianship case, and not a Marchman Act case as they had been advised by another lawyer. As such, we were able to get the family and their daughter the help they needed.

By the time you decide to work with us, you'll know how we're going to help you. We'll never suggest you take action when it's not absolutely the right thing for you and your loved one.

THE BASICS

We know from experience that, when left unchecked, substance use disorder and mental illness only get worse. As a result, an individual suffering from these diseases can only go to one of three places: 1) treatment; 2) prison; or 3) the morgue. Our goal is to facilitate treatment.

One symptom of a substance use disorder is lying, cheating, and stealing - not because the person is bad, but because this is the nature of the disease. If your loved one is arrested, we can help them. We have 50 years combined experience in defending the accused in the criminal justice system.

If your loved one needs treatment and either will not go into treatment, or will not stay in treatment, we can help. Treatment is not a magic bullet, but your loved one's chances of experiencing the miracle of recovery are significantly increased if they go into treatment.

TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ADDICTION

1. Addiction is a disease. When an addiction is active, the person has virtually no control over their actions. They are just as much a victim of their disease as is someone with diabetes, cancer, heart disease, or any other chronic condition.

2. Addiction is a lonely disease. Because of the deception and denial that goes hand-in-hand with addiction, many substance abusers find themselves distanced from those around them. This isolation can exacerbate their problem because they feel alone and unworthy.

3. Addiction is incurable. Addiction is a chronic, progressive disease, one that can never be cured. A person who is addicted will always have to be on guard with their thoughts and actions, lest they suffer a relapse. There is no such thing as a “recovered” addict or alcoholic. There is only “being in recovery.”

4. Many addicts cannot feel normal without their substance of choice. Addiction is a disease of the brain. The brain of someone who is actively addicted to drugs or alcohol undergoes physical and chemical changes, and these changes are what makes it so hard to overcome an addiction.

5. There is no such thing as a “typical” addict. Many people still picture the typical addict/alcoholic as homeless, dirty, incoherent, and criminal. While there is no doubt that some substance abusers fit that profile, there are many more who outwardly appear normal and productive everyday citizens. In fact, because up to 20 percent of the U.S. population suffers from drug or alcohol dependency, high-functioning addicts may even be the rule, rather than the exception.

6. No one knows exactly what causes addiction. Addiction is a disease with many contributing factors, but no single identifying cause. Some factors that may play a role include: genetics,

trauma, family history, social pressure, and co- occurring mental disorders and behavior. If a person drinks or uses drugs long enough and heavily enough, they will become addicted.

7. Addiction can be fatal, but so can unsupervised recovery. Most people understand that recovery from addiction requires abstaining from drinking and using, and that means unpleasant withdrawal symptoms such as:

- anxiety and irritability
- nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- headaches and confusion
- wild mood swings
- muscle cramps and bodily pain
- insomnia
- tremors

8. A person can be addicted to anything. When talking about addiction, we usually think in terms of drugs and alcohol, but those are by no means the only types of addiction. A person can be addicted to:

- sex
- tobacco products
- caffeine
- gambling
- social media
- video games
- shopping
- hoarding

Any behavior that disrupts a person's life and leaves them powerless to stop may qualify as an addiction, and professional intervention and counseling may be necessary.

9. Recovery from addiction can require drastic lifestyle changes. People in recovery for alcoholism or drug addiction learn that in order to stay sober they must avoid the people, places, and things that were a regular part of their drinking and drugging lifestyles.

This means that, to avoid risking relapse, the recovering alcoholic or addict must stay away from friends and family members who are still actively addicted, find new places to go, and change their behaviors and mindsets.

This can be difficult, but it is necessary.

10. Recovery from addiction is possible. With proper treatment by trained professionals, it is possible for a person to recover from alcoholism or drug abuse. Addiction is a highly personalized disease, and it manifests itself differently from individual to individual.

TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS

1. One out of four adults suffers from mental illness.
2. Mental illness typically strikes young people in their most productive years, ages 16-25.
3. Half of mental disorders begin before the age of 14.
4. One out of ten children and adolescents is living with some form of mental illness.
5. Depression is ranked as the leading cause of disability worldwide.
6. Schizophrenia affects 2.2 million adults over the age of 18 in the U.S.
7. Two out of three people who suffer do so in silence, fearing judgment and rejection.
8. Mental illness affects more than twice as many women as men.
9. Anxiety disorders affect 12 percent of the population and many people go undiagnosed for a decade or more.
10. Mental illness is the number one cause of workplace disability, accounting for 30 percent of disability claims and 70 percent of total disability costs.

THE OPTIONS

The Marchman Act

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 114 people die each day because of drugs, and 6,748 are sent to hospital emergency rooms for treatment. While addiction and substance abuse are major problems in the U.S., a survey conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration found that as many as 90 percent of the people who most need drug addiction treatment do not receive it.

The best-kept secret in the battle against the opioid epidemic in Florida is the Marchman Act. It is a critical piece of life-saving legislation that has been on the books since 1993. The Marchman Act permits the involuntary commitment of individuals suffering from a drug or alcohol substance abuse disorder.

The Marchman Act is a two-step process: 1) assessment and stabilization; and 2) treatment.

Assessment

The Court cannot and will not order treatment without an assessment conducted by a qualified professional. The assessment can be conducted on a voluntary or involuntary basis.

Voluntary

For a voluntary assessment, a Petition for Treatment Services can be filed and a hearing conducted to determine if there is clear and convincing evidence that the individual meets Marchman Act criteria (they have a substance use disorder and are a danger to themselves or others; or they have a substance use disorder and fail to recognize their need for help).

Involuntary

Most often, the individual will not voluntarily agree to undergo an assessment because they don't believe there's anything wrong with them. If so, a court order mandating an assessment must be requested.

An involuntary assessment can be requested on an emergency or a non-emergency basis.

Emergency

If the court grants an Emergency Ex Parte Petition for Assessment and Stabilization, law enforcement will order that your loved one be picked up and taken to a receiving facility to be assessed and stabilized. They are typically held for five to ten days. If it's in Palm Beach County, our investigator Dan Riemer will be on the pickup.

Non-Emergency

In the absence of an emergency, a Petition for Assessment and Stabilization is filed and heard by the court. If the Court finds a reasonable basis to believe that the individual meets Marchman Act criteria, then they are ordered to be assessed and stabilized. They may or not be held pending further order of the Court once they are at the assessment facility.

Treatment

Once an assessment has been prepared, a Petition for Treatment Services can be filed and a hearing conducted. In our experience, when an individual has been assessed and stabilized for up to ten days, they tend to think more clearly and will agree to go to treatment. Sometimes, however, the hearing is contested, and that's where our many years of courtroom experience come into play.

The maximum time in treatment is 90 days, which can be repeated several times. We routinely work with a family for six to nine months, although you can retain us for as few as three months.

I speak to lawyers, medical personnel, and families on a regular basis, and I am shocked that few, if any, have heard of the life-saving Marchman Act. Eighty percent of people in treatment in South Florida are from other states. Some treatment centers spend upwards of \$100,000 a month on advertising to attract clients to our state for addiction treatment, yet few families are told about the Marchman Act and how it can be used to protect patients who are at risk of walking away from treatment.

Families often ask me why I'm such a proponent of sending dangerously addicted persons into treatment. First and foremost, whether forced or voluntary, treatment saves lives. Additionally, it has been my experience that granting family members the power to make important decisions for people who are too ill to think clearly is a cathartic experience for all involved. That's why I love the Marchman Act.

Emergency Temporary Guardianship

A guardianship, and more specifically an emergency temporary guardianship (ETG) appointment, enables a petitioner to make health care decisions on behalf of an individual when "there appears to be imminent danger that the physical or mental health or safety of the person will be seriously impaired or that the person's property is in danger of being wasted, misappropriated, or lost unless immediate action is taken." The court considers whether the alleged incapacitated person (AIP) is a danger to themselves or others (like the Marchman Act). ETG also gives the guardian control over the AIP's finances.

