

**HONOREE** | AMY STRATTON, Moonan, Stratton & Waldman LLP



**Stratton's adviser role meaningful during crisis**

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

**AMY STRATTON OF THE PROVIDENCE** law firm **MOONAN, STRATTON & WALDMAN LLP** guides clients through wills, probate and estate planning. With founding partner Irving Waldman practicing part time, the small firm is run by Stratton and Kristen Prull Moonan, offering clients legal services that are – by design – personal and meant to cover all bases.

“We are not only attorneys, we’ve become trusted advisers,” Stratton said recently. “We know their families, businesses, everything about them. We know much more than the traditional attorney. I can’t think of a better way to practice law. I’m very lucky.”

Now the COVID-19 pandemic has added much more complexity to Stratton’s role.

With the coronavirus risk, the focus of Stratton’s practice – which involves estate planning and business succession – is even more pressing.

Stratton, who is accustomed to considering what-if and crisis-type scenarios, has had to think even further along these lines as clients call with concerns related to the pandemic. Many are anxious to make sure their affairs are in order if the worst were to happen.

“People are afraid and because this is a global pandemic, it affects every single person,” Stratton said. “They are thinking, ‘What if I am not here anymore?’ ”

And the work hasn’t slowed. Even as other businesses have shut down temporarily, Stratton and the team at the law office have continued to assist clients throughout the crisis. “This is not a marketing opportunity,” she said. “We see this as a service opportunity, and we are lucky to be able to help.”

While still maintaining office hours,

Stratton said that the firm is doing so with three things in mind: safety, consistency and flexibility. The staff works remotely when it can, but some clients still need to come into the office, such as for signing documents related to real estate transactions, she noted.

Even the smallest precautions are being taken.

“We sanitize all high-touch points. We give everyone a new pen and tell them to bring it home, or ask them to bring their own” rather than trying to sanitize each one, said Stratton. Clients are also sent a pre-appointment note asking them if they have symptoms. Video and phone conferencing are at the ready for clients who don’t absolutely need to come in.

It’s an unprecedented time for Stratton, who has been practicing law for 23 years, nine of those with Moonan, Stratton & Waldman, a firm that focuses on real-estate law, business law, elder-law services, and helps clients with Medicaid matters as well.

Stratton majored in English at Boston College before earning a law degree at Suffolk University. Creative writing was her interest, and she finds it applicable to what she does now – often serving as a filter for clients to break down frequently impenetrable legal jargon.

“They don’t need to know the ins and outs of tax code. That’s what I’m here for,”

**ESSENTIAL SERVICE:** Attorney Amy Stratton, who focuses on estate planning and business succession, says clients have sought out the services of her law firm, Moonan, Stratton & Waldman LLP, in these times of uncertainty. PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

said Stratton. “In cases of death, illness, divorce or family dysfunction ... I can filter it through the legal estate-planning system and make sure they are OK.”

Stratton regularly enlightens clients and potential clients on business, special needs, wills, probate and estate planning. She and her fellow team members speak to professional groups in the community about the importance of having proper legal documents and regular reviews to ensure circumstances that may have changed are covered, legally.

These topics might seem dry and boring, but Stratton’s creative nature comes into play in educating clients. Often, she uses examples of celebrities who did not have adequate estate or business plans to illustrate the problems that can result.

As part of that creative flair, you won’t find shelf upon shelf of law books in her office. Instead, what you will find is a life-size inflatable figure of ex-wrestler Hulk Hogan. Calling it a “good visual,” it’s unexpected and gets people’s attention, she said.

Hogan has had multiple, well-publicized, high-profile legal battles, including those in areas of estate planning and real estate. Legal lessons can be learned from his experiences and those of other high-earning celebrities, said Stratton, who once met Hogan at his beach shop in Clearwater, Fla.

In this time of the COVID-19 crisis, Stratton is using all the tools she can to ensure clients and staff are safe. Software allows her team to work remotely if needed. Hand sanitizer is at the ready, and clients who don’t need to visit the office won’t.

Serving clients’ legal needs in a comprehensive, complete way and delivering information succinctly and creatively is what Stratton’s office has been doing all along. Now, with COVID-19, the need for the firm’s services is clearer, and it is delivering service to those clients in different, necessary ways. ■

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**AMY STRATTON,**  
Moonan, Stratton &  
Waldman LLP law partner