

# EMBRY MERRITT SHAFFAR WOMACK, PLLC

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## **Firm:**

**Embry Merritt Shaffar WOMACK, PLLC** (“Firm”) is an AV Rated, multi-office, full-service law firm that represents clients across the Commonwealth. The Firm maintains a wide ranging practice representing clients in the areas of administrative law, complex commercial litigation, insurance defense litigation, criminal law, corporate formation, transactional law, real estate, workers’ compensation, estate planning, business succession planning, family law and advanced estate tax planning.

## **Members:**

**Darren L. Embry (Darren@emswlaw.com)** is a member of the Firm. Mr. Embry is an AV Rated Attorney as designated by Martindale Hubbell and was selected for inclusion to the list of Kentucky *Super Lawyers* in 2014 as a Rising Star as well as the list of Kentucky *Super Lawyers* in 2015 and 2018. Mr. Embry is admitted to practice law before the United States Supreme Court, the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky (U. S. District Court), and the Supreme Court of Kentucky. He is also a member of the American Bar Association, Kentucky Bar Association, Kentucky Justice Association, Kentucky Association of Administrative Adjudicators and former member of the Kentucky Defense Counsel.

Mr. Embry has acted as real estate counsel and title agent in over forty (40) commercial and governmental transactions ranging from \$1,000,000 to \$130,000,000. He is also State Counsel for the Kentucky Association of Professional Educators (KAPE) and is approved Counsel for Gulf Insurance Company, Unitrin Property & Casualty Insurance Company, Southern States Cooperative, Inc., Encompass Insurance Company, Kentucky Retail Federation, Kentucky Board of Education, Kentucky Self-Insured Auto program (KSAP) and the Kentucky Department of Transportation. He has vast and wide ranging court room experience having represented clients in over one hundred administrative, bench and jury trials. Mr. Embry is certified as a Mediator by the Administrative Office of the Courts. In addition to being a mediator, Mr. Embry served as a Hearing Officer for the Kentucky Board of Claims (2008-2010) and currently serves as a Hearing Officer for the Kentucky Personnel Board, the Kentucky Retirement Systems, and the University of Louisville.

Mr. Embry is a cum laude graduate of the University of Kentucky (1998) where he received multiple scholarships. Mr. Embry graduated from University of Kentucky College of Law (2001) where he served as the Articles Editor for the University of Kentucky Journal of Natural Resources and Environmental Law and received the Robert G. Gillum Memorial Scholarship and the Class of 1970 Scholarship. Also while attending the College of Law, he assisted Professor Thomas J. Stipanowich, who is internationally recognized as a leading authority in Arbitration, Contracts and Construction Law.

**Joyce A. Merritt (Joyce@emswlaw.com)** is a member of the Firm. Based on her peer-recognition and achievements, Ms. Merritt was selected for inclusion to the list of Kentucky *Super Lawyers* for years 2014-2018. Ms. Merritt is admitted to practice law before the United States Supreme Court, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, Supreme Court of Kentucky and the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky (U.S. District Court). She is also a member of the Kentucky Bar Association, and the Kentucky Association of Administrative Adjudicators.

Ms. Merritt is a Hearing Officer for the Kentucky Retirement Systems, the University of Louisville, and various Kentucky School Boards. In addition to these duties she focuses her practice on administrative law, Medicaid administrative hearings, health insurance defense, contracting, consulting and compliance for the health insurance industry, provider litigation, Medicaid regulatory review

and analysis, serious personal injury/wrongful death, and federal criminal defense. Ms. Merritt is such a renowned litigator that she is one of only a few attorneys on the Eastern District of Kentucky's Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel.

Ms. Merritt has extensive experience in administrative hearings as both Hearing Officer and counsel for parties. She has extensive appellate experience at all levels of both Kentucky and federal courts.

Ms. Merritt is a cum laude graduate of Marshall University (1991). She attended Marshall on a debate scholarship. Her competition on the Marshall Debate Team ended with her finishing her college career as one of the nation's top four debaters. Ms. Merritt graduated from University of Kentucky College of Law (1994) where she served as the Notes Editor for the University of Kentucky Journal of Natural Resources and Environmental Law.

Ms. Merritt was appointed by Governor Beshear to the Governor's 2008 Transition Team assigned to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. She has extensive experience in the area of Medicaid state fair hearings before the Cabinet.

