

Jayla Jay Howard

196 Dundee Rd., Fort Covington, NY 12937 | (214) 616-7120 | jaylajayw@gmail.com
Attorney Licensed in New York and Texas

EDUCATION

University of Pennsylvania Law School, Philadelphia, PA | JD 05/2014

Award: Outstanding Pro Bono Service Award (120+ hours)

Publication: *Disappearing Together? Social Contract Theory and American Federalism*, 17 U. Pa. J. Const. L. 569 (2014)

Activities: *Journal of Constitutional Law*—Executive Editor; Class Officer; Student Member of Three School Committees; Pro Bono Research Volunteer & High School Moot Court Coach; Mock Trial Competitor & Alumni Relations Chair; Morris Fellow (Mentor); Y'allSA President

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA | MS-Criminology 05/2014

Thesis: *Alcohol Outlet Density and Gun Violence in Washington, D.C.*

University of North Texas, Denton, TX | BA-Social Sciences, *summa cum laude* 05/2011

Honors Thesis: *Evolution of Religious Jurisprudence*

Publication: Fuhrmann, C.J. and J. Wilkerson. "Punishment and Penalties, Greece and Rome." *Encyclopedia of Ancient History* Wiley-Blackwell (2012).

Honors: UNT Honors College—Distinguished Honors Scholar; David B. Kesterson Award for Outstanding Honors College Student; Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society—Chapter President

EXPERIENCE (additional experience available upon request)

Practice of Law:

Bucher Law Firm—Associate Attorney | 01/2026–Present

Consumer-protection/antitrust litigation practice including arbitration.

Law Office of Jayla Wilkerson, PLLC—Owner/Attorney | 07/2021–12/2025

Operator of solo law firm engaged primarily in Environmental Law, Criminal Defense, and Family Law matters with particular focus on low-income and LGBTQIA+ clientele. My practice also includes civil and criminal appellate work.

U.S. Small Business Administration—Attorney Advisor (GS-11) | 05/2020–07/2021

Temporary position assisting with the unprecedented number of disaster-relief loans submitted from small businesses all over the nation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dallas City Attorney's Office—Senior Assistant City Attorney II | 11/2018–03/2020

Community Prosecution—Team-based, community-focused civil enforcement of municipal codes with an emphasis on environmental protection. I worked with a multi-departmental team to identify and eliminate violations of Dallas city ordinances. This process involved both field work and civil litigation in state district courts, and often involved cooperation with agencies outside the City such as TCEQ and EPA. I conducted legal and other research, drafted motions and other documents, argued hearings, negotiated agreements, and worked with inspectors, business operators, and property owners to ensure continued compliance.

Dallas County District Attorney's Office—Assistant District Attorney | 07/2015–11/2018

Jury Trials—*Felony*: (4) Leads & (5) Third Chair (fraud cases) | *Misdemeanor*: Approx. (8) Leads & (13) Jury Selections

Specialized Crimes Division—Prosecution of White Collar (Fraud) and Environmental Crimes, including intake; working and training with law enforcement and other government agencies; grand jury presentations; gathering and analysis of evidence; plea negotiations; motion litigation and hearings; and trials by court or jury. Environmental cases involved pollution of land, water, and air. Fraud cases involved employee theft/embezzlement; complex retail theft; identity-theft-related crimes; illegal sales of copyrighted and patented items (improper labeling); forgery and tampering with documents/licenses; and fraud against agencies such as Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Department of Health and Human Services, Texas Department of Public Safety, and others

Misdemeanor Division—Litigation of misdemeanor criminal cases including hearings such as on motions to suppress evidence; plea negotiations; victim communication; and trials by court or jury. I worked in general misdemeanor courts and family-violence court (Chief Prosecutor).

Appellate Division—Though not assigned to the Appellate Division, I had the opportunity to write two appellate briefs for cases in the Court of Appeals for the Fifth District of Texas at Dallas, one of which was a complex appeal of five cases involving misapplication of fiduciary property and investment/securities fraud. I also handled the Class C Misdemeanor appeals docket for approximately one year in addition to my other duties.

Dallas County District Attorney's Office—Post-Graduate Legal Intern | 04/2014–12/2014

Specialized Crimes Division—Assisted prosecutors with trial prep for white-collar felonies including witness interviews; discovery compliance; data collection, synthesis, and analysis; organizing and analyzing evidence; consultation on trial strategy; research and memos

Family Violence Division—Assisted prosecutors in all aspects of trial prep for capital murder and other first-degree felonies, including voir dire, live witness interviews and transcriptions of statements, organization and analysis of evidence, and research and analysis of case law

Office of the Attorney General of Texas—Law Clerk | 05/2013–08/2013

Office of the Solicitor General—Conducted legal research and drafted memos regarding criminal and civil legal matters to which the State of Texas was a party on appeal

Criminal Appeals Division—Researched and drafted memos regarding federal habeas corpus writs in death penalty cases.

Higher Education:

Texas A&M University–Commerce—Adjunct Instructor | 10/2021–Present

Instructor for Competency-Based Education program courses in Criminal Justice, Legal Aspects of Occupational Safety and Health, and Environmental Law. Course development in Environmental Law and Occupational Safety and Health.

Arizona College of Nursing–Dallas—Adjunct Instructor | 03/2022–12/2023

Taught online lecture-style course, Introduction to Political Science to nursing students as a part of their general education requirements for their undergraduate degree.

University of Texas at Arlington—Adjunct Lecturer | 08/2016–12/2016

Developed curriculum and taught evening undergraduate course in the Criminal Justice Department: American Judicial Systems

University of Pennsylvania Law School—Research Assistant | 05/2012–08/2012

Researched legal matters and drafted memoranda under the direction of then-Professor (now Dean) Theodore Ruger primarily in matters of Health Care Law and Employment Law.

University of Pennsylvania—Summer Mentorship Program Coordinator | 05/2012–07/2012
Developed a curriculum and taught local high school students about legal issues and law school generally.

Other:

Jay W Services—Owner | 10/2003–07/2015

Started an air conditioning and refrigeration business specializing in commercial service and new construction; I handled all aspects of business including taxation, employment, consumer affairs/client satisfaction, and legal compliance.

Miscellaneous—

My other employment experiences include various positions in construction, service, retail, restaurant, entertainment, and other industries. Please contact me for more details if interested.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, ETC.

[American Bar Association](#);

New York State Bar Association;

[Texas Bar College](#);

[Dallas Bar Association](#);

[Dallas LGBT Bar Association](#);

[Dallas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association](#);

[Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association](#);

[American Constitution Society](#)—DFW Lawyers Chapter Board Member;

[Artitude](#)—Executive Board Member.

SELECTED AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

2019 Recipient Dallas LGBT Bar Association Justice Award;

2022 Recipient Liveable Arlington Environmental Justice Award.

LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATIONS

State Bar of Texas | #24093367 | November 6, 2014

State Bar of New York | November 2025

United States District Court Northern District of Texas

Texas Air Conditioning/Refrigeration License | TACLA23051C | September 2003

EPA Universal Refrigerant Handling Certification