

## Selecting an Attorney Specializing in Construction Law

Maybe you have never needed the services of an attorney before; but now you do. Obviously, you want a lawyer who is able to handle your particular legal situation, with expertise in the area of law relating to your legal needs.

To assist you in finding such a lawyer, the Supreme Court of Florida directed The Florida Bar to offer a "Board Certification" program for Florida Bar members. The program is designed to help the public make an informed decision when seeking and selecting a lawyer.

While all lawyers are allowed to advertise, only certified attorneys are allowed to identify themselves as "Florida Bar Board Certified" or as a "specialist." Certification is the highest level of recognition by The Florida Bar of the competency and experience of attorneys in the areas of law approved for certification by the Supreme Court of Florida.

A lawyer who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar and who meets the standards set by the Supreme Court of Florida, may become a "Board Certified Construction Lawyer."

Lawyers certified in construction law deal with matters relating to the design and construction of improvements on private and public projects including, but not limited to, construction dispute resolution, contract negotiation, preparation, award and administration, lobbying in governmental hearings, oversight and document review, construction scheduling analysis and delay claims, lending and insurance, construction licensing, and the analysis and litigation of problems arising out of the Florida Construction Lien Law, § 255.05, Florida Statutes, and the federal Miller Act, 40 U.S.C. § 3131-3134.

Every board certified construction lawyer has practiced law on a full-time basis for at least five years and been substantially involved - 40 percent or more - in the area of construction law during the three years preceding application.

Each certified lawyer must also have passed peer review, completed 45 hours of continuing legal education within the three years preceding application and passed a written examination demonstrating knowledge, skills and proficiency in the field of construction law to justify the representation of special competence.

Board certification is valid for five years, during which time the attorney must continue to practice law and attend Florida Bar-approved continuing legal education courses. To be recertified, requirements similar to those for initial certification must be met. Not all qualified lawyers are certified, but those who are board certified have taken the extra step to have their competence and experience recognized.

Construction Law certification was approved by the Supreme Court of Florida in 2004.

The Florida Bar Board of Legal Specialization and Education operates under the authority of the Supreme Court of Florida. The certification program and any supporting materials or activities are not funded by the general revenues of The Florida Bar.

For more information, please contact:

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