

WENDY HUFF ELLARD

Associate, BAKER DONELSON

FIRM

- Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC - Associate (2007 to Present)

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Disaster Recovery and Government Services
- State Public Policy

YEARS OF RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- 6 years

EDUCATION

- J.D., 2007, University of Mississippi School of Law
- Bachelor of Arts, 2003, Political Science, Mississippi State University

REGISTRATION/CERTIFICATION

- MS Law License, 2007

Professional Affiliations/Awards

- American Bar Association - Vice-Chair to YLD Dispute Resolution Committee
- MS Bar - Chair of Disaster Legal Services Committee
- Member National Emergency Management Association
- Member 2013 MS Bar Leadership Forum
- Board of Directors of MS Women Lawyers Association

Publications and Speaking Engagements

- Presenter – "Rebuilding a School System After a Natural Disaster: Lessons Learned," ABA Mid-Year Meeting, Section of State and Local Government Law, New Orleans, LA (February 2, 2012)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Wendy Huff Ellard primarily practices in the area of disaster recovery and grants management and has extensive experience with legal and regulatory compliance issues under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Recovery and Emergency Assistance Act. Following Hurricane Katrina, she assisted public and private non-profit entities in navigation of the complex federal and state regulatory frameworks and has extensive experience with eligibility and documentation issues, administrative appeals and arbitration of disputes arising from the federal grant process. She is an active member of the Firm's Disaster Recovery and Government Services Industry Service Team and a member of the State Public Policy practice group.

Professional Experience

MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY; Statewide, MS; Recovery Accounting Oversight Public Assistance Team; Division Coordinator (July, 2008 - Present), Information Management Specialist (July 2007-June, 2008) As Division Coordinator, managed a team of Information Management Specialists and assisted with development of procedures to respond to requests for documentation in association with eligibility reviews, closeout reconciliations, and audits by other federal and state agencies. For the issues that could not be resolved through informal processes, played an instrumental role in assessing regulatory guidance on the administrative appeal process and implementing a comprehensive review and tracking mechanism to assist MEMA with its administrative responsibilities.

As Division Coordinator for policy and appeals, assisted applicants by providing program guidance through group sessions and one on one meetings. To date, has prepared Grantee responses for over 250 administrative appeals. Additionally, Wendy assists in monitoring the likelihood of potential appeals and aids in assuring compliance with applicable deadlines. Also responsible for review of Department of Homeland Security- Office of Inspector General findings and assisting applicants and MEMA to effectively respond, greatly reducing the amount of funding at risk. Also reviews administrative decisions on appeals, OIG audits, and arbitrations for broad applicability and recommends program changes when necessary.

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, LA; The City of New Orleans v. FEMA, CBCA Docket Nos. 2875-FEMA, 3073-FEMA, 3344-FEMA; Co-Counsel (2012 - Present) Served as co-counsel to review issues and file CBCA 2875-FEMA surrounding FEMA reimbursement of 1/3 regular time costs of first responder personnel following Hurricane Katrina. After successfully defeating two Motions to Dismiss submitted by FEMA, this \$10.8 million issue proceeded to oral argument before the CBCA. Used knowledge of debris removal policy and time extension request requirements as co-counsel to pursue extension and expansion of the City of New Orleans' private property demolition and debris removal project under CBCA 3073-FEMA for additional obligation of up to \$180 million. Serves as co-counsel in CBCA 3344-FEMA regarding codes and standards applicable to the City's Phase II road restoration project with over \$13-26 million at issue.