One of the benefits of petitioning the court for an ETG is the ability to circumvent HIPAA (the federal medical privacy law) and relevant state laws that must be considered when an individual is 18 or older. Generally, a parent, physician, or interested person over 18 who qualifies as a guardian can immediately begin to manage the AIP's medical decisions, receive medical information on behalf of the AIP, authorize treatment based on physician recommendations, change facilities, or make any specific medical decisions unique to that particular AIP.

The ETG appointment is good for 90 days, with the ability to renew for an additional 90 days (like the Marchman Act) if a determination of permanent guardianship is not heard prior to that time.

We love ETG in large part because, when an individual does not meet Marchman Act criteria, such as when there is no current drug use but there is ongoing mental illness, an ETG can facilitate getting that individual quickly into treatment.

Permanent Guardianship

Permanent guardianship can be granted with or without an ETG. If it appears that the AIP is not going to become competent to manage their own affairs, either after the granting of an ETG or for a significant period of time, the petitioner can ask the court for a permanent guardianship.

This requires the court to appoint an examining committee of three experts who then advise the court as to the AIP's ability to make rational decisions and the likelihood of the AIP regaining competency. If the court determines that a permanent guardianship should be granted, the same benefits of an ETG apply, but for an indefinite period of time.

THE FUTURE

The Discretionary Trust

Addiction comes in many forms, such as drugs, alcohol, shopping, gambling, and other destructive behaviors that someone may be unable to control. This not only affects the addict, but their family as well. An addict can place both emotional and financial strains on their loved ones.

A common question to consider is, “If my son or daughter is suffering from addiction or mental illness, should I exclude them from receiving an inheritance upon my death?” The concern is that, if an addict or someone suffering from mental illness receives a large sum of money, then they may make decisions that are not in their best interests, or in the best interests of other beneficiaries.

Parameters may be set up so you do not have to disinherit a beneficiary, but instead can control what they receive. You may wish to consider establishing a discretionary trust, which allows you to control any distributions that are made while you are alive or once you are deceased.

A discretionary trust allows its creator to suspend the distribution of trust assets if, for instance, the beneficiary relapses, does not submit to random drug testing, or fails to continue on a course of treatment. This arrangement may allow a trustee to engage professionals to treat the beneficiary, and to terminate the beneficiary’s interest in the trust if treatment is refused.

Opioid Litigation

The opioid epidemic in the U.S. has claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people and is caused, in large part, by a group of greedy drug manufacturers that made billions from opioid sales at the expense of patients and our country. Lately, various states, cities, and municipalities have filed lawsuits against pharmaceutical companies, hoping to receive compensation for the cost of treating their citizens.

At Astor Simovitch Law we're all about helping families and individuals get justice for their loss. "Overdose or addiction from the use of opioids is not your fault and is the number one threat we face as a society." If you or loved one were prescribed an opioid pain reliever and suffered an injury as a result, you may be entitled to significant compensation from the drug manufacturers that profited from your suffering. Common injuries related to opioids include: Potentially fatal brain and heart damage due to overdose, heroin addiction, babies born addicted to opioids, the need for drug rehabilitation, loss of employment, and arrest with subsequent incarceration.

You can fight back. Individuals and families in numerous states, including Florida, plan to file suit against the pharmaceutical companies to hold them accountable for the damage they have done and continue to do. If you or your loved one has suffered from addiction or overdose after being prescribed an opioid, contact the opioid litigation team at Astor Simovitch Law today to find out if you're eligible to receive compensation.

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE (DUI)

An arrest and DUI charge are no laughing matter. The effects of the experience can change your life forever and derail your dreams. This is why, if you are charged with DUI, it is essential that you work with experienced attorneys who can help you navigate the complexities of the court system. We represent people charged with DUI in Florida.

