DarrowEverett LLP



Rhonda E. Stringer - Partner

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Bio

Rhonda E. Stringer concentrates her practice in the areas of affordable and public housing, with a focus on operational, management, policy, and regulatory compliance matters involving public housing programs, Housing Choice Voucher programs, project-based rental assistance and project-based voucher programs, RAD programs, and supportive housing programs serving specialized populations, such as the elderly and persons with disabilities.

With more than 25 years of experience, Ms. Stringer regularly counsels and provides legal services to housing authorities, other affordable housing providers, and property management companies throughout the state of Florida on day-to-day operational and management issues, including lease enforcement and evictions, HUD administrative grievance procedures, reasonable accommodations and modifications, Fair Housing Act and ADA/Section 504 compliance, and the development and implementation of HUD-compliant policies and procedures. She also represents clients in state and federal civil litigation arising from tenant disputes, lease enforcement, regulatory enforcement actions, and program compliance issues.

She works closely with housing authority leadership, boards, and staff as part of the firm's role serving as general counsel to public housing authorities, providing practical, program-focused legal guidance tailored to the operational realities of federally assisted housing programs.

In addition, Ms. Stringer regularly provides training to clients on lease enforcement, policy and lease drafting, HUD program requirements, state and federal regulatory compliance, Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law, and Public Records Law. She has also been a speaker on housing-related issues at Housing and Development Law Institute national conferences, Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Official conferences, and at other affordable housing trade organization conferences and client programs.

Practice Areas

- Public, Affordable & Workforce Housing
- Regulatory & Compliance
- Civil Litigation
- Commercial Litigation

Prior Experience

Ms. Stringer previously worked as a felony assistant state attorney with the Office of the State Attorney for the Sixth Judicial Circuit of Florida for over six years where she gains significantly jury and bench trial experience.

Representative Matters

- Developed and leads a statewide landlord–tenant and affordable housing litigation practice representing public housing authorities, affordable housing providers, and property management companies across Florida. Serves as long?term trusted counsel to many of these clients for decades and is routinely relied upon as the primary strategist for urgent, high?risk, and complex tenant and compliance matters, consistently achieving favorable outcomes.
- Served as co?counsel in a jury trial on behalf of a large public housing authority in an eviction action based on criminal activity of a household member, resulting in a favorable jury verdict. The public housing authority successfully defended the verdict on appeal in Florida's Second District Court of Appeal and subsequently prevailed in related federal litigation challenging the constitutionality of HUD regulations authorizing such evictions. The resulting decisions established controlling precedent favorable to public housing authorities in Florida and nationwide and predated the United States Supreme Court's

seminal decision in *HUD v. Rucker*, 535 U.S. 125 (2002).

- Successfully represented a public housing authority in a multi?year appeal before Florida's First District Court of Appeal after a trial court refused to enforce a HUD?mandated lease provision central to participation in the federal public housing program. Obtained a reversal directing entry of final judgment in favor of the housing authority and an award of appellate attorney's fees and costs, eliminating adverse precedent that would have impacted housing authorities statewide.
- Achieved favorable appellate rulings on behalf of public housing authority clients enforcing Florida statutory requirements that tenants deposit accrued rent into the court registry during the pendency of residential eviction actions pursuant to §83.56 and §83.60(2), Florida Statutes.
- Successfully represented public housing authorities in federal litigation, including actions seeking temporary restraining orders and injunctive relief in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, obtaining favorable outcomes for clients.
- Routinely defends public housing authorities, affordable housing providers, and property management companies in housing discrimination complaints investigated by HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, the Florida Commission on Human Relations, and local fair housing agencies. Assist clients in all aspects of the investigation process, conciliation process, and agency appeal process, frequently achieving "no probable cause" determinations, dismissals, and other favorable resolutions for clients.

Bar Admissions

- Florida
- U.S. District Court for the North District of Florida
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida

Education

- Stetson University College of Law, J.D.
- University of California, San Diego, B.A.

Accolades

- Member of Stetson Law Review
- Authored *The Due Process Defense in "Reverse Sting" Cases: When Do Police Overstep Bound of Permissible Conduct?*, 22 Stetson L. Rev. 1305 (1993)

- Recipient of the Elizabeth M. Leeman Award for Best Student Publication, the Outstanding Law Review Member Award, and the Cecil and Augusta Bailey Award for Character, Academic Achievement and Leadership