PENDER & COWARD
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELLORS AT LAW



SHAREHOLDER

E. DIANE THOMPSON

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EDUCATION

Master of Law in Taxation, New York University, 1982

Juris Doctor, William & Mary Law School, 1981

The College of William & Mary, 1977

ADMISSIONS

Supreme Court of Virginia, 1981

OVERVIEW

Diane Thompson is a firm shareholder and leader of the firm's wills, trusts, estate planning and administration practice group. She is nationally recognized for her legal practice focusing on estate and wealth transfer planning, trusts and estates administration, and taxation.

A highly respected estate and tax planning lawyer, Diane is a much sought after advisor to ultra high and high net worth individuals and families on the broad range of very complex estate planning concerns. She focuses on personalized planning with an emphasis on reducing the tax impact of federal income, estate, gift and generation-skipping transfer taxes to maximize the transfer of wealth. She guides personal representatives through the estate administration process and prepares estate tax returns, inheritance tax returns and fiduciary income tax returns of the United States and other jurisdictions.

One focus of Diane's practice is post-mortem tax and disclaimer planning. She maintains the most complete compilation of estate and tax reference resources in the country on disclaimer law, which is used nationally by many other professionals.

Diane is a frequent lecturer, particularly on the subject "Disclaimers: When, Why & How to Say 'No' to an Inheritance." She has lectured at many top industry conferences including the University of Miami Heckerling Institute on Estate Planning, Notre Dame Tax and Estate Planning Conference, Duke Estate Planning Conference, Southern California Tax & Estate Planning Forum, among others.

Diane authored "Chap. 13, When it is Better to Disclaim Than to Receive: Proceedings of the 39th Annual Heckerling Institute on Estate Planning" (Matthew Bender & Co. 2005). Additionally, she has instructed courses for numerous state CPA societies.

From 1988 through 1996, Diane taught courses in advanced estate planning and federal taxation of estates, gifts and trusts at William & Mary Law School.

REPRESENTATIVE CASES & TRANSACTIONS

Structured a plan of numerous disclaimers, to include the use of the credit for tax on prior transfers, for husband and wife estates with combined assets of $7,500,000 resulting in an estate tax savings of $1,700,000.

Prepared an estate plan using grantor retained annuity trusts, and other irrevocable trusts, resulting in millions of dollars saved in transfer taxes.

Prepared an estate plan which included provisions for the transfer of Roth IRAs, via trusts, to grandchildren which will result in income tax free growth for a long period of time for the grandchildren.

MEMBERSHIPS

- Norfolk-Portsmouth Bar Association
- Suffolk Bar Association
- American College of Trusts and Estates Counsel, Fellow and Chair of the Tax Policy Study Committee

HONORS & AWARDS

- Best Lawyers in America, Trusts and Estates, 1991-2027

  Best Lawyers in America, Trusts and Estates, Lawyer of the Year in Norfolk, 2015
- Virginia's Legal Elite, Taxes/Estates/Trusts, 2008, 2013-2025
- Virginia Super Lawyers, 2006-2026
- Virginia Super Lawyers, Top 25 Women, 2006-2010
- Virginia Super Lawyers, Top 50 Women, 2016-2018, 2020, 2022 and 2023
- Virginia Super Lawyers, Top 100, 2017
- Coastal Virginia's Top Lawyers, Wills, Trusts, & Estates 2016-2026