

# Fort Lauderdale Partners Obtain Jury Trial Win and Defense Verdict in Religious Discrimination Lawsuit

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[Sidney C. Calloway](#) and [Amy Wessel Jones](#), partners in the Fort Lauderdale office of Shutts & Bowen LLP, represented the Clerk of Courts for the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Broward County in a five-day jury trial in which the Clerk was accused of firing an employee over her faith-based objections to processing marriage license applications for two same-sex couples.

At trial, the Clerk argued that the plaintiff was not fired because of her religious beliefs, but rather due to her refusal to perform her essential job functions, which included processing marriage license applications, providing service to all customers regardless of sexual orientation, and upholding the U.S. and Florida Constitutions as a constitutionally sworn deputy clerk.

“The overwhelming theme was based on the functions of a deputy clerk’s job—and not her religious beliefs,” Sidney said in an interview with the *Daily Business Review*. “The evidence was that she was never asked to perform a marriage ceremony. All she was asked was to process an application, ask for information, verify it was correct, and send it off to the state. It is an administrative function, something that deputy clerks do all day long.”

Following the trial, the jury deliberated for less than 40 minutes, and found that the plaintiff did not lose her job due to her religious beliefs.

To read the full story, please click [here](#).

## About Sidney C. Calloway

[Sidney C. Calloway](#), Esquire is a partner at Shutts & Bowen LLP and Co-Chair of the Government Law Practice Group. A longtime Martindale-Hubbell AV®-rated lawyer, Sidney is a Leadership Florida Cornerstone XXX member and is a Florida Bar Board Certified Specialist in Civil Trial Law, a distinction accorded to less than 2% of Florida’s lawyers. His practice includes complex, high-exposure litigation, with expertise in eminent domain and land use and zoning matters. Sidney is the Chair of the Urban League of Broward County and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Port Everglades Association and the BB&T/Trust Bank Advisory Board. He is a former Vice-Chair of the Florida Transportation Commission and member of the Judicial Nominating Commission for the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit for Broward County, Florida.



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### About Amy Wessel Jones

[Amy Wessel Jones](#) is a Partner in the Fort Lauderdale office of Shutts & Bowen LLP, where she is a member of the Appellate Practice Group. Amy is board certified in Appellate Practice by the Florida Bar. She represents clients in a wide range of appellate and litigation matters involving commercial disputes, business torts, and real-property litigation. She also provides pre-trial and trial support to litigators, assisting in the development of legal arguments and ensuring that all steps necessary to preserve issues for appellate review are taken.

### Professionals

Sidney C. Calloway

Amy Wessel Jones

### Practice Areas

Appellate

Government Law

### Offices

Fort Lauderdale