What's at Stake

We understand that DUI is big business in and for the state – arresting officers are often paid extra, and there are fees for the probation and mandatory classes associated with DUI convictions. The result is a system that treats citizens unfairly and puts your livelihood and well-being at risk. Even before you are convicted, you are at risk of losing your driver's license for as long as a year. We can help you fight the penalties, fines, and repercussions of a DUI arrest.

We will assist you with issues that include DUI school, ignition interlock devices, higher insurance rates, loss of your job, community service requirements, probation, loss of an immigrant or non-immigrant visa, and loss of a professional license. All of these scenarios are very real in light of a DUI arrest. You need an attorney on your side, fighting to protect your rights.

The Sanctions

DUI is an enhancement crime, which means that the more DUIs you get, the more severe the punishment. Below are the possible sanctions an individual faces upon conviction of DUI.

First DUI

1. Adjudication of Guilt of Driving Under the Influence;
2. Maximum of 12 months' imprisonment;

3. Maximum of 12 months of probation at a cost of approximately 50 dollars per month; the total period of imprisonment and probation cannot exceed one year;
4. Minimum of 6 months driver's license suspension and maximum of 12 months drivers' license suspension;
5. Minimum of 50 hours of community service work; there is no statutory maximum, which means that the court can give you additional hours;
6. Minimum fine of \$500 and maximum fine of \$1,000, plus court costs;
7. Ten-day motor vehicle impoundment, at your expense unless waived by the court;
8. Attendance at a Victim Impact Panel seminar/course;
9. Attendance at a substance abuse course, licensed by the Department of Motor Vehicles, and/or DUI school, both at your expense; in addition, you may be referred to an authorized service provider for substance abuse evaluation and treatment.

As an enhancement crime, each time that you are convicted of a DUI the penalty becomes more severe. The penalties and enhancements for a subsequent DUI in Florida without an enhancement are as follows:

Second offense (including any out-of-state convictions), if the date of offense is outside five years of the prior conviction:

1. Imprisonment of not more than 12 months (nine months if BAL is less than 0.15);
2. Driver license revocation of no less than six months and no more than one year;
3. Fine of \$2,000-\$4,000 (\$1,000-\$2,000 if BAL is less than 0.15);
4. Ten-day vehicle impoundment or immobilization, at your expense;
5. Mandatory placement for a period of at least one year, at your expense, of an ignition interlock device;
6. Mandatory reporting probation with the same conditions as outlined above; and
7. Adjudication of guilt for DUI; and
8. No right to a hardship license for at least one year.

Second offense (including any out-of-state convictions), if the date of the offense is within five years of the prior conviction :

1. Imprisonment of not more than 12 months (not more than nine months if BAL is less than 0.15), with a mandatory period of imprisonment for 10 days; the first 48 hours of incarceration must be consecutive;
2. Driver license revocation of five years;
3. Fine of \$2,000-\$4,000 (\$1,000-\$2,000 if BAL is less than 0.15);
4. Thirty-day vehicle impoundment or immobilization, at your expense;
5. Mandatory placement for a period of at least one year, at your expense, of an ignition interlock device (up to two years if BAL is greater than 0.15);
6. Mandatory reporting probation with the same conditions as outlined above; and
7. Adjudication of guilt for DUI.

Third offense (including any out-of-state convictions), if the date of offense is within 10 years of a prior conviction, is a felony of the third degree and is punishable as follows:

1. Imprisonment for a period not to exceed five years if charged as a
2. felony. For the third or subsequent conviction for an offense that occurs within a period of 10 years after the date of a prior conviction, imprisonment of at least 30 days;
3. A maximum fine of \$5,000 (maximum is \$4,000 if BAL is less than 0.15);
4. Mandatory placement, for at least two years, of an ignition interlock device on any vehicle owned or leased solely or jointly by you, at your expense;
5. Mandatory reporting probation with the same conditions as outlined above;
6. Adjudication of guilt for DUI; and
7. Minimum driver license revocation of ten years, though you may be eligible for a hardship license after two years.

