PENDER & COWARD
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELLORS AT LAW



SHAREHOLDER AND COO

# BRETTA Z. LEWIS

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## EDUCATION

William & Mary Law School, 2000

George Mason University, M.A., 1996

University of Virginia, 1994

## ADMISSIONS

Supreme Court of Virginia, 2000

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, 2001

## OVERVIEW

Bretta Lewis is a shareholder and COO of the firm and focuses her practice on domestic litigation, including mediation and litigation of contested and uncontested divorce matters, negotiation and preparation of premarital agreements, and resolution of equitable distribution cases involving complex marital estates including corporate interests and business valuation.

Bretta has extensive experience trying custody, visitation, and child dependency cases in Juvenile and Circuit Courts in cities throughout the Commonwealth. She has also represented the interests of children in custody and foster care cases at the Court of Appeals. Bretta handles a wide range of matters including traditional and non-traditional family structures such as grandparent custody and visitation matters, same sex family issues, and step-parent or other third party cases.

In addition to representing clients dealing with complex family issues, Bretta has been certified by the Indigent Defense Commission to represent clients in both misdemeanors and felonies and has been qualified as a Guardian *Ad Litem* for children since 2005. She has decades of experience representing adolescents and adults in civil, criminal and administrative proceedings related to domestic violence, family abuse, traffic infractions, and behavioral issues at school or in the community.

Bretta has decades of experience representing adults and children involved with Child Protective Services, and she has a unique basis of knowledge and experience in matters involving children and adults with special needs such as physical or cognitive disabilities, mental health issues, substance abuse issues and other challenges that

may impact the outcome of civil and/or criminal litigation, mediation, or other proceedings. She has represented a multitude of families who face the difficult choice of seeking legal guardianship for their children who are unable to live independently as adults due to cognitive or physical differences.

A former adjunct professor at William and Mary Law School, Bretta is also a frequent lecturer and faculty member for multiple bar and professional organizations. She has authored and taught seminars on ethics and professionalism, as well as advanced family law topics and child advocacy.

## MEMBERSHIPS

- Viginia Beach Bar Association, Chair of Virginia Beach Jevenile Court Liaison Committee
- Virginia State Bar Council, Second District Representative
- Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Board, 2013-2019
- Faculty Member of Harry L. Carrico Professionalism Course, 2018
- Virginia State Bar Second District Disciplinary Committee, Secretary 2002-2008

## HONORS & AWARDS

- Best Lawyers in America, Family Law, 2024-2027
- Virginia's Legal Elite, Family Law/Domestic Relations, 2020-2025
- Coastal Virginia's Top Lawyers, 2020-2026
- Virginia Lawyers Weekly Influential Women of Law, 2022

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Team Hoyt Virginia Beach, Advisory Board Member and Legal Counsel
- Virginia Beach Surf and Rescue Museum, Executive Board