

Erika R. Bales

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Objective

It is my desire to dedicate myself to the study of law and use my knowledge and skills in service of my community by partnering with those who recognize that the right way is not always easy.

Experience

Sole Practitioner - February 2012 – Currently

The Law Office of Erika R. Bales, PLLC, Hillsborough & Pittsboro, NC

My firm handles a wide range of cases from Small Claims actions through Federal Court adversarial bankruptcy proceedings. I have had the privilege of assisting clients with critical issues like high conflict divorces, domestic violence, sexual assault, drug and alcohol addiction, and mental illness as those issues affect their lives and the lives of people close to them. My firm has also litigated complex construction, real estate disputes, and emergency filings. In assisting businesses and consumers, I draft, revise and enforce contracts and collect money owed. My familiarity with both statutes and local ordinances gives my clients a strategic advantage with starting or expanding into North Carolina. I am responsible for all aspects of client service, from initial consultations through post-judgment collections.

I manage the day-to-day operations of my practice, including management of staff, advertising, and accounts payable and receivable.

Independent Contract Attorney, as needed – September 2010 - 2018

Edgar Law Firm, Hillsborough, NC

As an independent contract attorney, I research complex legal issues for insurance defense and civil litigation. I also draft memos, correspondence, pleadings, and discovery responses including sorting and classifying confidential and privileged client documents.

Attorney, Of Counsel - March 2013 – December 2013

Monks Law Firm, PLLC, Durham, NC

I managed both civil and criminal cases. My responsibilities included client intake, drafting pleadings, discovery, motions practice, and negotiations. I also maintained client billing and accounts receivable.

Subrogation Paralegal - March 2007 – September 2008

Edgar & Paul, PLLC, Chapel Hill, NC

For this insurance defense and subrogation practice it was my responsibility to prepare correspondence, pleadings and discovery. I also performed skip traces to locate debtors, suspended driver's licenses and conducted asset checks to facilitate recovery.

Litigation Paralegal – September 2005 – February 2007

Larcade, Heiskell & Askew, PLLC, Raleigh, NC

My job duties included maintaining the most complex cases for the general civil litigation and insurance defense firm from complaint filing through appeals. I conducted client and witness interview, hired private investigators, coordinated schedules and tracked deadlines. I was further tasked with office management involving equipment troubleshooting, accounts payable and receivable and training.

Legal Secretary - June 2005 – September 2005

Smither & Associates (Temporary Employee)

I was responsible for preparing legal documents, coordinating closing schedules, and requesting mortgage payoffs for a real estate closing firm. I also performed residential title updates, researched irregularities, reviewed documents for compliance with local rules, recorded documents, and paid real estate taxes. I assisted 4 paralegals in maintaining files and meeting deadlines and made bank deposits

Legal Secretary - September 2002 – February 2003

Newby, Lewis, Kaminski & Jones, LLP

Practice areas included family law, environmental law, civil litigation and personal injury. Conducted legal research and skip tracing. Prepared correspondence and legal documents.

Lead Legal Assistant, Foreclosure Dept. - June 2001 – March 2002
Weltman, Weinberg & Reis

Promoted from Legal Secretary to Legal Assistant approximately 1 month after hire. Maintained largest caseload, at times more than 300 files, and most demanding clients. Contributions to 2 new filing methods, being closely reviewed for use within all 5 branches of the firm, led to increased department productivity and consistent attainment of monthly goals. Promoted to Lead Legal Assistant after only 7 months. Trained new employees, prepared correspondence and legal documents, reviewed real property titles, and attended sheriff sale auctions to bid on behalf of clients

Title Abstractor - April 2002 – September 2002
Land Grant Title Group

Followed the chain of title back 30 to 50 years to determine marketable title of residential and commercial real estate throughout Indiana and Michigan

Private Detective – 2000 – August 2001
Weidner & Associates

Conducted research, audio and video surveillance, and intelligence gathering
Investigated employee theft and federal identification compliance for alcohol and tobacco sales on behalf of corporate client

Office Manager/ Administrative Assistant – October 1999 – February 2001
Kenneth C. Harman, Attorney at Law

Maintained accounts receivable and financial reports for civil real estate and probate practice. Prepared correspondence, pleadings, and conducted residential title examinations. Attended sheriff sale auctions to bid on behalf of client

Education

Juris Doctorate

North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC - May 2010

Bachelor of Arts in Behavioral Sciences, Psychology concentration

Purdue University, Westville, IN - May 2005

**Licenses/
Memberships**

North Carolina State Bar
Eastern District of North Carolina
Middle District of North Carolina
Western District of North Carolina

North Carolina Bar Association
American Bar Association
15B Judicial District
Orange County Bar Association

**Volunteerism/
Fun**

American Bar Association, Woman Advocate Committee, Small Business Subcommittee Chair 2019-currently

Board of Directors for Pathways to Change, Secretary – 2016-currently

North Carolina Board of Law Examiners Bar Candidate Committee for Judicial District 15B – 2015-currently

North Carolina Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service Committee - 2016-currently
• Chair, 2019-2020

Durham Orange Woman Attorneys, Vice President and Program Chair - 2012-2013

Chapel Hill/Carrboro YMCA Co-Coach for co-ed t-ball – 2016-2019

Guest on True Bill radio program on multiple occasions since 2016

Publications

Erika Bales, *My Uncertain Journey*, American Bar Association, Section of Litigation, Woman Advocate (Aug. 14, 2020) <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/woman-advocate/articles/2020/summer2020-my-uncertain-journey/>.

Erika R. Bales, *Account Collection Tips for Small Businesses*, American Bar Association, Section of Litigation, Woman Advocate (Nov. 19, 2020) <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/woman-advocate/articles/2020/fall2020-account-collection-tips-for-small-businesses/>.