



# EPGD

B U S I N E S S L A W

*Statement of Values, Practice Areas  
& Meet the Team*

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# A Word

*From Our Founding Partner*

*Eric P. Gros-Dubois, Esq*

To Our Newest Client:

On behalf of our entire staff, I would like to welcome you to EPGD Business Law. We are thrilled that you have chosen us for assistance with your legal matters. More specifically, you have hired us to help make your life better – either for your money, your time, your reputation – or even all three.

Our endeavor to always provide the best results, value and customer care. We will continuously strive to earn your confidence and work closely with you to achieve the solutions that are best for you and your business.

The information enclosed in this welcome package will help you make the most of our services. You will find guidelines and examples of what to expect as your case progresses as well as other areas handled, bios of our team members, and policies to help us build a lasting and successful partnership.

We look forward to assisting you. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding anything in this packet, do not hesitate to contact us directly.

*Best Regards,  
Eric P. Gros-Dubois, Esq  
For the Firm*

# *EPGD Law*

## Mission Statement

*We Are Passionate About Entrepreneurs. The firm's mission is to provide a high quality, creative, and results-oriented legal team to individuals and businesses, and serve as a primary resource and partner in all aspects of clients' business growth and development.*



# How to Find Us

777 SW 37TH AVE  
SUITE 510 (5TH FL)  
MIAMI, FL 33135



To visit our new offices, look for the building on the Northeast corner of 8th St. & Douglas Rd. (Sw 37th Ave). Limited Visitor Parking is available on the second floor accessible through the ramp one small block North, on Sw 7th St.





## Attorney-Client Relationship & Making the Most of It

**We will work hard to understand all of your concerns. We will determine and discuss all options available to you. We will provide personal service and advice you can trust.**

### *YOUR LEGAL TEAM*

Our Firm is made up of many skilled attorneys and the support staff – all with different legal and professional strengths. Customarily, each client of the Firm is served by a principal attorney contact. You will often be contacted by the other members of our team – who are all capable and talented individuals. The principal attorney should be someone in whom you have confidence and with whom you enjoy working. You are free to request a change of principal attorney at any time. Subject to the supervisory role of the principal attorney, your work or parts of it may be performed by other lawyers and legal assistants in the Firm. Such delegation may be for the purpose of involving lawyers or legal assistants with special expertise in a given area or for the purpose of providing services on the most efficient and timely basis. Whenever practicable, we will advise you of the names of those attorneys and legal assistants who work on your matters.

### *PROFESSIONALISM*

We require that relationships between members of the law Firm and our clients be of a professional nature only. Firm members are expected to treat all clients and potential clients with professionalism, courtesy and respect without evolving into personal relationships.

### *HONESTY*

The reason for explaining the scope of confidentiality, and the attorney-client privilege, is because the only way our relationship can work is through complete honesty. We need to know all of the facts, even the ones that might be bad – especially the ones that might be uncomfortable to talk about. Without knowing the truth, how can we properly advocate for you? To paraphrase the famous line, help us help you.

### ASSISTING WITH YOUR CASE

Frequently, we will require your assistance to best represent you. In litigation matters, you will need to cooperate with discovery requests (questions, document requests, depositions). Also, you must promise not to destroy documents or communications (e.g. evidence), and to timely provide us with all papers, documents, and information on time. Whenever we make a request of you, we will try to do so with as much time as possible, and with clear instructions and deadlines set forth so that we can comply with any obligations and be prepared for your case.

### TREATMENT OF OPPOSING PARTIES

You will find the utmost courtesy and professionalism at our Firm. This sometimes seems contradictory when we have to deal with opposing parties and their attorneys. While you are always able to communicate with opposing parties, NEVER communicate with their attorneys, and if an attorney contacts you directly say NOTHING and contact the Firm immediately. We suggest that you refrain from communicating with the other side, and from responding to hostile communications and emails. Also, we suggest that from the time we begin our representation, you keep a log of any communications or incidents involving the opposing parties. It is mostly true that **“you catch more flies with honey than vinegar,”** and furthermore, we will not compromise our professional or ethical standards, nor stoop to anyone’s level. Trust us; in the long run, judges punish unprofessionalism. We will advise that if you don’t have anything constructive to discuss with the opposing party, that anything you say may hurt your case more than help, and could lead to a long dispute with higher fees. In our experience, the “mean” or “pit-bull” attorneys cost their clients more money, and that will never be our goal.

### KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE

We will always strive to keep you informed about any developments in your case as quickly as possible. This will usually mean that if you haven’t heard from us, nothing has happened. We appreciate that this can be frustrating, and for this reason have instituted a Monthly Update Policy. During the first week of each month, at no charge to you, we will provide you with an update on your matter if there is anything pending, and what the next steps are, and which, if any, will require your attention and/or involvement.

“ Law is nothing other than a certain ordinance of reason for the common good, promulgated by the person who has the care of the community. ”

- Thomas Aquinas



### *A WARNING ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA*

You should refrain from posting on Facebook or Twitter (or other social media) during the pendency of your legal matter. You should check their privacy settings and ensure that friends cannot “check you in” or tag photos of you. Attending your brother’s bachelor party may seem innocent enough until you are tagged in a photo with a beer in your hand and “checked in” at the Cheetah by your brother’s college roommate in the middle of a contested custody case, for example. Likewise, posting that you are “feeling 110 percent better after your car accident” may have a detrimental effect on your personal injury case even when you still don’t have full use of your legs. Just keep in mind that everything online can potentially be used against you – let’s not give any “gifts” to the other side.

### *COMMUNICATING WITH THE FIRM*

In order to better serve our clients and make the best use of your time, our attorneys arrange all calls and meetings ahead of time. We have found that in addition to preventing a lengthy game of phone tag, scheduling calls and meetings also ensures that our attorneys can be prepared for the call or meeting and can devote their full and complete attention to the important matters that will be discussed at the call or meeting.

## *NEW*

### *CASE DEVELOPMENTS*

As new developments arise in your legal matter, you will need to have periodic meetings with your attorney. These meetings may have a singular focus, such as preparing for a specific meeting or court appearance, or it may be for a general status update on a number of issues.

### *INFORMATION*

Please be sure to contact our office and relay any new information related to your case. If there are new documents, please make sure to relay a copy of those documents to our office prior to talking to your attorney about the information.

