



## GEORGE N. MEROS, JR.

### **PARTNER**

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George N. Meros, Jr. is a partner in the Tallahassee office of Shutts & Bowen LLP, where he is a member of the Governmental Law Practice Group.

A Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ attorney with more than 30 years of experience, George focuses his practice on complex, constitutional and commercial litigation, regulatory compliance and governmental affairs. He has counseled a broad range of public and private clients on matters related to administrative law and politics, including Fortune 500 companies, state and national healthcare companies, national business associations and government agencies. He has argued numerous complex legal claims at trial and on appeal, including before the Florida Supreme Court, all five Florida District Courts of Appeal and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

George has decades of experience assisting clients in achieving robust state regulatory compliance. He has represented healthcare companies and facilities in change of ownership processes (CHOWS) and prompt, comprehensive disclosure to Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA). He has worked with medical clinics, hospitals and HMOs in their dealings with AHCA, and has received the honor of serving as AHCA's lead counsel in groundbreaking federal litigation under the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition to the AHCA, George has advised numerous clients on regulatory compliance issues before Florida's Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Department of Children and Families, Office of Insurance Regulation and the Department of Financial Services. He has tried numerous procurement protests and other cases under Florida's Administrative Procedures Act.

Since 1994, George has engaged in legislative and executive branch advocacy on behalf of state and national businesses, as well as local governments. His extensive work in the public sector includes previous service as lead counsel for the Florida House of Representatives as it developed, defended and litigated Florida's new redistricting plan. He has also represented the Governor of Florida, the Florida Secretary of State, and four Speakers of the Florida House of Representatives and the Florida Senate. In addition, George has testified before the Florida Legislature and Texas Legislature on civil

## George N. Meros, Jr.

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justice reforms. He served as Special Counsel to Florida's business community in passage of the 1999 Tort Reform Act and played a central role in passage of Florida's 2003 Medical Malpractice Act, as well as the Worker's Compensation Reform Act.

He is regularly recognized among his peers in the legal community as a leading practitioner in his field, by such publications as *The Best Lawyers in America*® and *Florida Super Lawyers*. A frequent guest lecturer and author on legal reform issues, George is a graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law. After law school he clerked for Justice Alan Sundberg of the Florida Supreme Court.

### Regulatory and Administrative Law Transactions

George represents medical practices, clinics, health insurers and a national child care provider to ensure regulatory compliance and the resolution of administrative complaints. He has represented a healthcare company in a defense of a procurement award, as well as one of Florida's largest health maintenance organizations in a challenge to Medicaid procurement. His previous experience also includes the representation of a leading hospital district in a month-long trial defending a certificate of need for the construction of a new hospital.

### Florida Redistricting

In George's service to the public sector, he represented the Florida House of Representatives in an original proceeding in the Florida Supreme Court, prevailing 7-0. He also represented Florida's Speaker of the House in original proceeding in the Florida Supreme Court, which resulted in the striking of an initiative petition from the ballot. In 2002, George defended the Florida Legislature's House and Congressional redistricting maps against multiple federal challenges before a three-judge district court.

### Florida Constitutional Litigation Matters

With an extensive background in litigation related to Florida Constitutional matters, George has obtained a *writ of certiorari* to quash orders compelling a hospital to produce documents that qualified as patient safety work product under the federal Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act (PSQIA). He has defended First Amendment challenges to state statutes restricting commercial speech and professional advertising. George's experience also includes the defense of a federal Commerce Clause claim against a state statute discriminating against out-of-state educational entities, as well as the defense of a federal challenge to the parental notification of abortion statute, representing a former Speaker of the House, intervenor on behalf of the Florida House of Representatives. He also defended a former Florida Secretary of State in a Florida Supreme Court appeal, reversing a trial court decision and permitting Ralph Nader's ballot placement in the 2004 presidential general election.

## George N. Meros, Jr.

### Other Complex Litigation Transactions

George's practice includes a dismissal of the U.S. Department of Justice's challenge to Florida's health services delivery system under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. He has also obtained a writ of prohibition to disqualify two commissioners from participation in administrative proceedings to establish rates of compensation for port pilots. George has defended a verdict in favor of an insurer in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. He also obtained a judgment affirming ballot placement of a local charter amendment. Prior to joining Shutts, he represented clients in multimillion-dollar disputes, obtaining settlements on behalf of a mezzanine lender in a contract claim as well as a global real estate investment trust (REIT) in an insurance claim arising from Hurricane Katrina.

### Government Affairs Transactions

George has counseled clients across a broad range of industries on governmental affairs and transactions. He represented a national business association to advocate for common sense reforms to Florida's civil justice system, a major auto manufacturer and others in passage of a product liability "crashworthiness" reform, as well as international insurer syndicates on legislative claims bills. In his representation of client business interests, he navigated the passage of Florida's Transparency in Private Attorney Contracting Act and the repeal of joint and several liability in Florida. In addition, George represented an insurer coalition in the passage of the groundbreaking Asbestos Liability Reform Act. He also represented specialty physicians in the passage of medical malpractice liability reforms.

### Practice Areas

Appellate

Administrative Law and Licensing

Constitutional Law

Government Law

Health Law & Life Sciences

Litigation

Political Law

### Industry Focus

Government

Health Care

## Accolades

*The Best Lawyers in America®*

- - Appellate Practice (2021-2025)
    - Administrative/Regulatory Law, Mass Tort Litigation/Class Actions – Defendants (2019-2025)
    - Litigation – Health Care, Litigation – Labor and Employment (2020-2025)
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- Recognized in the inaugural [Florida Power 100 list](#) (2022)
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- Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ Rated
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- Florida Legal Elite, *Florida Trend* magazine (2011, 2014 and 2019)
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- Florida *Super Lawyers* magazine (2010-2013, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022)
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- Legal Reform Champion, American Tort Reform Association (2004)

## Education

- University of Virginia School of Law, J.D. (1978)
- Eckerd College, B.A., *with highest honors* (1975)

## Bar Admissions

Florida

## Court Admissions

- United States District Courts for the State of Florida
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court

## Publications

- "Some Reports of Adverse Medical Incidents are Privileged and Confidential," Co-Author, *Florida MD* (February 2016)

## George N. Meros, Jr.

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- "Legal Fact and Fiction: The Contraction and Expansion of Florida's Collateral-Source Rule," Co-Author, *Washington Legal Foundation Counsel's Advisory Newsletter* (January 2016)
- "Florida's Tort Reform Act, Chapter 99-225; Keeping the Faith with the Promise of *Hoffman v. Jones*," Co-Author, *Florida State University Law Review* (Winter 2000)
- "Toward a More Just and Predictable Civil Justice System," *Florida State University Law Review* (Winter 1998)
- "The Seat Belt Defense Is Alive and Well Under the Amended Section 316.614," Co-Author, *Trial Advocate Quarterly* (January 1995)

## Presentations

- Speaker, "Alternative Dispute Resolution Roundtable," Office of the Insurance Consumer Advocate (January 6, 2010)