

OWEN KOHLER

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SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Offering nearly 23 years of legal experience with a strong emphasis in city, county, and local government law. Extremely knowledgeable in municipal home rule, sunshine meetings and public records, public sector liability, public finance, procurement and contracts, sovereign immunity, ethics, and quasi-judicial bodies. Excellent communication, interpersonal, and negotiating skills. Comprehensive background in advising elected officials and government departments on complex legal issues and providing collaborative and goal-oriented advice.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

City Attorney's Office / City of Clearwater, Clearwater, FL

Interim City Attorney, February 2026 to Present

Lead Assistant City Attorney, December 2019 to February 2026

Assistant City Attorney, February 2018 to December 2019

- Directly responsible for all legal matters for the City of Clearwater and managing the City Attorney's Office.
- Serve as attorney during public meetings for City Council, Community Redevelopment Agency, Downtown Development Board, and Pension Trustees.
- Work in conjunction with the City Manager and senior level management to effectively manage risk and avoid costly legal problems.
- Drafted Clearwater Ordinance 9639-23 which updated and modernized the impact fee structure in Chapter 54 of the Community Development Code.
- Drafted Clearwater Ordinance 9460-21 which reorganized, updated, and amended nearly every section of the Procurement Code.
- Successfully prevented the severance of a non-hazardous bargaining unit in *Communications Workers of America v. City of Clearwater v. Sun Coast Police Benevolent Association*, 52 FPER ¶ 249 (2025).
- Drafted and negotiated construction contracts and agreements pursuant to the Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act.
- Served as lead attorney for employment and tort litigation cases filed in Federal and State Court.
- Drafted and negotiated lease, license, and use agreements of City facilities.
- Lead negotiator for collective bargaining agreements between the City and Unions, including the FOP, IAFF, and CWA.
- Successfully defended the City during employee discipline appeals.
- Manage and approve outside counsel agreements.

Law Department / City of Hialeah, Hialeah, FL

Assistant City Attorney, September 2015 to February 2018

- Directly responsible for all labor and employment law matters for the City of Hialeah.
- Worked in conjunction with the City Mayor, City Attorney, and senior level management to effectively manage risk and avoid costly legal problems.
- Successfully upheld terminations and suspensions of employees.

- Assisted with employment litigation cases filed in Federal and State Court.
- Drafted position statements for matters involving the EEOC, FCHR, and Miami-Dade CHR.
- Member of negotiating team for collective bargaining agreements between the City and Unions.
- Handled unfair labor practices, grievances, and arbitrations as the lead attorney for the City of Hialeah.
- Conducted internal employee investigations.
- Formulated internal policies and procedures for the City of Hialeah.
- Provided guidance, counseling, and informal training to supervisors and managers.
- Conducted periodic human resources and employment audits.
- Ensured compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Senior Advisor and Prosecutor for the City of Hialeah Personnel Board.

Tampa Police Benevolent Association, Tampa, FL

General Counsel, June 2010 to January 2015

- Sole In-House General Counsel for Public Employee Labor Union with nearly 1000 members.
- Successfully reinstated veteran officer who had been terminated from employment without just cause.
- Provided legal representation to police officers in more than 100 internal affairs investigations.
- Drafted and negotiated collective bargaining agreements between the Labor Union and the City of Tampa.
- Handled all grievances and arbitrations as the lead attorney for the Union.
- Formulated internal policies and procedures for the Union.
- Co-authored amendment to Florida Statute 775.087(2)(a)(1)(r), 2012 Legislative Session.
- Researched employment law issues and updated members through articles in quarterly newsletters.
- Reviewed pleadings and motions brought against officers under Section 1983.
- Prepared Wills, Trusts, and other estate related documents.

Office of Statewide Prosecution / Attorney General's Office, Fort Myers, FL

Acting Chief Assistant Statewide Prosecutor, September 2009 to May 2010

Assistant Statewide Prosecutor, June 2007 to September 2009

- Obtained guilty verdicts in 6 out of 7 jury trials as lead attorney.
- Lead attorney with full oversight of trial planning, motions practice, discovery, and courtroom appearances.
- Responsible for prosecuting complex criminal cases involving multiple circuits and multiple defendants.
- Caseload consisted of organized schemes to defraud, drug trafficking, conspiracy, racketeering investigations, money laundering, identity theft, and other white collar crimes.
- Obtained guilty verdicts in multi-defendant heroin trafficking case that resulted in 25 year prison sentences for each defendant.
- Obtained guilty verdict in major cocaine trafficking case that resulted in a 30 year prison sentence.
- Prepared legal memorandums for criminal post-conviction appeals.
- Speaker and volunteer for the Attorney General's CyberSafety Education program.
- Recognized for Best Community Outreach in 2007 and Distinguished Service Award in 2009.

State Attorney's Office, Tallahassee, FL

Assistant State Attorney, August 2003 to June 2007

- Prosecuted hundreds of felony and misdemeanor criminal cases.
- Conducted more than 40 jury trials as lead attorney.

- Second-chaired death penalty case involving the murder of a prominent Tallahassee attorney and obtained guilty verdict that resulted in a life sentence.
- Obtained guilty verdict in bank robbery case that resulted in a 30 year prison sentence.
- Supervised and trained Certified Legal Interns.
- Assisted in training of FDLE chemical analysts by performing mock cross-examinations.

EDUCATION

Florida State University College of Law, Tallahassee, FL
Juris Doctor, May 2003

- Recipient of the Daughters of the American Revolution Scholarship in 2001

Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
Bachelor of Science in Finance, December 1999

- *Magna Cum Laude*
- Recipient of the Florida Undergraduate Academic Scholars Fund and the Florida Bright Futures Scholars Fund
- Member of Golden Key Honor Society, Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society, and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

AFFILIATIONS

- The Florida Bar, 2003
- U.S. Middle District Court of Florida, 2011
- U.S. Southern District Court of Florida, 2016
- Labor and Employment Law PERC/NLRB Committee