**Hon. SONYA LEAH HEATH**

201 Caroline, 15th Floor • Houston, TX 77002
(713) 274-1310

sonya\_heath@justex.net

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**310TH Family District Court** 2019 - Present

*Presiding Judge*

 Exclusively family law.

**THE LAW OFFICE OF SONYA HEATH** 2010 - 2018

*Solo Practitioner*

 Primary focus was family law.

 Experienced in contested divorces, custody and child support cases; issued and responded
to discovery; represented clients in mediation; and, motions practice.

 Counsel for parents in Texas Department of Protective Services termination of parental rights cases.

 Attorney Ad Litem Certificate – *Representing Texas Children in Abuse and Neglect Cases*

* Treasurer for Hon. Julia Maldonado Campaigns (Family Law Judge for the 507th Harris County)
* Assisted in Hon. Maria Jackson Campaigns (Criminal Judge for the 339th Harris County)
* Candidate for Judge of the 310th Family Law District Court in Harris County, Texas (2017-18)
* *Pro Bono* Attorney, Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program (2017-18)
* Special Master for the 507th Family District Court (2018)

**United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit** 2013 - 2015

*Criminal Justice Act Attorney for the Southern District of Texas, McAllen Division*

 Accepted appointments, ordered and reviewed reporter’s transcript of testimony.

 Researched and drafted motions, memorandums of law, and appellate briefs.

 Prepared for oral argument to Fifth Circuit.

 Prepared *Anders* briefs if applicable.

**THE CRAIG WASHINGTON LAW FIRM** 2008 - 2010

*Associate Attorney*

 Prepared and argued contested motion hearings, bench trials, mediations, and depositions.

 Researched and drafted motions, memorandums of law, and appellate briefs.

**NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAW COUNCIL** 1993 - 2010

*Conference Planner*

 Managed 750+ membership of national labor and employment defense attorneys.

 Planned and coordinated annual member meeting throughout the country.

**First Court of Appeals** 2007 - 2008

*Judicial Intern to Justice George Hanks*

 Researched factual and legal issues; reviewed appellate records; performed substantive cite checks;
wrote memorandum of law; discussed memorandum with Justices and Court attorneys; observed Justice discussions regarding issues that were to be argued; observed oral arguments; and, observed post-submission resolution of legal issues raised in oral arguments.

**Hirsch & Westheimer, P.C.** 2007

*Summer Law Clerk for Pat Huttenbach, Esq.*

 Drafted writs of garnishment, motions and post-judgment collection discovery.

 **Godfrey, Leibsle, Blackbourn & Howarth, S.C.** 2006

*Executive Legal Assistant and Real Estate Department Administrator*

 Managed Real Estate Department; and, kept track of past-due receivables and coordinate
collection efforts.

 Performed executive legal assistant duties to managing partner of real estate department.

**EPSTEIN BECKER GREEN WICKLIFF & HALL, P.C.** 1993 - 2005

*Executive Legal Assistant*

 Recruited, hired, and supervised staff in the labor and employment section;
facilitated monthly team meetings; coordinated yearly performance reviews; and
planned quarterly client seminars.

 Created policies and procedures manuals; reviewed, coded, and processed invoices
for payment through accounting department; and kept track of past due receivables
and coordinated collection efforts.

 Performed executive legal assistant duties to managing partner of Houston office;
interacted with clients, court staff, opposing counsel, and governmental agencies
(NLRB and EEOC).

**Meyer, Cribbs & Wilson, P.C.** 1984 - 1993

*Legal Secretary / IT Coordinator*

 Worked for managing partner Larry Meyer and attorney Richard Blohm.

 Established, monitored and updated Novell network system; drafted and maintained
confidential firm management and financial documentation.

**Polk County Judge Wayne Baker** 1984

*Assistant Secretary*

 Assisted with court room docket, dealing with public and general office duties.

**THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL OF LAW**

*Juris Doctorate*, 2009**EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN**

*Bachelor’s in Business Administration- Accounting*, 2004

*Bachelor’s in Business Administration-Administrative Management,* 2005

**Speaker and Publications**

 *Human Papillomavirus: Can the Legislature Mandate the Vaccine*

17 THE ADELPHIA LAW JOURNAL OF SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW (2010-2011)

 *Establishing Character of Marital Property Techniques*

 Mexican-American Bar Association of Houston, September 11, 2017

 *Judicial System Reform*

 Houston Community College, Central Campus, April 16, 2018

 *Family Law Highlights, Court Policies and Procedures*

 Houston Bar Association—Family Law Section, September 27, 2019

 *Personnel Leadership-Talent Management Policies and Skills*, University of Houston-Downtown President’s Leadership Academy, February 27, 2020

 *Family Law Highlights, Judicial Question/Answer*

 Houston Bar Association—Family Law Section, March 4, 2020

 *Zoom, or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Have Remote Hearings*
Houston Bar Association—Family Law Section, April 8, 2020

 *Zoom Hearings in the Era of COVID-19*
The Houston Family Law Group, September 23, 2020

 *How is Harris County Handling Jury Trials*
Mexican-American Bar Association of Houston, September 25, 2020

 *Forget Me Not–Issues Easily Forgotten When Dividing Assets that May Have Future
Complications for Our Clients*, HBA’s Family Law Section, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2020

**Associations**

American Bar Association, *Vice Chair, Family Law Committee* 2009 – 2010

American Leadership Forum, Houston Gulf Coast Chapter, *Fellow Class LV* 2020 – Present

Association of Women Attorneys, *Member* 2008 – Present
Burta Rhoads Raborn Family Law American Inn of Court, *Barrister* 2018 – Present

The College of the State Bar of Texas, *Member* 2009 – Present

First Methodist Houston, Downtown Campus, *Member* 2006 – Present
Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, *Lifetime Member*  2013 – Present

Houston Bar Association, *Co-Chair Law Library Committee 2019-Present* 2009 – Present

Mexican-American Bar Association of Houston, *Board of Directors* 2009 – Present
Rotary Club, University Area Chapter, *President 2016-17* 2010 – Present

State Bar of Texas, *Family Law Section Member* 2009 – Present

Texas Bar Foundation, *Fellow* 2019 – Present