

MARIANA E. ORMONDE, ESQ.

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CORE COMPETENCIES

State and Federal Adult-Use and Medical Cannabis Law • State and Federal Hemp Law • Civil Litigation • Civil Motion Practice • Criminal Law and Procedure • Appellate Practice and Procedure • Regulatory Law • Administrative Agency Law • Rhode Island Native American Law • Federal Practice and Procedure • State Government Law and Defense • Open Government Compliance • Mediation • Negotiation • Oral Advocacy • Persuasive Brief Writing • Research and Analysis

BAR ADMISSIONS

United States Supreme Court • United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit • United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island • State of Rhode Island • Commonwealth of Massachusetts

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Rhode Island Cannabis Control Commission

Chief of Legal Services

September 2023 – Present

Warwick, Rhode Island

Serving as the first legal counsel to the recently created state agency tasked with regulating the medical and adult-use cannabis and hemp industries in Rhode Island. Routinely conduct extensive research and analyze other states' cannabis and hemp related laws, regulations and policy to inform Commission decisions and ensure state and federal compliance. Provide counsel to the three-person Commission, the nineteen-member Cannabis Advisory Board, and the Board's five subcommittees, including at public meetings. Serve as Rules Coordinator for the Commission, responsible for the drafting, updating and promulgating of Commission regulations, including the state's inaugural adult-use cannabis regulations governing both the adult-use and medical cannabis markets as well as the Rhode Island Industrial Hemp Program regulation. Work to design and implement defensible agency processes, including the state's landmark Social Equity Program. Draft, submit and testify in favor of statutory amendments and proposals. Develop and deliver topic-based presentations to the Commission, the Advisory Board and the public. Monitor and defend litigation brought against the Commission, the Advisory Board and individual staff members. Advise the presiding officer and commissioners in enforcement matters and contested cases, and litigate administrative agency appeals of Commission decisions. Ensure Commission compliance with the Rhode Island Access to Public Records Act, the Administrative Procedures Act, and the Open Meetings Act. Conduct interviews for the hiring of staff and interns and supervise the work and projects of staff and interns. Meet with and provide guidance to the public and state and municipal government officials.

Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General

Special Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Appellate Unit

Providence, Rhode Island

May 2019 – September 2023

Briefed and argued criminal cases on direct appeal to the Rhode Island Supreme Court as well as post-conviction relief applications, habeas petitions and petitions for extraordinary writs in both state and federal courts.

Special Assistant Attorney General, Civil Division

March 2015 – May 2019

Defended state officers, employees and agencies in general litigation cases brought in state and federal court as part of the Government Litigation Unit. Served as legal counsel and prosecutor to the Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board. Acted as Attorney General designee to the State Properties Committee. Specialized in local Native American law and litigation.

Rhode Island Supreme Court September 2013 – August 2014
Judicial Clerkship with Associate Justice Maureen McKenna Goldberg Providence, Rhode Island
Performed legal research, drafted memoranda and advised Senior Associate Justice Goldberg on issues presented in cases on appeal to the Rhode Island Supreme Court. Drafted, cite checked, edited and peer-edited judicial opinions prior to publication.

Rhode Island Supreme Court Law Clerk Department August 2012 – August 2013
Judicial Clerkship Providence & Warwick, Rhode Island
Conducted extensive legal research and writing regarding criminal and civil matters on a variety of court calendars and advised judicial members of the Superior, Family and District Courts. Drafted numerous published Superior Court decisions.

Rhode Island Supreme Court January – May 2012
Judicial Externship with Associate Justice Maureen McKenna Goldberg Providence, Rhode Island
Performed legal research and writing under the supervision of Senior Associate Justice Goldberg. Drafted two published Rhode Island Supreme Court opinions.

Roger Williams University School of Law Mediation Clinic August – December 2011
Student Mediator Newport, Providence, Wakefield & Warwick, Rhode Island
Directed mediation sessions with litigants in Family Court and District Court to resolve issues arising in divorce, child custody, landlord-tenant and contract disputes. Mediated, drafted and filed contractual agreements, marital settlement agreements and child visitation schedules. Completed extensive mediation training and received both general mediator and divorce mediator certifications.

Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General June – August 2011
Rule 9 Student Attorney, Juvenile Prosecution Unit Providence, Rhode Island
Appeared on behalf of the State of Rhode Island in Family Court juvenile proceedings.

Rhode Island Family Court June – August 2010
Judicial Internship with Chief Judge Haiganush Bedrosian Newport & Providence, Rhode Island
Created a court-specific handbook for new judges. Performed extensive legal research and writing.

EDUCATION

Roger Williams University School of Law, Bristol, Rhode Island *Juris Doctor*, May 2012
Rhode Island Editor, Executive Board Member, *Roger Williams University Law Review*
President, *Family Law Society*

University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island December 2000
Bachelor of Arts, Sociology; minors in *General Business* and *Justice, Law and Society*

PUBLICATIONS

Comment *Debunking the Myth of the “Anchor Baby”: Why Proposed Legislation Limiting Birthright Citizenship is Not a Means of Controlling Unauthorized Immigration*, published in *RWU Law Review National Edition*, September 2012

Rhode Island Survey *In re Paul Harrison*, published in *RWU Law Review Rhode Island Edition*, May 2011

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Member, Supreme Court Bench / Bar Committee, 2022 – 2025 • RWU School of Law Alumni Association Board of Directors, 2013 – 2016 • Chair, 16th Annual RWU School of Law Alumni Association Scholarship Golf Tournament • Member, Rhode Island Mediators Association, 2009 – 2014