Shipman & Goodwin LLP

# Catherine M. Watson

Partner

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Boston, MA

View Full Bio

Catherine Watson is a partner in Shipman's Boston office. Her practice is focused on estate planning, estate administration, and probate litigation, where she works closely with individuals, families, and fiduciaries to safeguard wealth and guide it across generations. She has earned recognition for her ability to translate complex tax and fiduciary concepts into straightforward, actionable strategies that address both immediate needs and long-term goals.

Her estate planning work includes preparing wills, trusts, and other planning vehicles to help clients protect assets, minimize estate and gift tax exposure, and ensure that their intentions are clearly carried out. She advises family business owners on succession strategies, addressing the intersection of corporate governance, family dynamics, and tax considerations. In administering estates and trusts, Cathy counsels personal representatives and trustees on their fiduciary responsibilities, assists with probate filings and tax compliance, and provides solutions when disputes arise.

Cathy has also represented clients in contested probate and fiduciary matters, including will contests, breach of duty claims, and disputes over accountings. Her litigation background provides clients with the confidence that, when conflicts cannot be resolved informally, she can advocate effectively in court while remaining sensitive to the family relationships at stake.

Clients value her blend of technical knowledge and practical guidance. She draws on prior experience working for the Committee for Public Counsel Services, where she represented children and families, and from her early work with a nonprofit facilitating international adoptions in Russia and Lithuania. These experiences honed her ability to manage legal issues that involve not only financial and procedural complexity but also sensitive personal dynamics.

Cathy's professional engagement extends beyond her client work. She has served as Vice President of the Family Business Association, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit dedicated to supporting multigenerational family enterprises. Her leadership in this role reflects her commitment to advancing governance and sustainability for family-owned companies. Combined with her day-to-day practice, this perspective enables her to help clients design estate plans and succession strategies that are not only legally sound but also aligned with family values and long-term continuity.

## Distinctions

- Listed as a Massachusetts Super Lawyer® Rising Star: *Family Law (2008-2009, 2011-2012)*
- Named as a Massachusetts Top Lawyer in Boston Magazine (2012)

## Professional Affiliations

- Family Business Association, Inc. - Vice President
- Massachusetts Bar Association - Past Member of the Child Welfare Section Council

## Community Involvement

- Committee for Public Counsel Services - Private Counsel, Children and Family Law Panel

## Credentials

### *Education*

- Suffolk University School of Law, J.D., 2005
- College of the Holy Cross, B.A., 1997, *cum laude*

### *Bar Admissions*

- Massachusetts