### *MATTERS*

If during the course of our representation with you a new legal matter arises, we are happy to discuss this with you. However, please be sure to mention this when scheduling time to talk by phone or in person so we can schedule adequate time to discuss the new matter.



*We are bound by the law,  
so that we may be free.*



*- Marcus Tullius Cicero*





## *EMERGENCY DEFINED*

To provide clarity between our clients and the Firm, we have defined what constitutes a client-related emergency. An emergency is an immediate threat to a client's life, liberty or property. In many such cases, the client should have already called "911" if applicable. An emergency mandates an immediate response and the attorney will be interrupted no matter what. Our clients are asked to please consider whether the matter is urgent as opposed to an emergency. Our staff will prioritize any (non-emergency) urgent issue and make sure that the information is conveyed to the attorney as soon as possible in such situations. We ask this of all of our clients so that we can focus on the matter we are working on without unnecessary interruption.

## *TELEPHONE CALL POLICY*

If you are calling in regards to an emergency, please use that word and our staff has been instructed to take every step possible to reach your attorney including calling his or her cell phone, home telephone number and even the cell phone of your attorney's family members on your behalf. Because of the nature of our work, these private telephone numbers cannot be disclosed but will be called for you. Telephone appointments will be charged at the same rate as time spent discussing your case in the office. You should use your common sense and good judgment in deciding whether your question is urgent enough to warrant the extra expense or if it can wait until your next scheduled office appointment or monthly status report for which there is no charge. If your attorney has previously given you the information you need to answer your question, but you have misplaced it, you will not be charged for sending you an extra copy if that is the only reason for your call. **Please do not ask the staff for legal advice. They are not attorneys licensed to practice law and cannot give legal advice.**

## *COSTS VS. FEES*

Fees are the charges for the Firm's legal services, as described above. Costs, however, are expenses that our Firm pays on your behalf, such as filing fees, court costs, sheriff and service of process fees, any postage over \$5.00, and other such costs. In the majority of cases, we pay these costs for you directly and then include them as a line-item on your monthly statement. Since we have already paid these costs for you, we ask that utmost attention is paid to reimbursing the firm for these expenses.

## *SUSPENSION AND/OR TERMINATION OF REPRESENTATION*

If the Firm is in a position where a client has failed to abide by the terms of their Retainer Agreement or other arrangements due to non-payment, the Firm will advise the client that all non-essential work on their matter has been suspended. At that point, staff members will cease performing all non-essential work on that file until the non-payment issue is resolved. Please stay current with deposits to the Lawyer Trust Account so that we can remain focused on resolving your legal matter without interruption. We will always strive for the best and most productive relationship with you. When we have completed our services for a certain matter, we will inform you, and generally wait for you to bring any other legal matter to discuss with us. If we fail, however, to have a professional and satisfactory relationship, either party at any time may terminate it immediately by giving notice. We will then return to you any documents in our possession, and close your file.

### THE LIFE'S TOO SHORT RULE

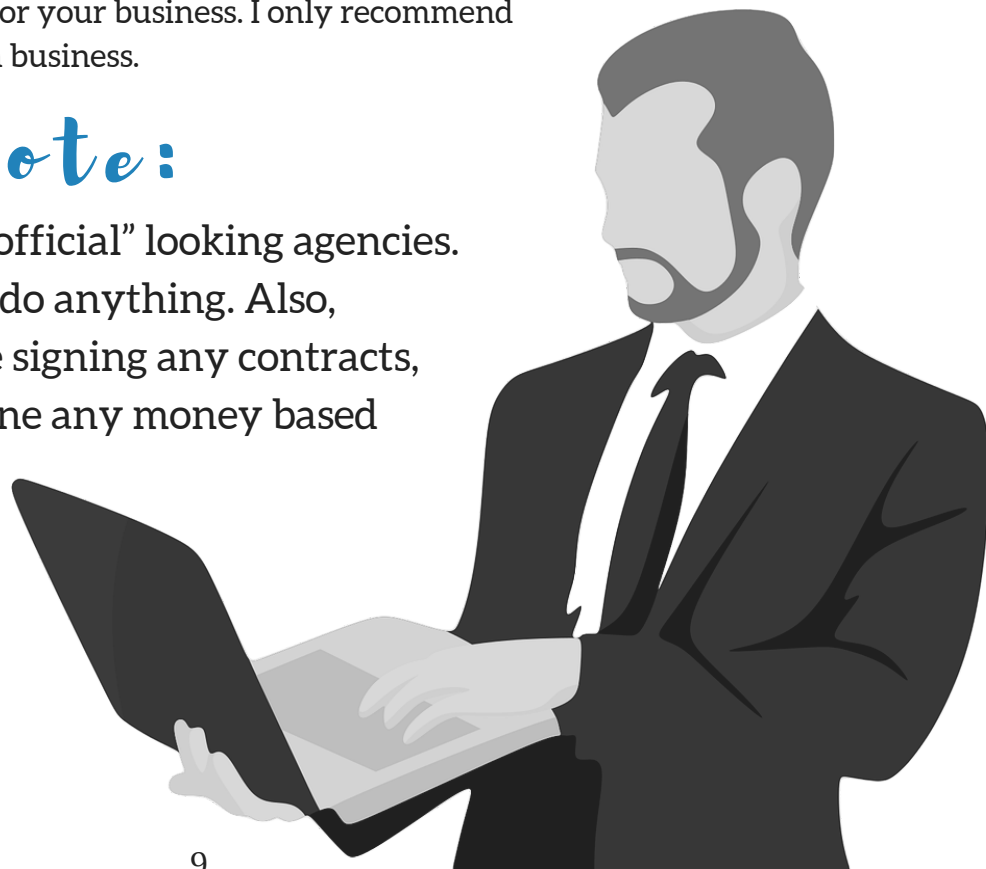
When we opened the Firm years ago, we decided that life is too short to deal with problem clients. As set forth in our engagement agreement, in most cases the Firm reserves the right to terminate the representation and withdraw from representing a client for a number of reasons, or no reason at all. Fortunately, we've only had to do that very few times. But if you are rude, inconsiderate, disrespectful to attorneys and staff, including receptionists, or if you refuse to follow the advice from the Firm, we may very well decide that life is too short to deal with you, at which point we will withdraw from your matter, close the file, and return any documents. We will do everything we can, starting with this letter, however, to avoid this unfortunate outcome. Luckily, most of our clients have great relationships with our firm and will continue to do so for years to come.