Third offense (including any out-of-state convictions), if the date of the offense is outside 10 years of a prior conviction:

1. A term of imprisonment not to exceed one year;
2. Minimum fine of \$2,000 and maximum fine of \$5,000 (minimum fine is \$4,000 if BAL is greater than 0.15);
3. Driver license revocation of no less than six months and no more than one year;
4. Ninety-day vehicle impoundment or immobilization, at your expense;
5. Mandatory placement, for at least two years, of an ignition interlock device on any vehicle owned or leased solely or jointly by you, at your expense;
6. Adjudication of guilt for DUI; and
7. Mandatory reporting probation with the same conditions as outlined above.

DRUG CRIMES

Drug crimes can include anything from possession to selling or trafficking. In some cases, your intentions might be misinterpreted by the rules of the legal system, and merely having an illegal drug with you could result in serious charges. Matters are made worse by your location, especially considering Florida's proximity to international ports. The bottom line? Accusations against you can be lofty. Our state has the harshest marijuana possession laws in the country, and any drug – from cocaine to methamphetamine to heroin – can cause you a lifetime of trouble.

What's at Stake

- Loss of your driving privileges
- Loss of your job
- Potential loss of custody and loss of future opportunity to adopt or foster a child
- Loss of voting rights
- Revoked student loan privileges

Get Help

Florida is also home to mandatory minimum sentencing, which means that, no matter the circumstances of your situation, you are looking at least a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine. In Florida, even minor drug convictions are serious business. You need an attorney on your side to protect your rights and help you avoid a lifetime of misery from one mistake.

This is just a glimpse into how your life can change following a drug conviction. If you are facing drug charges and are frightened about what might happen, we can help. We are experienced attorneys who have been helping Boca Raton residents fight drug charges for years. We understand the Florida court system and we know that things are not always as simple as they seem – even when you are not guilty of a crime.

CONCLUSION

At Astor Simovitch Law, our goal and our passion is to help those who suffer from substance use, mental illness, and eating disorders clean up the wreckage of their past so they can build a better future.

We hope this book gives you an outline of how we can help you and your loved one. Because we cannot anticipate all of your questions and concerns, we invite you to schedule a consultation with us; it's free of charge and we may be able to give you options and the ability to regain control of an out-of-control situation.

Please call us at (561) 419-6095 or visit us on the web at: <https://mentalhealthaddictionlawfirm.com/>

We're here for you seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day.

ABOUT US

Mark G. Astor (Founder and Managing Partner)



Born and raised in the United Kingdom until the age of 21, Mark Astor has been an attorney since 1994. Before entering private practice, Mark served the citizens of Palm Beach County as an assistant state attorney from 1994-1999. During his career as a prosecutor, he served as chief of two different county court divisions and, thereafter, was promoted to a felony trial division. He has handled thousands of cases, ranging from first-degree misdemeanors to capital murder.

Mark was admitted to The Florida Bar in 1994 and, in 1995, was admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida. In 2005, he was admitted to the District of Columbia Bar. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Michigan in 1990, his Juris Doctorate from Nova Southeastern University College of Law in 1994, and his Master of Laws Degree (L.L.M.) from American University, Washington College of Law in 2005.

In 2016, Mark founded Drug And Alcohol Attorneys (<https://drugandalcoholattorneys.com>), a law firm dedicated to empowering and representing families and individuals in crisis because of drug, alcohol, and mental health disorders. Many times, individuals and families come to Mark because they have a friend or loved one who either refuses to go into treatment or will not stay in treatment. In these situations, Mark's team helps them navigate through the complexities of the Marchman Act process, Florida's involuntary commitment statute for drug, alcohol and co-occurring mental health disorders. When a family needs to regain control over medical decisions and finances, Mark's team assists them in filing for an Emergency Temporary Guardianship (ETG) so that an individual who is no longer competent to make medical decisions for themselves can have that burden taken off their shoulders. Other times, when an individual has been arrested for a criminal offense that stems from drug addiction or a mental health disorder, Mark's team creates and enacts a plan of action that not only gets the person into recovery but helps them stay out of prison.

