ArentFox Schiff LLP
Attorneys

Jessica J. Birnbaum

PARTNER

Jessica helps clients articulate their wealth transfer objectives and implement estate plans that meet their financial, familial, and business goals in a tax-efficient manner.

Practices

Private Clients, Trusts & Estates

Education

University of Pennsylvania Law School, JD, magna cum laude, Journal of Constitutional Law, Senior Editor, 2011

Northwestern University, BA, History and Political Science, 2005

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She advises clients on all aspects of estate planning, including the preparation of wills, trusts and premarital agreements; the analysis and execution of estate, gift and generation skipping tax planning strategies; and the administration of estates and trusts.

Jessica has extensive experience advising family offices and multi-generational families. The ongoing relationships that she builds with these families is essential in developing strategies that both accomplish shared family goals and account for individual needs and circumstances. Jessica also regularly assists clients with trust administration, including effectuating modifications such as trust decantings and nonjudicial settlement agreements when needed.

Jessica also represents corporate fiduciaries in trust administration matters. These matters include trust interpretation questions, fiduciary duty issues, and beneficiary disputes. In contested matters, she partners with the firm’s trust litigation team to settle disputes, and when necessary, to seek court resolution. As a result of Jessica’s work with corporate fiduciaries, she has the ability to anticipate issues that may arise in trust administration and address these issues before a trust is created through careful planning and drafting.

Jessica formerly advised companies on corporate governance and acquisition matters, which gives her insight into the issues facing clients whose assets include business interests.

Boards, Memberships & Certifications

- American Bar Association, Section on Real Property, Trust and Estate Law
- Chicago Bar Association

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

Presentations

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“The Illinois Trust Code: Highlights for Fiduciaries,” Illinois Bankers Association, Webinar (Sep. 11, 2024)

- **“**Drafting Estate Planning Documents” Chicago Estate Planning Council, Webinar (Feb. 20, 2024)
- “Planning with Permanent Uncertainty,” IICLE Estate Planning Short Course, Conference (May 23, 2022)
- “Retirement Planning under the SECURE Act,” The Chicago Financial Planning Group, Seminar (Mar. 23, 2022)
- “Nuts & Bolts of Decanting a Trust,” 63rd Annual Estate Planning Short Course, Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education (IICLE) (May 5 and 19, 2020)
- “SECURE Act, CARES Act & Retirement Planning,” CBA Trust Law Committee, Webinar (Nov. 9, 2020)
- “Income Tax Planning Given the Increased Exemption,” The Chicago Bar Association Trust Law Committee Meeting (Jan. 14, 2019)
- “How to Utilize Planning Opportunities & Navigate the Challenges of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act,” First Midwest Bank 11th Annual Trust and Estate Seminar (May 11, 2018)
- “Basics of Trust Administration,” Lorman Education Services Webinar (Jan. 30, 2018)

Awards

- The Best Lawyers in America, *Best Lawyers* (2023-2024)
- *Chambers High Net Wort*h - Private Wealth Law, Illinois (2023-2025)
- Illinois Rising Star, *Illinois Super Lawyers*, Thomson Reuters (2021)

Bar Admissions

Illinois