

Melissa C. O'Neill

Associate

Contact

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Location

505 South Flagler Drive
Suite 1100
West Palm Beach
Florida 33401

Education

J.D., University of Florida Levin College of Law, *cum laude*

B.A., Quinnipiac University, *cum laude*

Admissions

The Florida Bar



Melissa O'Neill, formerly Melissa Steen, is a member of Jones Foster's **Trust & Estate Litigation** and **Private Wealth, Wills, Trusts & Estates** practice groups. She represents clients in a range of matters involving trust and estate disputes as well as contested and uncontested guardianship proceedings.

Melissa has successfully handled guardianship cases on behalf of both the alleged incapacitated person and concerned family members seeking guardianship. Her advocacy in court has led to favorable outcomes, including protecting vulnerable individuals from exploitation and securing court affirmation of the alleged incapacitated person's documented choice of guardian, agent under a durable power of attorney, or healthcare surrogate.

In uncontested guardianships, Melissa has petitioned for the prompt appointment of guardians for elderly adults and young adults with disabilities, ensuring they receive the support and protection they need. Following her clients' appointment as guardian, she continues to assist her clients by guiding them through the administrative and procedural requirements under Florida law for a smooth transition.

Melissa's trust and estate litigation practice includes successfully representing clients involving claims of undue influence, lack of capacity, and breach of fiduciary duty. She approaches complex family and financial disputes with legal insight and empathy, which has resulted in favorable judgments and settlements for her clients.

Melissa is involved in several legal organizations, including The Florida Bar's Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section and the Palm Beach County Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section, and she previously served on the Florida Association for Women Lawyers Palm Beach County chapter's FAWL in Love With GAL Committee. She has been selected by her peers for recognition in several industry publications, including *The Best Lawyers in America* "Ones to Watch", *Florida Super Lawyers* "Rising Star" and *Palm Beach Illustrated's* "Top Lawyers".

Melissa earned her Juris Doctor degree and graduated *cum laude* from the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where she served as a notes advisor for the *Florida Law Review*, a student research assistant in the area of criminal law, and a teaching assistant in the areas of legal writing and appellate advocacy.

Additionally, she gained valuable experience as an intern for the Honorable James Rooney of the Supreme Court in the 9th Judicial District of New York.

Honors & Distinctions

The Best Lawyers in America

Ones to Watch, Trusts and Estates Litigation, 2024-Present

Florida Super Lawyers

Rising Star, Estate & Trust Litigation, 2025-Present

Palm Beach Illustrated

Top Lawyers, Trusts and Estates, 2024-Present

Top Lawyers, Elder Law, 2024

Affiliations

The Florida Bar

Real Property, Probate & Trust Law (RPPTL) Section, 2022-Present

Palm Beach County Bar Association

Judicial Relations Committee, 2025-Present

Membership Committee, 2024-Present

Young Lawyers Section, 2022-Present

Florida Association for Women Lawyers (FAWL)

Palm Beach County Chapter, 2022-Present

FAWL in Love With GAL Committee, 2023-2025

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