**Suzanne Lee Shaffar (Suzanne@emswlaw.com)** is a member of the Firm. Mrs. Shaffar is an AV Rated Attorney as designated by Martindale Hubbell and was selected for inclusion to the list of Kentucky *Super Lawyers* Rising Stars in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. Mrs. Shaffar is admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of the United States, the United States 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals, the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky (U.S. District Court), the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (U.S. District Court), the District of New Jersey (U.S. District Court), Kentucky state courts, Pennsylvania state courts, and New Jersey state courts. She is a member of the American Bar Association, ABA Section on Real Property, Trust & Estate Law, Kentucky Bar Association, National Association of Administrative Adjudicators, and the Kentucky Association of Administrative Adjudicators. Mrs. Shaffar was recently appointed to the Board of the Kentucky Institute on Aging. The Institute advises the governor of Kentucky on issues and policy affecting the elderly.

Mrs. Shaffar concentrates her practice in estate planning, business succession planning, advanced estate tax planning, probate, and trust administration. She is also a Hearing Officer for the Kentucky Retirement Systems as well as approved Counsel for the Kentucky Association of Professional Educators (KAPE), Unitrin Property & Casualty Insurance Company, Southern States Cooperative, Inc., Jenmarr of West Kentucky, Inc., Jenmarr of Kentucky, Inc., One Beacon Insurance Group and many other closely held businesses throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Mrs. Shaffar began her legal career in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania as an associate with Lavin, O'Neil, Ricci, Cedrone, & DiSipio where she practiced products liability defense. At night she returned to Temple's Master of Law in tax program where she earned a Certification in Estate Planning.

Mrs. Shaffar graduated magna cum laude from Duquesne University (2001) with a bachelor's degree in Political Science. She attended Duquesne as a Strub Merit Scholarship recipient. Mrs. Shaffar graduated from Temple University's Beasley School of Law (2005) where she received the Law Faculty Scholarship. While at Temple she was a member of the Women's Law Caucus and Temple's nationally acclaimed Trial Team. As a member of the trial team she participated in over thirty mock trials throughout the country, from New York City to Los Angeles. She also studied International Civil Litigation and International Criminal Litigation in Rome Italy during the summer of 2003. Upon graduation from Temple she was named the "Most Promising Litigator" of her law school class.

**James G. Womack (James@emswlaw.com)** is a member of the Firm. With over 20 years of trial experience throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky, he is well respected among his peers as a seasoned trial lawyer. Mr. Womack was most recently recognized in Best Lawyers 24<sup>th</sup> Edition., 2018 for Litigation-Insurance. He is admitted to practice in the Commonwealth of Kentucky; United States District Court, Eastern and Western District of Kentucky; and, United States Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mr. Womack has litigated cases in such areas as products liability, automobile negligence, premises liability, administrative law, debtor/creditor rights, real estate, insurance bad faith, coverage issues, and workers' compensation. For the last eight years, Mr. Womack's practice has focused almost exclusively on insurance defense issues and the litigation of countless cases throughout all of Kentucky, in both state and federal court. His experience also includes serving at the city attorney for Providence, Kentucky and as a Hearing Officer for the Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Mr. Womack attended the Salmon P. Chase College of Law and earned his law degree in 1990. Upon completing his degree, he returned to private law practice in Henderson, Kentucky where he managed a small firm handling cases in the areas of insurance defense, workers compensation, personal injury, criminal law, municipal law, collections and real estate. Since 2002 Mr. Womack has practiced in Lexington, Kentucky handling litigation and trials most predominantly in insurance defense, accident and injury law, trucking litigation, coverage issues, products liability, premises liability, automobile negligence, and insurance fraud. Consequently, Mr. Womack has handled cases across the entire state of Kentucky.

**Samantha Tucker Nance (Samanthan@emswlaw.com)** is a member of the Firm. Ms. Nance has been with the Firm since 2010 and was selected for inclusion on to the list of Kentucky *Super Lawyers* Rising Stars in 2017 and 2018. She is admitted to practice in Kentucky as well as the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky (U.S. District Court). Ms. Nance practices in administrative, trial and transactional contexts throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Her areas of practice include administrative and regulatory law; federal and state Medicaid law; business formation, transactions and disputes; health insurance defense; and civil litigation. She represents clients in wide-ranging business transactions including contract interpretation and drafting, business disputes including complex business litigation, and real estate transactions and litigation as well as various personal injury, estate planning and employment law contexts. Ms. Nance has extensive experience as a participant in KRS Chapter 13B administrative hearings and additionally devotes a significant portion of her practice to appellate legal work.

