

# ASHLEY L. WHITE

SENIOR ASSOCIATE • DALLAS/FORT WORTH

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972-441-4532

Ashley has been passionate about public law since entering law school. She obtained a Masters of Public Administration in conjunction with her law degree, serving on the editorial board for two public policy journals while doing so. Upon graduation, she received the Frank M. Ennix Award recognizing her commitment to public service. Since law school, her practice has focused on advising educational, governmental, and business entities. She is proud to know that her legal work for clients allows them to concentrate on their essential work for the public good.

A skilled and highly trained legal advocate, Ashley has over a decade of experience advising school districts, colleges, universities, community colleges, and other public and private clients in general counsel matters. She advises clients on matters such as commercial transactions, procurement, partnerships, compliance—including civil rights and diversity equity and inclusion—data privacy, corporate governance, policy development, and real estate.

Ashley can help clients with the full range of transactional legal issues they face. She drafts and negotiates all types of contracts, including interlocal, software, licensing, MOUs, non-disclosure, professional services, and finance agreements. She advises clients on procurement matters, real estate transactions, and governance issues. She has negotiated numerous Senate Bill 1882 and HB 3 partnerships between open-enrollment charter schools, higher education institutions, non-profits, and governmental entities. She serves as the primary attorney in the firm for all issues associated with cell tower leases, including lease negotiation with wireless carriers, re-negotiation, licensing, landlord-tenant disputes, and environmental due diligence.

Ashley regularly assists clients with proactive measures to improve their operations and legal compliance before an issue arises. She writes and revises legally-compliant policies and procedures and provides engaging, innovative training for employees and managers. She audits entities' programs concerning civil rights, constitutional issues, employment, ethics/codes of conduct, procurement, technology use, and data access.

Ashley leads high-level investigations for school districts, universities, and other entities in the civil rights realm related to allegations of civil rights violations, discrimination/harassment claims, and ethics violations. She guides clients when they receive internal and external complaints under laws such as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Title IX of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Ashley is skilled at helping clients maneuver the often-challenging intersection between diversity, equity, and inclusion pursuits and State laws, such as so-called critical race theory laws, and Federal limitations, such as the First Amendment's free speech and religion protections. Her work helping schools navigate Senate Bill 3 and House Bill 3979 in Texas is particularly significant.

Before joining Thompson & Horton, Ashley served as outside general counsel to cities, public utilities, special districts, and other government entities. In that role, she honed her skills with business transactions, land use, open records/open meetings, civil service/employment matters, law enforcement issues, environmental regulation, economic development, public affairs, and governmental relations. In private practice, she served as City Attorney and Deputy City Attorney for various cities across the state of Texas.

Before entering private practice, Ashley was an Assistant City Attorney for the City of Corpus Christi, Texas. There, she was the Juvenile Prosecutor, one of two adult municipal prosecutors, and the back-up prosecutor for environmental court. Ashley also



## **PRACTICE AREAS**

Business & Commercial  
Constitutional Law  
Construction  
Employment Law  
Elections & Redistricting  
General Counsel / Board Counsel  
Government Relations & Public Policy  
Real Estate  
Special Investigations  
Training & Compliance

## **EDUCATION**

J.D., University of Tennessee, 2010

M.P.A., *summa cum laude*, University of Tennessee, 2010

B.A., *with honors*, English and International Studies, Southern Methodist University, 2006

## **LICENSING & COURT ADMISSIONS**

Licensed in the state of Texas

U.S. District Courts for the Northern and Eastern Districts of Texas

## **MEMBERSHIPS & RECOGNITIONS**

2022–2023 Chair, Black Alumni Board for Southern Methodist University

State Bar of Texas, School Law Section and Government Section

LeadershipSBOT, Class of 2014

Texas Council of School Attorneys

Dallas Bar Association, Government Section

JL Turner Legal Association

**Thompson  
& Horton** LLP

ATTORNEYS | COUNSELORS

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served as an Attorney-Advisor for the U.S. Small Business Administration, where she provided advice on matters pertaining to loan collateral, deeds, title reports, insurance, and building permits.

In 2014, Ashley was one of twenty attorneys across the state selected to participate in the “LeadershipSBOT” leadership academy sponsored by the State Bar of Texas. That same year, she was recognized on the Lawyers of Color Hot List – Southern Region. From 2015 through 2022, she served as an appointed member of the Public Affairs Committee for the State Bar of Texas, which oversees planning the Open Government Seminar for the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting. Ashley is also active in the local bar and serves on the Pro Bono and Public Affairs committees for the Dallas Bar Association. Beyond legal organizations, Ashley is a member and active volunteer for Junior League of Dallas, Genesis Women’s Shelter and Equality Texas. Currently, she is serving as the 2022-2023 Chair of the Black Alumni Board for her alma mater, Southern Methodist University.

*Due to her father’s job, Ashley spent her childhood moving from state to state and even overseas. As a result of her upbringing, she has an adaptive and eclectic personality. Ashley’s family moved to Dallas when she was a junior in high school and she is a proud graduate of Bishop Dunne Catholic School, located in the heart of Oak Cliff. In her spare time, you will likely find her somewhere in the Bishop Arts District, riding her bike around Uptown, hiking at Cedar Ridge Preserve or playing video games at the Cidercade.*

## **REPRESENTATIVE PRESENTATIONS, TRAININGS, & SPEECHES**

*Outlawing Discomfort: Supporting Critical Thinking in Schools during the Anti-CRT Era, COSA School Law Seminar, 2023*

*You Can’t Say That...in the Classroom: Practical Application of the Texas “CRT” Bill, T&H Webinars, 2022*

*Sex, Race & Paperbacks: Texas K-12 Schools and the Cultural Tug of War, T&H Dallas Lunch & Learn, 2022*

*Texas Open Government & Ethics Training, TRWD Board of Directors, 2022*

*Critical Race Theory Law in Texas: What Texas School Districts Must Do Now, Education First Teacher Preparation Community of Practice Virtual Convening, Region 20 ESC Training and Region 10 ESC HR Summit, 2021*

*HB 3979 & SB 3 Up to the Minute: What Texas School Districts Must Do Now, TASA/TASB Convention and Region 4 ESC Leadership Council Training, 2021*

*Navigating Student Discipline in the Wake of COVID-19 & the New Title IX Regulations, T&H Webinar, 2020*

*The New Era of Title IX: What Every K-12 School Should Know, Garland ISD Training, 2020*

*Navigating SBA Loans for Schools in the Wake of COVID-19, T&H Summer Webinar Series 2020*

*School Building Contracts – Key Contract Clause Issues, DISD Lunch & Learn, 2020*

*Critical Legal Issues for the New Year: School Safety Update, TASBO Facilities Operators Master Conference, 2019*

*School Safety Legislative Update, Education Service Center Region 4 Back to School Seminar, 2019*

*The Sky is the Limit: Local Regulation of Flying Drones, Annual Hot Topics in Local Government Seminar sponsored by Brown & Hofmeister LLP, 2017*