### RESOURCE FOR YOU

Finally, I want you to realize that I can be a resource for you and your business in any other legal matter as well as any business matter or concern. This Firm and my close network of excellent attorneys can address every field of law, including immigration, taxation, criminal, family, probate, estate planning, employment, bankruptcy, personal injury, litigation, real estate, and intellectual property. Outside of the law, some common referrals I provide are for business services, including bookkeeper, payroll services company, accountant, commercial banker, public relations specialist, copywriter, web-marketer, courier, information technology expert, telecom expert, commercial property & casualty insurance agent, realtor, mover, interior designer, picture framer, business coach, printer, merchant services processor, freight forwarder, and customs broker. Never hesitate to ask, I assure you I can provide trustworthy and ethical referrals for your business. I only recommend professionals that I use for my own business.

### As a Side Note:

Beware of junk mail from "official" looking agencies. Just contact me before you do anything. Also, ALWAYS contact us before signing any contracts, agreements, or giving anyone any money based on an agreement.





## Attorney Client Privilege Insight & FAQ

The attorney-client privilege is the foundation of our relationship. It is one of many privileges that protect you because we are a law firm. The attorney-client privilege can be invoked to protect from disclosure of both documents and testimony that involve confidential communications between a client and his attorney. There are different privileges depending upon the court you are in. For instance, the states offer an accountant-client privilege. However, a state-created accountant-client privilege does not apply in a federal investigation.

The attorney-client privilege is the “oldest of the privileges for confidential communications known to the common law,” with its underlying purpose being to “encourage full and frank communication between attorneys and their clients and thereby promote broader public interest in the observance of law and administration of justice.” The attorney-client privilege protects two related, but different, communications: (1) communications made in confidence by a client to an attorney for the purpose of obtaining legal advice and (2) confidential communications made by the attorney to the client if such communications contain legal advice or reveal confidential information on which the client seeks advice.

“

*From your confessor,  
lawyer and physician,  
hide not your case on no condition.*

”

- John Harington

## WHAT IS A COMMUNICATION?

Communication means written or verbal communications between you and us. It means things we say to you, things you say to us, things we write to you, and things you write to us. It includes all communications in any form including telephone, email, text message, etc. It is very broad.

## DO NOT SHARE OUR COMMUNICATIONS

Do not share our communications WITH ANYONE. The only exception is another ATTORNEY-AT-LAW who is a member of a bar. Period!

## UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU WAIVE THE RIGHT TO PRIVILEGE WITHOUT CONSULTING ME

Under no circumstances should you waive this privilege without consulting me first. I am here to protect you and advocate for you. If you feel like I was hard on you or cautious during a consultation, it is because I am trying to render candid advice internally. To the external world, under all circumstances my job is to protect you FROM THEM. Remember that!

## WHY SHOULD I NOT TALK TO A FINANCIAL ADVISOR, ACCOUNTANT, OR REALTOR?

Free advice is oftentimes worthless. If the person providing the advice is not being compensated, then how valuable can the advice be? Is the person providing the advice actually trained to render a legal opinion? Is the advice personalized? If the advice is so valuable, why is the person giving it to you for free? The laws are very complicated and their application is oftentimes unclear. The advice we provide is formulated for you personally. It is based upon our years of experience.

## WHOSE PRIVILEGE IS IT?

It is the client's privilege. The attorney must abide by the client's privilege. Therefore, don't waive it intentionally or unintentionally WITHOUT CONSULTING US FIRST. Your realtor, financial advisor, and accountant are not authorized to render legal advice. Whatever you say to them can be discovered by the government.

## WHAT IF I NEED TO SHARE A COMMUNICATION WITH MY ADVISOR?

This is not a problem, but we must advise you on how to do it first. We will advise you how to do it.

## HOW IT PROTECTS YOU

It prevents you from disclosing information that can be used against you in court or in an administrative proceeding.

## WHAT TO DO

Follow the instructions in this document, and contact us **BEFORE** disclosing anything.

## HOW LONG DOES IT PROTECT ME?

As long as its not waived, client communications are protected indefinitely.

## DO NOT DISCLOSE OUR COMMUNICATIONS WITH YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS

Unless we also represent them, do not discuss your case or disclose our communications to anyone. If we represent you and you are married, we represent your spouse by default as well.

## WHAT NOT TO DO

Do not disclose our communications with anyone. This includes accountants, financial advisers, family members, trusted people, etc. The law says if you disclose our communications to any other person, your privilege is waived. Your friends can be compelled to testify against you. Your lawyer cannot. **REMEMBER THAT.**

## HOW TO ASSERT THE PRIVILEGE

In most cases, we will assert your attorney-client privilege. In other cases, you simply decline to respond stating, "attorney-client privilege."



# Meet The Team



Eric P. Gros-Dubois, Esq.

*Founding Partner*

Mr. Gros-Dubois was raised in Dallas, Texas, educated by the Jesuits, and attended Southern Methodist University, during which time he lived and studied in Paris, and Cannes, France. After living and working in New York City and Costa Rica, he attended American University's Washington College of Law in Washington, D.C., completed his Juris Doctor (J.D.) in 2007 and later his Masters in Business Management (MBA) with a specialization in Finance from the Kogod School of Business in 2008. In 2010 he sat for, and passed, Level I of the Chartered Financial Analyst Exam. He has been admitted to practice law in the State of New York, the state of Maryland, the District of Columbia, the state of Florida, before the Federal District Court for Southern District of Florida, the Federal District Court for Maryland, and the US Tax Court. He is also a member of the bar associations in New York, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Florida, Miami-Dade County, Coral Gables and the American Bar Association. He is fluent in English and French, and proficient in Spanish.



