

# Melissa R. Gillis

## SHAREHOLDER

*"I believe that an important key to being a successful attorney is adaptability. I adjust my strategy to suit each situation as it presents itself. I adapt to judges' styles as well as those of opposing counsel. Sometimes I have to be aggressive and take a hardline stance, but sometimes it makes more sense to be flexible and negotiate. I also enjoy taking a client through a sometimes very emotional cycle to a satisfactory result. It makes me feel good at the end of the day when I've successfully guided somebody through a complex area of the law and accomplished their goals. My clients know that I have listened to their feelings, anxieties, fears and wishes, and have advocated for them accordingly."*

## Practice Areas

- Domestic Relations and Family
- Real Estate and Zoning
- Mediation/Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Estate Planning

## Locations

- Springfield

## Education

### Quinnipiac University School of Law

Bridgeport, Connecticut

J.D. - 2000

Honors: Distinguished Academic Achievement Award  
in Bankruptcy, 2000

Honors: Distinguished Academic Achievement Award  
in Representing Clients, 2000

Honors: Excellence in Clinical Workaround Award,  
2000

Honors: Tax Litigation Award, 2000

### Elms College

Chicopee, Massachusetts

B.A. - 1996

## Bar Admission

- Massachusetts, 2002
- U.S. District Court District of  
Massachusetts
- U.S. Court of Appeals 1st Circuit

## Classes and Seminars

- Lecturer, Rebuilding Support Group, Southwick, MA, February, 2014
  - Lecturer, Agawam Town Council, 2008
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## Pro-Bono Activities

- Volunteer, Walk for Autism
- Member, Smart Start Preschool Parent Activity Board
- Human Rights Committee, The Association for Community Living, Member, 2009 to 2014
- Women's Business Owners Alliance of Pioneer Valley, Member, 2009 to Present
- Women's Partnership - Affiliated Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield, Inc., Member, 2009 to Present
- Daisy Girl Scout Troop 557, Girl Scouts of America, Founder and Leader, 2008 to Present

## Professional Associations

- Hampden County Bar Association
- Massachusetts Bar Association
- Real Estate Bar Association
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts Notary Public
- Senior Partners for Justice Pro Bono Alliance, Member
- Civility Standards sub-committee, Hampden County Bar, Member
- Magistrate Protocol sub-committee, Hampden County Bar, Member
- Court Conciliation Program, Hampden County Bar, Member
- Volunteer, Dial-A-Lawyer, 2008

## Honors

- Certified Mediator
- Recipient, Distinguished Academic Achievement Awards in Bankruptcy & Representing Clients
- Recipient, Excellence in Clinical Workaround Award
- Recipient, Tax Litigation Award

## Published Works

- Contributor, Family Law Bits
- "Health Insurance as a Post-Divorce Issue," Family Law Bits
- "Paying Child Support While Receiving SSDI," Family Law Bits
- "Separation Agreements: The Significance of Legalese..." Family Law Bits
- Quoted: "I Don't, Anymore...Divorces Increasing Among Midlife" Prime Magazine, February 2014
- It's that Time of Year Again: Careful Review, Renegotiation of Your Child's IEP is Critical, Healthcare News, March 1, 2014
- Is This the Time to Fight? When Divorce Is Complicated by Serious Medical Concerns, August 1, 2013

## Published Works, con't

- Custody of a Special-needs Child: Sometimes, It's Better to Focus on Quality Parent Time, Not Quantity, April 1, 2013
  - Oh Dear, College is Here! - How can I get my Ex to Help Pay?, August 27, 2012
  - Insurance and Autistic Children: Update to ARICA Is Changing the Picture for Many Families, April 1, 2012
  - A Time for Change: Measure Reforming Alimony Is Certainly History in the Making, March 12, 2012
  - Transitional Planning in Special Ed: Start Early When Determining and Preparing for Life After School, December 1, 2011
  - For Good Measure Autism Insurance Legislation: What It Means for Your Child, August 1, 2011
  - Special Education What Every Parent Should Know About Their Child's IEP, March 1, 2011
  - Developmental Delay or Disability? Making Early Identification of Your Child's Special Needs, January 31, 2011
  - Special-education Assessment and the IEP - A Chance for You to Advocate for Your Child, July 10, 2010
  - Ten reasons to hire a lawyer for domestic-relations proceedings, April 27, 2009
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