



Erika F. Apelis

Counsel

Cleveland

P: 216.348.5811

Practice Focus

- Estate planning and probate
- Trust administration
- Probate and estate administration

Erika serves as Counsel in the Estate Planning and Probate Practice Group and Business Department at McDonald Hopkins. A passionate estate planning attorney who advocates for her individual and family clients, Erika’s practice focuses primarily on traditional wealth and estate planning administration and trust and probate administration and litigation, including drafting wills and trusts, advising on fiduciary obligations, and planning for probate avoidance. Her clients including high net worth individuals and business owners, who she assists not only with estate planning but also tax strategies to minimize estate taxes. Erika’s experience also includes assisting individuals and families with Elder law and special needs planning issues, including Medicaid application and compliance, long term care planning, and drafting trusts to comply with public benefits requirements.

Prior to joining McDonald Hopkins, Erika counseled clients at a midsize Cleveland firm and also managed her own solo practice that provided Elder law, estate planning, probate administration and litigation, and small business advisory services. While her practice focuses on estate planning, Erika’s legal experience also extends to providing guidance related to intellectual property, investigations into corporate compliance, and governmental, regulatory and antitrust investigations of financial services institutions, technology companies and construction companies.

Erika earned her Juris Doctorate from Western Michigan University Cooley Law School. Prior to that, she earned her Bachelor of Arts in psychology (with a minor in sociology and art history) from the University of Massachusetts. Erika is passionate about women in leadership and serves as the Vice Chair of FDCC Ladder Down Cleveland, which is dedicated to empowering women attorneys to serve in leadership roles.

Admissions - Court

- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio

Admissions - State

- Ohio
- Massachusetts

Education

- Western Michigan University Thomas M Cooley Law School
- University of Massachusetts – Amherst

Honors and Awards

- Selected to Ohio Rising Stars (2017, 2018, 2019, 2021,2022)
- Selected to Ohio Super Lawyers (2023)
- Recognized in the Best Lawyers in America (2022, 2023)

Professional Membership

- National Association of Women Business Owners
- Estate Planning Council of Cleveland
- Professional Association Specializing in Seniors
- Ohio State Bar Association
- Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association

Public Service and Volunteerism

- American Latvian Youth Association - Board of Directors (2009-2011)
- National Association of Women Business Owners, Cleveland Chapter Board Member Programming Chair (2021-2022) and past committee member for corporate bylaws review
- FDCC Ladder Down Cleveland, Vice Chair (2021-2022); Chair (2022-2023)

News

- McDonald Hopkins welcomes Erika Apelis to Business Department and Estate Planning and Probate team

Speaking Engagements

- Professional Advisors Seminar, Elder Law 101, November 2021
- The Lantern of Chagrin Valley, Basic Estate Planning, August 06, 2020
- OSBA Elder Law Institute, March 2020
- Long Term Care Planning When Mom and Dad Won't Listen, Hamlet of Chagrin Falls, 2018
- Estate Planning and Long Term Care Planning Seminars, Assisted Living Facilities/Skilled Nursing Facilities, ongoing
- Nuts and Bolts of Estate Planning, NBI, 2017