## Oscar A. Gomez, Esq.

### *Managing Partner*

Mr. Gomez focuses his practice on all aspects of business law with a heavy focus on business litigation and disputes. Born and raised in Miami, FL, Mr. Gomez attended Belen Jesuit Preparatory School (2001) before attending college and earning a Bachelor of Science in Political Science With Honors at Florida State University (2005). Mr. Gomez worked as a certified crisis hotline counselor for Big Bend of Tallahassee during his time in Tallahassee, made Dean's List consistently, was Political Action Chair for the Hispanic-Latino Student Union, a founding member of the Coalition for Active Voter Education (CAVE), and recognized for his excellent academic record by the Oscar Arias Sanchez Hispanic Honor Society. Mr. Gomez's undergraduate track record earned him the prestigious DePaul Achievement Scholarship to attend DePaul University College of Law in Chicago, Illinois. During his time in law school Mr. Gomez worked at a Plaintiff's medical malpractice firm in Chicago, IL for two years and as a summer associate at a commercial litigation firm (Garbett, Allen, Roza, P.A.) in Miami, FL. Mr. Gomez was admitted to practice law in the State of Florida in 2008 and began his career representing institutional lenders in bankruptcy proceedings with a law firm in Broward County, FL until 2010. From 2011 to 2016 Mr. Gomez worked for a firm in Miami, FL (Gonzalez & Wermuth P.L.) handling contract, landlord-tenant, commercial, corporate, real estate, tax, and intellectual property matters. Mr. Gomez is a member of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, Coral Gables Bar Association, the Cuban American Bar Association, the Dade County Bar Association, and the Florida State University Alumni Association. Mr. Gomez is admitted to practice before the U.S. District Courts for the Southern, Middle, and Northern Districts of Florida and the Florida Southern, Middle, and Northern District U.S. Bankruptcy Courts. Oscar is first and foremost a litigator with a focus on resolving business disputes, partnership disputes, real estate matters, and employment matters. Oscar's passion is taking on good cases regardless of Plaintiff or Defense side and resolving a person or business' issues to the best of his ability. Oscar has tried and won several cases through trial and to verdict. In 2017 and 2018 Mr. Gomez was named to Florida Trend Magazine's Florida Legal Elite Up and Comer list.



## Elizabeth M. Fernandez, Esq.

### *Senior Trusts & Estates Associate*

Mrs. Fernandez is an attorney in EPGD Law's probate and estate planning department. She received her B.A. in Political Science from Florida International University, and worked for FIU Advancement and the FIU Office of Alumni Relations while studying at FIU. She is also a Lifetime Member of the FIU Alumni Association. Elizabeth earned her Juris Doctor with honors from St. Thomas University School of Law. While in law school, she was the President of the St. Thomas University Chapter of the Cuban American Bar Association and briefly served as Executive Vice President of the St. Thomas University Trial Team. Elizabeth received the CALI Book Award for Administrative law, and earned Dean's List distinctions several times. Before joining EPGD Law, Mrs. Fernandez interned at the City of Miami City Attorney's Office, where she assisted in civil litigation matters, and the CABA Pro Bono Project. Elizabeth is fluent in Spanish, and is admitted to the Federal District Court for the Southern District of Florida, and the US Tax Court. In her spare time, Elizabeth enjoys attending sporting events and concerts, and spending time with her family.



## Samuel J. Gittle, Esq.

### *Senior Litigation Associate*

Mr. Gittle was born and raised in Queens, New York. He attended college at Washington University in Saint Louis, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in both Classics and Political Science, and was a member of the Classics Honorary Society and the Eta Sigma Phi Classics Honorary Society. During his time at college, Mr. Gittle worked at the Worldwide Security Services division of JP Morgan Chase as well as at Wayne Hummer Investments in Chicago, Illinois. Thereafter, Mr. Gittle attended Emory University School of Law in Atlanta, Georgia. During his time in law school, Mr. Gittle interned at the Office of the Attorney General in Manhattan, New York, and at a prominent civil litigation firm in Savannah, Georgia. Mr. Gittle was admitted to practice law in the State of Florida in 2012 and in the State of New York in 2016. Mr. Gittle is admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida. Prior to joining EPGD Attorneys at Law, Mr. Gittle worked at a firm in Miami, Florida focusing on contract disputes, real estate, and general commercial litigation.



## Yasemin Sünbül, Esq.

### *Senior Franchise Associate*

Ms. Sünbül is a contracts and franchise attorney and has been part of the EPGD Law family for over 5 years. She was born and raised in Tübingen, Germany and is fluent in German, Turkish, and English. Ms. Sünbül started her academic path at the PH Ludwigsburg in Ludwigsburg, Germany, where she studied mathematics and physical education. She was subsequently recruited and joined the Women's Varsity Soccer Team at Clayton State University in Atlanta, GA, where she majored in international business. She concluded her academic career cum laude at the St. Thomas University School of Law, having earned multiple Dean's List distinctions and CALI Book Awards. Yasemin is the director of EPGD Law's Washington D.C. office and a member of the Florida Bar and the D.C. Bar. In her free time, Yasemin enjoys reading, traveling, and soccer.



## Alberto "Papo" Manrara, Esq.

### *Senior Litigation Associate*

Mr. Manrara has extensive experience in all facets of litigation. He began his career handling commercial litigation and bankruptcy matters for a boutique bankruptcy firm before turning to public service. After devoting five years to the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office as a trial prosecutor, he has the expertise and ability to assist clients obtain a timely and cost effective resolution of legal matters. He prosecuted hundreds of felony cases from start to finish, ranging from drug possession and violent crimes to life felonies and non-bondable offenses. As a prosecutor, Mr. Manrara tried over 50 bench trial cases to verdict, was lead counsel for jury selection in many jury trials and tried over a dozen cases to verdict before a jury. In an era where few attorneys ever set foot inside a courtroom, he successfully argued extensive motions, including pre-trial hearings, sidebar objection conferences, and summary judgment motions during trial. This experience benefits our clients by ensuring that navigating through the court and legal system is handled by a very experienced attorney. He is a proud alumnus of Belen Jesuit Preparatory School and the University of Florida, where he earned a Bachelor's in Psychology and a Master's in Business Management, all while serving in the higher levels of student government and earning recognition by the Florida Blue Key Leadership Honorary. Before law school, he worked for three years as a litigation paralegal at the Manhattan office of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton and Garrison LLP. He is proud to have earned his J.D. from Villanova University School of Law, graduating with honors and as an executive officer of the Moot Court Board. He now serves on the Board of the League of Prosecutors and lives in Coral Gables with his wife, Natalie, and their pet french bulldog, "Porkchop".



