

# About Elder Care Law

## About Your Team

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In the late 1980s Elder Law became a specialty of law that focuses on the needs of older clients and those with disabilities. It encompasses such areas as

- Long-term care planning and care coordination;
- Medicare, managed care, and payment for health care;
- Social Security and retirement income planning;
- Medicaid, Veterans Affairs, and other public benefits eligibility planning;
- Housing and residential care options;
- Legal, financial, and health care decision-making;
- Probate and estate administration; and
- Estate, tax, and retirement planning.

### What Makes Us Unique? Why “Elder Care Law”?

Elder law is the only area of law defined by the clients we serve rather than the areas of law in which we practice.

As we see and practice it, elder law is transitioning to “elder care law,” because of our “elder-centered” approach, which puts the older clients’ life care needs first.

Under this approach, not only do we

handle estate planning issues and counsel clients about planning for incapacity with decision-making documents, we also assist our clients in planning for possible long-term care needs.

Locating the appropriate type of care, coordinating private and public resources to finance the cost of care, and working to ensure our client’s right to quality care are all part of what we do at Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning.

### Your Team at Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law

**Barbara McGinnis**, Certified Elder Law Attorney (CELA), Registered Nurse (RN), Partner

**Chris Johnson**, Attorney, Partner

**Joshua Hunter**, J.D.

**Chelle Guidry**, Office Manager

**Debra King**, Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Elder Care Coordinator

**Pati Bedwell**, Elder Care Coordinator

**Katlyn Green**, Gerontologist, Certified Senior Advisor (CSA), Elder Care Coordinator

**Joshua Bey** and **Tyler McCullar** Public Benefits Specialists

**Jennifer Berkon**, **Jennifer Wheeler**, and **Sam Cox** Paralegals

**Sarah Marlett**, Legal Assistant

**Dana Hentschel**, Outreach Coordinator

**Crystal Santi**, Intake Specialist

**Hope Campbell**, Office Assistant and Receptionist

## **Who We Are and What We Do**

**Barbara McGinnis**, Partner, Certified Elder Law Attorney (CELA), Registered Nurse (RN), Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)

Barbara is certified as an elder law attorney by the National Elder Law Foundation. She is also a VA-accredited attorney. Before receiving her license to practice law in Tennessee, Barbara spent more than 20 years as a Registered Nurse and Gerontological Nurse Practitioner.

**Chris Johnson**, Partner, Attorney

Chris provides legal expertise on a wide range of client issues with a focus on estate planning, VA benefits, and probate. He comes to Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning with 19 years of legal and military experience. Prior to his retirement in 2014, Chris had achieved the rank of Major and was heading the Legal Services Support Team at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, NC.

**Joshua Hunter**, J.D.

Josh helps the partners with their estate planning cases and administrative needs. Before assuming this role, Josh was the Public Benefits Specialist at Johnson McGinnis assisting clients with their Medicare and Veteran's benefits, and he held that position for six years.

Prior to joining Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning, Josh worked as the Benefits Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator for the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) with an additional year of experience working with SMP on Medicare fraud. He graduated from Nashville School of Law and will sit for the bar in 2024.

**Chelle Guidry**, Office Manager

Chelle has been on staff since 2008, first as a legal assistant and then, in 2021, as Office Manager. Chelle provides vital administrative support to members of the Johnson McGinnis team. She assists with a wide variety of tasks necessary to implement Life Care Plans for the firm's clients. Chelle works on everything from intakes, appointment scheduling, and asset transfers to court filings, trust funding, database management, and more.

Before joining Johnson McGinnis in late 2008, Chelle held administrative positions in the real estate industry, working as closing manager for a high-profile Hendersonville realtor, and at a title company where she processed closings for loan officers, realtors, and buyers and sellers.