When he's not working in his law practice, Mark empowers members of the community by teaching Krav Maga (the Israeli system of hand-to-hand combat taught to the military, special forces, and anti-terror units). He also enjoys an early morning workout and believes that a healthy body leads to a healthy mind.

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Audra Simovitch



Audra Simovitch is an of counsel member of the Drug And Alcohol Attorneys team. She has practiced in both Massachusetts and Florida since 1994 in the areas of estate planning, probate, guardianship, and real estate law. She graduated from Nova Southeastern Shepard Broad Law School in 1992 and continued her studies to earn a Master of Laws (L.L.M.) degree in taxation from Boston University Law School.

Her practice began in Boston, Massachusetts, in the firm of Rosencrantz and Daily where her primary areas of practice were estate planning and probate. Many of her clients were high net worth individuals. In 1997, she began work at McCullough Steivater and Polvere, a prestigious real estate firm in Charlestown, Massachusetts. In 2011 she earned a Master of Laws (L.L.M.) in Banking and Finance from Boston University Law School and subsequently moved with her two children back to Boca Raton, Florida. After working at Labovick Law Group, she opened her own law firm in 2014 and has been a solo practitioner since.

Audra is admitted to practice law in Massachusetts and Florida as well as the District Court of Massachusetts, US Tax Court, and the Southern District Court of Florida. She has delivered numerous lectures regarding asset protection.

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Lewis Hanna



Lewis K. Hanna is an of counsel member of the Drug And Alcohol Attorneys team. He graduated from Nova Southeastern University School of Law in 1992. Prior to undergraduate school, Lewis served a tour of duty with the U.S. Army and attended the U.S. Army Intelligence School in Arizona.

Immediately after law school, Lewis worked as an assistant state attorney, investigating and prosecuting criminal offenses in Palm Beach County from 1992 until 1997. After leaving the state attorney's office, he opened his firm in Boca Raton, where he has primarily focused on both state and federal litigation in civil and criminal areas. Mr. Hanna has also successfully prosecuted state appellate cases that have been covered in national law reports.

In addition to his legal practice, Lewis has taught Political Science and Business Law I and II as an adjunct professor for Palm Beach State College since 1994. During his time at PBSC, he also served as the head coach for the college's mock trial team. The PBSC team has competed in several American Mock Trial Association competitions against powerhouse schools such as

Harvard, Clemson, University of Florida, and Florida State University.

Additionally, Lewis has served two terms (six years) as an investigating member of The Florida Bar Ethics Grievance Committee for the 15th Circuit. During his last tenure, he served as vice chairman of his committee. The members of the ethics grievance committees of The Florida Bar are made up of attorneys and laypersons throughout each circuit charged with administering the bar's statewide disciplinary system to enforce the Supreme Court Rules of Professional Conduct for the more than 100,000 lawyers admitted to practice law in Florida. On behalf of The Florida Bar, the committee accepts complaints against attorneys, investigates the complaints, and renders decisions on whether to prosecute any attorney's potentially unethical conduct.

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Dan Riemer



When it comes to professional investigation, Dan Riemer has become synonymous with experience, efficiency, and professionalism. Not only does he have years of experience in both the public and private sectors, but he specializes in several different fields of investigation. He handles each case with the utmost integrity, speed, and efficiency. Dan is a valued member of our team and his proven track record of successful investigations makes him the only choice when it comes to quality private investigation.

As a former law enforcement officer, Dan's experience helps us ensure that every Marchman Act case goes smoothly and with minimal stress to your family and your loved one. Dan accompanies law enforcement on most pick-ups and helps us locate your loved one if they leave treatment. Harvard, Clemson, University of Florida, and Florida State University.