## Andres F. Rey, Esq.

### *Litigation Associate*

Mr. Rey was born and raised in Miami, Florida. He received his Juris Doctorate, from St. Thomas University School of Law and received his Bachelor of Science in Criminology, from Florida State University. While in Law School Mr. Rey received an award for Outstanding Commitment to Public Service Pro Bono Commendation. During law school Mr. Rey was a law clerk at a criminal law firm in Miami, FL assisting in criminal defense and was a Certified Legal Intern at the Miami-Dade State Attorneys Office. Mr. Rey began his career at a Criminal Defense firm in Miami, FL handling, Misdemeanors and Felonies throughout the State of Florida. Mr. Rey was admitted to practice law in the State of Florida in 2015 and is also admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida and the U.S District Court for the Middle District of Florida. Mr. Rey is also active as a volunteer in the Special Olympics Basketball Program.



## Stephanie Avitan, Esq.

### *Corporate Associate*

Originally from Montreal, Canada, Stephanie Avitan is an associate in the EPGD Law Corporate team. Mrs. Avitan earned her Civil Law degree from the University of Ottawa, and shortly after moving to Florida, she went on to graduate Cum Laude from the Florida International University School of Law. Prior to being admitted to The Florida Bar in 2017, Stephanie was a law clerk with the EPGD Law family, focusing on corporate structure, business development, and business immigration matters. Stephanie is fluent in English, French, and Hebrew. Stephanie enjoys spending time with her family and exploring new places across the globe.





## Silvino Diaz, Esq

*Litigation Associate*

Mr. Diaz is an attorney licensed in Florida and Puerto Rico. A civil litigator with more than 5 years of experience, Mr. Diaz has developed a reputation as counsel to artists and creative industries; from music, art, and film, to startups and innovative technologies. His areas of practice include contracts, copyrights, and trademarks. He's served as Professor of Intellectual Property Law at the Caribbean's leading digital arts institution - Atlantic University College; and is also a regular on TV and media as a resource on subjects such as music royalties and rights management.



## Carlos Andres Mora

*Bogota Office*

Carlos Andres Mora is an Attorney for EPGD Business Law at our Bogota Satellite Office. Lawyer from Universidad de la Sabana, and Founder of the company MORAGAITAN Abogados. He has 12 years of experience as a consultant in corporate law in companies in the real sector and services. He's characterized by his ease as a negotiator, visionary and mentor in the creation of new businesses. He has collaborated with his experience in several recognized companies in Colombia, both from public and private industry sector. He specialized in the Universidad del Rosario in tax law, intellectual property. In the same way in Sergio Arboleda University in Labor Law. Currently, his law firm has national and international clients through which he has managed to develop projects on issues related to Intellectual Property, Corporate Law, Corporate Governance, Family protocols, creation of business structures at national and international level and relationship management of personal. In conjunction with its law firm, he has expanded its services to sectors such as accounting and auditing - MGA NUMBERS - personnel management - MGA PAYROLL-, and administration of foreign companies - MGA SOFTLANDING. He has been a member of the Board of Directors of companies in the port sector, sugar mills, and advertising agencies, among others. Representative of Port Businessmen of the Port of Buenaventura before the OIT and the Ministry of Labor in the collective negotiations with the unions of the sector. Legal Representative and consultant of maritime agency and technology companies, both traditional companies and also with entrepreneurs. Carlos Andrés in his free time enjoys playing golf and tennis, and traveling with his family.



## Niuris Ramos

*Law Clerk*

Niuris Ramos is a future attorney in EPGD Law's probate and estate planning department with expected admission to the Florida Bar, 2019. She received her B.A. in Psychology from Florida International University. Niuris earned her Juris Doctor from Florida International University College of Law. While at FIU College of Law, Niuris was the co-President of the Negotiation and Mediation team and a member of the Moot Court Board of Appellate Advocacy Team. For her time as co-President of the Negotiation Team, Niuris received an "Outstanding Service to the Negotiation and Mediation Team Award" and a "Negotiation and Mediation Skills Award." Before joining EPGD Law, she interned with the Administrative Judge, the Honorable Maria M. Korvick, of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court's Probate Division, where she assisted in probate and guardianship matters. Her time spent with the Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Niuris received a "Pro Bono Service Award" from FIU College of Law. Niuris enjoys reading, traveling, and eating new things.



## Gabriella R. Ledbetter

*Law Clerk*

Gabriella Ledbetter is a recent graduate from the University of Miami School of Law, with expected admission to the Florida Bar, 2019. She is also a member of the International and Comparative Law Review and has made the Deans List. Gabriella graduated from Florida State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in Accounting and was a member of the accounting society, Beta Alpha Psi. During her time in undergraduate studies, she interned at a Miami CPA firm.



## Aviv Asoulin

### *Law Clerk*

Born in Tel-Aviv, Israel, Aviv Asoulin is entering his third year at the University of Miami School of Law. He received a B.S. in Legal Studies and a B.S. in Criminal Justice at the University of Central Florida. Aviv is fluent in Hebrew. During his undergraduate studies, Aviv worked in a Criminal Law firm in Orlando. Since joining EPGD in May of 2018, Aviv has developed a focus on corporate transactional matters while also assisting our litigation department. Aviv has worked on a vast array of corporate matters including creating and restructuring businesses, drafting transactional contracts, and handling Trademark applications. In the litigation department, Aviv has assisted in researching complex legal issues and drafting pleadings and motions. Coming from a family of small business owners, Aviv is passionate about helping entrepreneurs succeed.



## Madelyn Peterson

### *Law Clerk*

Madelyn is a third-year law student at the University of Miami School of Law. She graduated cum laude from the University of Miami Business School with a double major in Finance and Business Management. During her time in undergraduate studies, Madelyn worked for a private equity firm and an investment real estate firm in Chicago, Illinois. Prior to joining EPGD Law, Madelyn interned at the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office.



## Daniella Gonzalez

### *Law Clerk*

Daniella is a third-year law student at St. Thomas University School of Law. She received an award for Outstanding Commitment to Public Service Pro Bono Commendation. Daniella graduated from Florida International University, where she earned a B.A. in Psychology. Before joining EPGD Business Law, she interned with the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Criminal Mental Health Project Jail Diversion Program.



