

NorthernVirginia

M A G A Z I N E



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Top Divorce Lawyers 2009

Statistics say more than 50 percent of all U.S. marriages end in divorce. Chances are that you or someone you know has faced the painful dissolution of a marriage. Add children to the mix, and matters become even more complicated. Even though prenuptial agreements, which court respect if properly prepared, have been on the rise, the simple fact is most married couples don't tend to have them, particularly if the union took place more than 10 years ago.

So here you stand, knowing you are faced with a major life decision, one for which you need legal representation. Thankfully, there appear to be some excellent attorneys in the field of family/matrimonial law here in Northern Virginia. To compile a list, we began by consulting some notable sources, such as the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, Best Lawyers® and Super Lawyers®. We spoke with some of the leading names in the profession, asking each contacted attorney to nominate at least one respected colleague to the list.

Some names were brought up again and again; these are the veterans of the marriage wars who have provided stellar representation for their clients over the course of decades. Still, an attorney may simply not feel like the right match for your needs, or a firm's hourly rates may be out of your price range. If you're in the market for a divorce lawyer, make several calls. Ask for hourly rates. Check credentials. And get a feel for whether or not an attorney's personality and style match yours.

Brian West

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A former rugby player, Brian West's tough-minded, goal-oriented approach may not be for everyone. He maps out the issues, sets objectives and takes direct steps to achievement. In the initial consultation, he describes the dynamic, and says that people with competitive frames of mind will be drawn to him. Hourly rate: \$550