**Debra King**, Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Elder Care Coordinator

Debra has been on staff as an Elder Care Coordinator at Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning since 2006, with ten years prior experience as a discharge planner in Nashville. This experience gives her a special understanding of the needs and challenges facing the elderly and their families during every phase of the elder care continuum. She helps our clients' coordination of care.

**Pati Bedwell**, Elder Care Coordinator

Pati has worked with the elderly and their families for more than 20 years. Her presentations draw on her experiences helping families navigate the long-term care system, and her role as a guide, encourager, counselor, resource gatherer and advocate during the journey. She helps our clients' coordination of care.

**Katlyn Green**, Gerontologist, Certified Senior Advisor (CSA), Elder Care Coordinator

Katlyn's specialties include work as a Certified Senior Advisor (CSA)®, a Certified Senior Occupancy Specialist (COS), a Certified End-of-Life Doula (EOLD) as well as field work (practicum, internships, student teaching, and clinical training) in senior housing, chaplaincy, grief counseling, end-of-life care, hospice service, funeral implementation, family mediation, aging development, and social work.

**Joshua Bey, Public Benefits Specialist**

Joshua spent several years working for Tennessee public benefits agencies, experience that makes him a valuable addition to the Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning team. His expertise equips him with the ability to assist clients and families with Medicaid eligibility and applications.

**Tyler McCullar, Public Benefits Specialist**

Tyler helps guide clients through the difficult maze of Medicare benefits, and he assists clients in applying for Veteran's benefits.

Tyler came to Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning with four years of healthcare and insurance experience. Tyler was the program coordinator for the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), a service that provides free and unbiased Medicare counseling to older adults, a position he held for more than four years.

**Jennifer Berkon, Paralegal**

Jennifer helps clients with estate and asset protection planning. Prior to joining Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning, she worked as a paralegal for eight years at Carter Shelton, PLC formerly Emerge Law, PLC.

**Jennifer Wheeler, Paralegal**

Jennifer provides legal support to the firm's attorneys in estate planning, trust planning, and asset protection matters. She brings over a decade of paralegal experience to the firm.

**Sam Cox, Paralegal**

Sam provides legal support to the firm's attorneys in estate planning, trust planning, and asset protection matters.

Prior to coming to Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning, Sam had over a decade of experience in corporate leadership roles. He was also a former college athlete, but now spends his time coaching his two young children.

**Sarah Marlett, Legal Assistant**

Sarah is often the main contact for Life Care Plan families, assisting with Trust funding, Deed drafting, and providing any support that the Elder Care Coordinators may need. Sarah joined Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning after 5 years in banking. Aside from Sarah's passion for Elder Law, she is a singer/songwriter.

**Dana Hentschel, Outreach Coordinator**

Dana represents Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning to the community at large. She coordinates the Learning Café for clients, as well as community speaking engagements and other external communications such as the firm's podcast Aging Starts Now. Prior to joining the firm, Dana spent seven years as a Community Relations Director for a local assisted living. Also, she served as a professional fundraiser for 50 nationally known health charities for ten years. She is a PAC Independent Certified Trainer and contracts with Mental Health America of the MidSouth to train professionals and caregivers in the Positive Approach to Care for someone with dementia.

**Crystal Santi, Intake Specialist**

As the firm's Intake Specialist, Crystal Santi, takes calls from prospective clients and helps them decide whether there is a mutual fit between their needs and the services Johnson McGinnis provides. Crystal also schedules appointments, follows up with prospects, and oversees the firm's intake data collection system.

Prior to coming to Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning, Crystal has worked in the legal field for over 20 years, and she brings her experience and warm demeanor to help the people who call the firm identify what they need.

**Hope Campbell, Office Assistant and Receptionist**

Hope is often the first-person people to interact with when they call or visit Johnson McGinnis Elder Care Law & Estate Planning. As the firm's receptionist, she answers the phones, makes appointments, and provides administrative support to members of the Johnson McGinnis staff. Prior to joining the firm, Hope worked for four years as a surgery coordinator at a local pain clinic.