## Kathrine Karimi

### *Law Clerk*

Born in Toronto, Ontario, Kathrine moved to Miami at the age of nine. She attended Florida International University where she received her B.S in Political Science and is now a second year law student at St. Thomas University School of Law. Prior to joining the EPGD family as a law clerk this year, Kathrine clerked for a personal injury firm and interned for a practice specializing in real estate transactions. In her free time, Kathrine volunteers with CABA pro bono legal services where she assists on cases that are focused on women who are victims of domestic violence and martial disputes. When she's not working, Kathrine enjoys being active outdoors and spending time with her friends and family.



## Rashad Ismail

### *Law Clerk*

Rashad was born and raised in Miami, Florida where he attended Belen Jesuit Preparatory School. He then attended Florida State University in Tallahassee where he earned a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Marketing while minoring in Data Analytics, and graduating Cum Laude. While at school he was active in the National Society of Leadership & Success, the Oscar Arias Hispanic Honors Society, and The College of Business' Marketing Research Laboratory. Rashad is currently serving as an intern by helping us correspond with clients, research legal matters, and organize our databases. He is currently applying to Law School to become a matriculated student in Fall 2020. Rashad enjoys spending time with his friends and family. He is also an avid music and cinephile.



## Graciela S. Diaz, Esq

### *Of Counsel*

Graciela S. Diaz is a corporate attorney and is currently Of-Counsel at EPGD Business Law. Ms. Diaz joined the firm in 2017 and was formerly the Sr. Corporate Associate and member of the Corporate/Transactional Department of the firm. Graciela represents business owners and investors in all types of commercial transactions ranging from corporate formations to complex business transactions. Prior to joining the Firm, Ms. Diaz represented national financial institutions in the negotiation and documentation of secured loan transactions and restructuring of defaulted loans at a top business law firm in Miami. Ms. Diaz also previously served as Associate General Counsel for an international bank. In addition, Ms. Diaz worked as Corporate Counsel for real estate, litigation and intelligence and investigations law firms in Miami. Before that, Ms. Diaz was an associate with a prominent boutique firm in Miami, where her practice focused on corporate and business law. Ms. Diaz earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Miami School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts in English, with a minor in Sociology, from Florida International University, where she graduated magna cum laude. She was admitted to practice law in the State of Florida in 2007 and is admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court Southern District of Florida. She is fluent in written and spoken Spanish. Ms. Diaz is a member of the Business Law Section, Real Property, Probate & Trust Law sections of The Florida Bar, the Business Law Section, Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association and the Dade County Bar Association.



## Deirdre D. Nero, Esq

### *Of Counsel*

Deirdre Nero started her own Immigration & Nationality Law Practice in 2009 after having practiced in two large law firms for several years. Deirdre previously served as the attorney in charge of the Individual and Small/Medium Company division at the Coral Gables, Florida office of a major international immigration law firm; and prior to that as an attorney in the International and Immigration and Nationality Law Groups for a domestic and international commercial law firm in Florida. She led that firm's immigration practice from 2006-2008. Ms. Nero's practice focuses on all types of business immigration including employment based immigrant (permanent residency) and nonimmigrant (temporary) visa petitions, and related business immigration matters. She also routinely handles family immigration matters and naturalizations. Ms. Nero works closely with small and medium companies and individual clients to personally coordinate and execute all aspects of the client's Immigration strategy and represent them in front of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the U.S. Department of State. She represents clients in all 50 States and from countries around the globe, and takes pride in providing individualized service and maintaining a very high success rate. She is fluent in English and Spanish.



## Patrick Grozinger, Esq

### *Of Counsel*

Patrick Grozinger is the founder of Grozinger Law and has been recognized as an AV Preeminent rated Criminal and Civil law attorney in Central Florida. Originally from Shreveport, Louisiana, he attended Southern Methodist University, during which time he studied in Paris, France and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Economics and a Bachelor of Arts in History. After college, Mr. Grozinger joined the United States Peace Corps and spent two years serving as a Small Business Development volunteer in the West African nation of Mali. Mr. Grozinger then attended business school in Paris, France, graduating with a M.B.A. from the International School of Management. Mr. Grozinger then attended law school at Louisiana State University, where he graduated with a Juris Doctorate and a Graduate Diploma in Civil Law. During his time in law school, Mr. Grozinger served as an Executive Member of the LSU Moot Court Board and was a National Moot Court Award winner. After law school, Mr. Grozinger took a position as a criminal Prosecutor for the State Attorney's Office in the Ninth Judicial Circuit in Orlando, Florida. While an Assistant State Attorney, Mr. Grozinger prosecuted thousands of misdemeanor and felony cases in both Orange and Osceola counties. He is dedicated to protecting the Constitutional rights of his clients, and to providing his clients with the courtesy, respect and professionalism they deserve. Mr. Grozinger has been recognized by Super Lawyers Magazine as a Rising Star in criminal defense for four years in a row. He is licensed to practice law in the Florida, Texas, New York, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit and the Northern, Middle and Southern District Courts of Florida. He is proficient in French, conversant in Creole, and is a member of the Orange, Seminole and Osceola County Bar Associations.

## Jessica Fernandez

*Paralegal & Notary Public*

Ms. Fernandez was born and raised in Miami, Florida. She received her paralegal certification from the University of Miami. Prior to joining EPGD Law, Jessica has held several positions in management and customer assistance throughout the Miami and Coral Gables business areas. she is fluent in both English and Spanish.

## Nancy Gonzalez

*Office Manager, Human Resource Director*

Ms. Gonzalez is a Miami, Florida native. She has earned the professional respect of attorneys and colleagues as a result of her compassion, commitment and professionalism assisting in the practice of law. Nancy's career has been mostly in areas outside of the law. Nevertheless, she is eager to expand her experience into other areas of the law, namely business planning and management. She is fluent in English and Spanish.

## Susana Hernandez

*Corporate Receptionist*

Mrs. Hernandez, a Miami native, serves as the firm's corporate receptionist. She assists the staff with scheduling meetings and overseeing the front office operations. Suzie is fluent in English and Spanish. In her free time, Suzie loves to spend time with her family and travel.