Ms. Nance utilizes her practice experience to further educate her peers through legal education presentations. Recent presentations include the 2016 Kentucky Association of Administrative Adjudicators Annual Conference, *Standing Issues in Administrative Matters*; the 2015 Kentucky Paralegal Association Annual Conference, *The Administrative Law Process*; and the 2013 Kentucky Law Update, *Effective Use of Technology in the Courtroom*.

Ms. Nance graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Transylvania University in 2005. While attending Transylvania University, she was the recipient of the prestigious William T. Young academic scholarship as well as the Thomas Jefferson scholarship for excellence in Political Science studies. She earned her law degree from the University of Kentucky College of Law, where she was a recipient of the Cull Academic Fellowship and member of the Moot Court Board. Ms. Nance participated in the 2011 National First Amendment Moot Court Competition held at Vanderbilt University, as well as the 2012 National Moot Court Competition in Richmond, Virginia.

#### **Associates:**

**Seth B. Pinson (Seth@emswlaw.com)** is an associate of the Firm. Mr. Pinson has been with the Firm since 2016. Mr. Pinson is licensed to practice law in both Kentucky and Tennessee. In Tennessee, where he began practicing in 2012, he worked in the areas of criminal defense, family law, civil litigation, estate planning, probate, insurance defense and personal injury. He litigated major felony cases, helped families through divorces and adoptions, and represented both landlords and tenants in real estate disputes. At EMSW, Mr. Pinson focuses his practice in the areas of family law, civil litigation, and corporate formation, business transactions and trust litigation.

Mr. Pinson graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing from Abilene Christian University in 2008. He earned his law degree from Texas Tech University, where he also graduated cum laude. During law school, he was a member of Texas Tech's national trial team, participating in the Texas Young Lawyer's Trial Competition, and ending as a semi-finalist at the San Diego Defense Lawyer's Trial Competition. He was one of only five members of his class to be named an Associate Member of the Board of Barristers, he was later chosen to be the Board's Vice Chair of Mock Trial. Mr. Pinson was also singled out for the Murray Hensley Trial Excellence Award for his advocacy skills and his dedication to Tech's advocacy program. Before being licensed, he gained valuable experience in the criminal field by serving as a clerk for the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas and the Lubbock County District Attorney's Office.

**Kevin Robinson (Kevin@emswlaw.com)** is of counsel with the Firm. Mr. Robinson joined Embry Merritt Shaffar Womack in 2017 after spending one year with Frost Brown Todd, LLC. Prior to coming to Embry Merritt Shaffar Womack, LLC Mr. Robinson was a Law Clerk in Kentucky's 21st Judicial Circuit where he performed legal research and drafted orders in all types of cases including civil, domestic and criminal. He was previously employed as a Paralegal Consultant and Right of Way Agent with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. While employed by the Cabinet, Mr. Robinson worked primarily on matters involving the acquisition of property through Kentucky's Right of Way Process.

Mr. Robinson graduated cum laude with a bachelor of arts in government and history from Morehead State University in 1994. He earned his law degree from the University of Louisville's Brandeis School of Law in 2016 where he graduated Magna cum laude. While in law school he participated in the Robert and Sue Ellen Ackerson Law Clinic as a student attorney representing victims of domestic violence in Jefferson Circuit Court. He also earned the CALI Excellence for the Future Awards in Federal Income Taxation of Individuals, Business Organizations, Equine Regulatory Law, Insurance and Clinic I.

#### **Represented Clients**

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Kentucky Finance Cabinet, Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky Self Insured Auto Program, Kentucky Communications Network Authority (KCNA), Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG), Louisville Metro Government, Alliance Corporation, Chartis, Compass Group, Gallagher-Bassett Claims Services, Argo Select Insurance, Grocers Insurance, M & D Contractors, ERMC, Coventry Health and Life Insurance Co., WellCare Health Plans, Inc., Wilson Muir Bank, Jennmar of Kentucky, Inc., Jennmar of West Kentucky, Inc., Conshor Mining, LLC, H & D Mining, LLC., Straight Creek Mining, LLC., C & N Mining, LLC., Gulf Insurance Group, Unitrin Property & Casualty Insurance Company, Southern States Cooperative, Inc., Encompass Insurance Company, Springfield Contracting, Kentucky Association of Professional

Educators (KAPE), Bluegrass Telephone Company, Aon Risk Solutions, Wabuck Development Company, Clayton Watkins Construction Co., Inc., Homeland, Inc., AST Environmental, Inc., One Beacon Insurance Group and Twin Lakes Regional Medical Center.

Additional Represented Clients available upon request.