

ANN BUTENHOF / Butenhof & Bomster PC / Elder Law



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Why did you choose to be an attorney?

I have always wanted to work with people and make a difference in people's lives. My initial goal was to become a social worker, and I ultimately obtained a joint degree in law and social work, which has proven to be a beneficial combination in my areas of practice.

Did something specific attract you to your specialty?

I enjoy helping people in very concrete ways, whether through maintaining eligibility for public benefits and enhancing life options for individuals with disabilities, creating an estate plan, or assisting in qualifying a spouse for essential home or nursing home services. The eligibility rules for various public benefit programs such as Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are complex, and it is gratifying to assist parents, spouses, adult children and trustees in navigating these difficult waters at times that might be emotionally charged.

What's something you learned in law school that has guided you through the years?

In the first week of my first year of law school, my property law professor lectured the class for nearly an hour on

the importance of maintaining balance in one's life — your life should solely not be about work, and one's own family and friends must remain a primary focus. I believe an effort to maintain balance and have outside interests enables me to be a better attorney and more focused while at work.

Can you briefly share your most memorable moment as a practicing attorney?

While working at New Hampshire Legal Assistance, I litigated a class action lawsuit relating to Medicaid liens and recovery, *DesFosses v. Shumway*. The settlement of that case resulted in the return of millions of dollars to individual New Hampshire homeowners.

Do you have advice for someone who might need your help now or in the future?

It is never too early to begin planning — but it easily can become too late. Do not wait for an emergency to review and evaluate your options with an attorney.

Advice for someone planning to go into the practice of law?

A career can last many years — find something that will hold your interest and play to your strengths. There is a direct correlation between enjoying your work and quality of work product.

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