## Kimberly Terralavoro

*Client Relations & Marketing Director*

Mrs. Terralavoro is originally from North Carolina and has experience in marketing, customer relations, as well as business. She is currently going to school to further her expertise in the marketing industry. Kimberly loves to spend her time with her husband and their two dogs.

## Isabella Codinach

*Social Media Consultant*

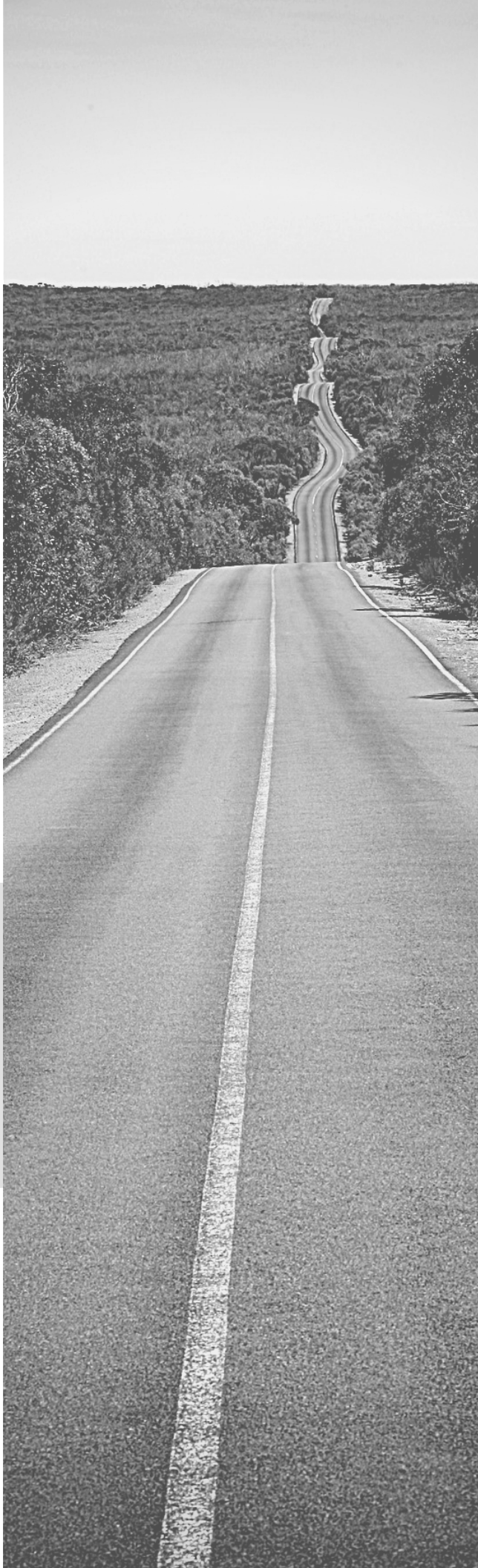
Ms. Codinach is in her senior year at Florida State University. She will be graduating with a major in political science and a minor in communications. Last summer, Isabella interned at the Senators office where she was able to oversee cases and manage correspondence from constituents. Isabella is currently studying for the LSAT and plans to go to law school post graduation. Isabella loves fashion, so on her free time she enjoys styling outfits and posting photos for boutiques and brands in Miami.

## Sandra Muñiz

*Billing & Accounting Coordinator*

Sandra Muñiz was born and raised in Miami, Florida. She has been working and assisting legal professionals as an office administrator and bookkeeper for over 20 years. She is fluent in both English and Spanish. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family and relaxing at the beach.





# Road Map to EPGD LAW Practice Areas

*"A good plan is like a road map: it shows the final destination and usually the best way to get there."*

*- H. Stanley Judd*

## *Contract & Corporate Transactions*

Proper planning is the most important aspect to successful contracts and corporate documents. Any agreement should be in writing however, poor writing can do extreme harm. As a general rule, never sign anything until you have had the chance for our firm to review the document to make sure it is in your favor and protects your interest. Every agreement is comprised of two parts; the business terms and the legal terms. We will work to incorporate your business terms, into an enforceable legal document. If we do our job right, that contract will never need to be litigated because all of the parties will uphold their side of the bargain. Then again, if we do have to litigate, you will be better protected with a stronger contract. Trust us, the "cost" of doing it right in the beginning is worth ten-fold if something goes wrong.

## *Franchising*

If you've ever thought about expanding your business, there are usually two ways. One, you set up multiple locations with designated managers but, all owned and operated by a single owner. Or, you franchise your business by distributing goods and services through a licensing relationship. Essentially, a franchisor will not only specify the products and services that will be offered by the franchisees but also provide them with an operating system brand and support. To begin franchise planning, you must first brand yourself. It is important to understand that as a franchisor, or brand owner, you do not manage and operate the locations that serve consumers their products and services on a day-to-day basis, but you establish a framework for these locations to thrive.

# Litigation

A lawsuit is broken up into four stages. Pleadings, Discovery, Trial, and Post-Judgment. However, In Miami-Dade County, over 95% of cases are resolved before the trial stage, whether by settlement, or by the filing of certain Motions.

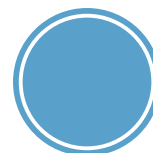
**Pleadings:** A case begins when a Plaintiff files a Complaint describing his legal claims against a Defendant. Once a Defendant receives the Complaint, he then has twenty days to Answer the Complaint, or file a motion to challenge the sufficiency of it. Once these Motions are exhausted, the Defendant will then file an Answer which responds to the Complaint and names the Defendant's defenses in the case. The Plaintiff may file a response to the Defenses called a Reply. It is important to note that once this stage is done, the case is at issue, but can take several months to reach a final resolution.

**Discovery:** This stage is where the Plaintiff and Defendant will seek documents and answers to written questions in order to prove or defend their case. Documents may also be obtained from people who are not in the case. The Parties may also depose witnesses or each other, where one must answer questions under oath.

**Motions:** Motions are the method whereby the Plaintiff and Defendant may request things from the Court, such as dismissing the Complaint, striking a defense, or even forcing the other side to answer a discovery question. Some motions, such as a Motion for Summary Judgment, allow the Court to resolve the case without a trial if it chooses.

**Trial:** This is where a winner is decided, either by the Judge or by the Jury. Both sides present evidence and witnesses, and argument in order to prove their case. Including preparation time, this stage usually takes about two weeks, putting in up to 10-12 hours per day.

