



McKINLEY IRVIN

FAMILY LAW

DAVID STARKS

PARTNER



BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA® 2024
BEST LAWYERS "LAWYER OF THE YEAR"
IN FAMILY LAW 2024
WASHINGTON SUPER LAWYERS® 2023

AREAS OF PRACTICE

- Difficult Custody and Divorce
- Complex Divorce (cases involving business interests, complex financial issues, or asset values of \$1 million or more)
- Hague Convention cases
- International Divorce and Child Custody
- International and Local Relocation
- Parenting Plan Modifications

CONTACT DAVID

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Possessing a wide smile, engaging demeanor, quick wit, and a laser-sharp legal mind, David Starks is, as one colleague recently put it, Larger Than Life.

That personality has served him well over the years as he continues to carve out an impressive legal career rarely matched by attorneys twice his age: Diplomate, American College of Family Trial Lawyers; Fellow, International Academy of Family Lawyers; Top 100 Attorneys in Washington State; The Best Lawyers in America; Washington Super Lawyers, and most recently, Best Lawyers 2024 "Lawyer of the Year" for family law in the Seattle Metro Area.

Public rankings and recognitions aside, David is a strategic thinker, a gifted advocate, and a warm "people person" who insists that "law, even as an imperfect human creation, is capable of great things." He proves that every day, representing clients in a wide range of divorce cases involving the protection, valuation, and distribution of significant assets or business interests, as well as other cutting-edge family law matters, including international divorce and child custody.

"Practicing family law is emotionally satisfying for me. I much prefer the personal connection that comes with protecting the rights of my clients and their families to the impersonal process of representing corporations. And I've done both."

Whether at the negotiating table or in the courtroom, David says he will "go the distance" to resolve each case in his clients' interests. And he will do so with compassion and respect.

Admired around the office for his innate ability to connect with clients and for his willingness to share his expertise with younger lawyers, David Starks is the kind of professional who can handle with aplomb the toughest cases that come in the door.

"You wake up a little earlier than the other guy. You work a little later," he explains. "And you make sure you've done everything you can to ensure the best possible outcomes. That's what exceptional lawyering is all about. And that's the standard we have set for ourselves at McKinley Irvin."

"Mr. Starks has that rare combination of a deep, practical knowledge of the law as it is practiced, as well as a personality that makes you feel comfortable and valued."

– FORMER CLIENT, SEATTLE, WA



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EDUCATION

J.D., *cum laude*, Seattle University School of Law
B.A., English, *cum laude*, University of Southern Indiana

DISTINCTIONS

Diplomate, American College of Family Trial Lawyers (ACFTL)
Fellow, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML)
Fellow, International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL)
Named "Lawyer of the Year" by Best Lawyers in the field of Family Law, 2022, 2024
Ranked Band 1 in Chambers 2023 High Net Worth Guide for Family/Matrimonial in Washington State
Listed in the The Lawdragon 500 Leading U.S. Family Lawyers Guide, 2024
Listed in The Best Lawyers in America® in the field of Family Law, 2012-2024
Top 100 Attorneys in Washington State, Washington Super Lawyers, 2012, 2014-23
Distinguished as a Washington Super Lawyer by Super Lawyers, 2010-2023
Avvo.com 10.0 "Superb" rating

APPOINTMENTS

- National Liaison, Washington State Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML)
- Faculty, National Family Law Trial Institute, 2021-present
- Past President, Washington State Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML), 2017-2018
- Past Newsletter Ex Officio, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML)
- Executive Committee, International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL)
- Section Advisor of the American Bar Association to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws' Drafting Committee on the Implementation of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children
- Past Co-Chair, American Bar Association, International Law Section Family Law Committee, 2010-2011

MEMBERSHIPS

American Bar Association, Washington State Bar Association, State Bar of Texas, Oregon State Bar, King County Bar Association
Member, King County Bar Association Judicial Screening Committee
Member, Washington State Bar Association Professionalism Committee

RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Panelist, "Family Assessments: From Errors to Excellence," Washington AFCC 9th Annual Conference, April 2024
- Co-authored with Marguerite C. Smith, Chapter 71: International Family Law, Washington Family Law Deskbook, WSBA Continuing Legal Education, 2022

"David is a rockstar attorney. If you need a smart, wise, responsive, attorney for a tough case, David is definitely it. I felt connected, informed throughout a hard and long divorce and educated on process and next steps when I needed to be. I'm convinced that my divorce would have taken a different path without his wisdom and clear but fair approach."

– FORMER CLIENT, SEATTLE, WA

ABOUT MCKINLEY IRVIN

Founded in 1991, McKinley Irvin is the Pacific Northwest's premier law firm focusing exclusively on the practice of family law. Attorneys at McKinley Irvin are acknowledged leaders in a range of traditional and cutting-edge areas of the practice, including divorce matters involving complex financial issues, collaborative law, contested child custody, international family law, military family law, and LGBT family law.



Super Lawyers®



Ranked Tier 1
in the Seattle
Metro in
the field of
Family Law