**Post Judgment:** Once the judgment is received from the Court, we have various tools to recover what is owed to you. We may demand financial disclosures, use discovery tools to locate assets, subpoena bank account records, and ask the Court or the Sheriff for assistance.



## *Estate Planning*

We counsel and draft wills, trusts, advanced directives, etc. Since many areas of estate planning are distinct, here is an overview of the matters the firm can help you address.

**Estate & Tax Planning:** We assist in preparing wills, trusts, living wills, and general durable powers of attorney. Tax planning, disability planning, as well as business succession planning are also considered when appropriate.

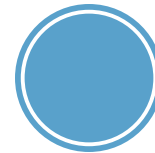
**Elder Law:** Focusing on the legal needs of those over 50. Particularly in protection planning such as allowing a family member to enter a nursing home without exhausting the family's assets.

**Medicaid Application:** Being that Medicaid applications can be downright frustrating, we represent clients before county Medicaid agencies and prepare/file benefit applications on their behalf.

**Estate Administration:** We are often called on to represent the executor or trustee in the process of administering a decedent's estate. Services include estate, inheritance and fiduciary tax returns, post-mortem tax planning, and distribution of assets.

**Guardianship:** We establish guardianships through the court to protect and provide for incapacitated adults and developmentally disabled family members.

**Will Contest:** We are often called on to represent a party in probate litigation. Frequently, this occurs when someone is questioning the handling of an estate. Our services include the filing of caveats, motions, briefs and other court documents necessary to contest the handling of an estate.





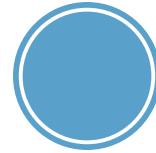
## Taxes & IRS Disputes

A substantial part of our practice is dedicated to providing tax-related legal advice and representation in tax litigation. We approach complex tax issues from a business perspective, delivering value to our clients while minimizing their costs and risks.

Our tax services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Tax Audits*
- *Tax Whistleblowing*
- *Criminal Tax Defense*
- *State and Local Tax*
- *Homestead Exemption Disputes*
- *Trust Fund Recovery Penalty*
- *Exempt Organizations*
- *Foreign (Offshore) Asset Disclosures*  
*These include FBAR, OVDP, FATCA, and TIEA*

We ask that you contact us immediately upon receiving any documents or communication from the IRS.



# Probate

Our condolences for your loss and hope we can relieve some of the stress that losing a loved one imposes. Here are some FAQ's to help.

**What is probate, and why is it necessary?** In probate proceedings, the court supervises the collection and safeguarding of a decedent's assets, pays the decedent's debts, and then distributes the remaining assets to any beneficiary(ies). This is a necessary process to wind up a decedent's estate and legally transfer the decedent's assets to their beneficiary(ies).

**What happens if I die without a will?** If no will is found, the court must determine the heirs of the decedent and distribute them according to the laws of the State of Florida. Usually, the first in line are the spouse, children, and then parents.

**If I have a will, is probate necessary?** Yes, if you have a valid will, it must be submitted to the court through a probate administration process to be properly administered.

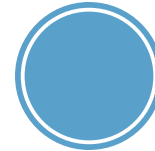
**What is a summary probate process and am I eligible for it?** Generally, summary administration is eligible for estates in which the decedent has been dead for at least two years or in which the value of the estate subject to administration in Florida is \$75,000 or less. This option is available on a case by case basis, depending on various factors, such as, nature of the asset, decedent's creditors, etc.

**What is a personal representative?** An individual or corporate entity appointed by the court or in the decedent's will, to administer the decedent's estate in its entirety.

**Does a personal representative get compensated?** Yes. They are issued a statutory fee based on the final amount of the estate, or based on the compensation provided in the decedent's will.

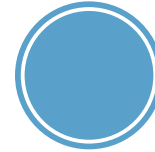
**Why should a personal representative hire an attorney?** One should always engage a qualified attorney to handle any legal issues that may arise throughout a probate proceeding. In addition, Florida law requires a personal representative to be represented by an attorney unless the personal representative is the sole interested party in the probate.

**How long does the probate process take?** The timeframe varies depending on the county in which the estate is being administered, nature of the assets, number of beneficiaries, decedent's creditors, etc. Generally, a probate proceeding can take between 6 to 8 months.



## Intellectual Property - Trademarks

Seeking a **US Trademark (TM)** is a relatively extensive but rewarding process. Prior to filing, it is advisable to conduct a search of prior trademarks and pending trademark applications to determine whether a person or company is using it already. Federal registration, assuming there are no major difficulties during the examination process, normally takes about 12 months. The first application is called a **“Principle Register”**. These are “fanciful, “arbitrary” or “suggestive” trademarks that have the strongest consideration. Once filed, it is assigned to a TM examining attorney who reviews the application and deems it accordingly for use. Frequently, if an issue arises after an application is filed, an **office action** will be issued for things like “likelihood of confusion” in the marketplace, similarity to another mark, or secondary meaning. Office actions require the owner to provide additional information regarding said matters and should not generally be a cause for alarm, provided of course that the issue is promptly addressed. Once the examining TM attorney approves the trademark, it is published in a Patent & Trademark Office publication called the *Official Gazette*. Once published, any who believe they will be harmed by this issuance has 30 days to file an opposition. If the trademark is not opposed during the 30 day period or if the applicant prevails in any proceedings, the TM office will move forward with the registration. Expect around two-to-three months from the end of the opposition period for registration to be finalized. At this point, the TM owner receives a **Certificate of Registration for the TM** and may begin using the TM registration symbol on their products/services. Keep in mind, for a registration to remain valid, an Affidavit of Use must be filed between the fifth and sixth year after registration and before the end of every ten year period thereafter.



*In closing, the best relationships, personal, professional, or even legal, are based on mutual respect and healthy communication.*  
We are proud and honored to be your legal team, and look forward to many years of productive collaboration.

If you ever have the slightest question, concern, or even a complaint, please do not hesitate to address it with us. *Call the office and we can handle it immediately, or schedule an appointment for an in-person meeting.*

Kind Regards,  
Eric P. Gros-Dubois, Esq. and Oscar A. Gomez, Esq.  
*For the Firm*



**DISCLAIMER:**

The materials available in this packet are for informational purposes only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. You should contact your attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular issue or problem.