



JOE G. DURRETT

Partner

Joe's professional experience began as a public accountant in New Orleans, La., but his love for learning led him to attend law school. He began practicing disability law as an attorney for the Florida Special Disability Trust Fund in 1985, where he traveled throughout the State litigating cases, and also arguing cases before the Florida First District Court of Appeals. Because of his experience with the Special Disability Trust Fund, he still represents multiple clients regarding ongoing claims with the Fund, and manages the largest practice of this nature in Florida.

Joe left the S.D.T.F. and began practicing workers' compensation defense in 1989. Joe has practiced in workers' compensation throughout his career and has experience with all the dramatic changes in the law for the past thirty-seven years. With his background in accounting, he has represented clients on hundreds of cases regarding Social Security and Grice offsets. His clients find that he is the go-to source for questions regarding the older laws and offset issues. Joe has also represented the disabled for on the job injuries, Social Security disability claims, and Veterans' disability claims. He was a managing partner of a multi-office Social Security and Veterans disability practice.

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Practicing in the other fields of disability has provided Joe with invaluable insight to practicing workers' compensation defense.

Joe's background has resulted in his having one of the more eclectic practices within the firm. Joe's primary practice is workers' compensation defense. Being also an accountant, Joe approaches each case from a quantitative approach, i.e. determining the most cost efficient approach to defending the case for his client. With his background, Joe does not believe workers' compensation defense should be practiced in a vacuum, but should be practiced with consideration of the other parties' resources and goals as there is often interplay between the injured parties workers' compensation claim and their other claims such as third party claims and/ or Social Security disability claims, their other resources such as Medicare, Tricare, private insurance and retirement benefits, and their ultimate goals regarding their workers' compensation claim. This approach has resulted in Joe's ability to settle cases which others have considered impossible to settle.

While it is often said that lawyers hate math, Joe loves numbers. His clients recognize with his C.P.A. and legal backgrounds, and his expertise with spreadsheets, that he is a valuable resources for issues involving complicated benefit calculations. Joe has been challenged by the best, but yet had remarkable success on benefit issues, some going back over forty years. This ability not only applies to claims, but he has also developed a niche practice in representing his

clients in regard to D.F.S. audits, and audits by excess carriers. He has also performed end of life audits on cases for additional claims against excess carriers. These talents have saved his clients hundreds of thousands of dollars.

While not a primary part of his current practice, but more out of passion, Joe represents disabled veterans regarding their disability claims with the Department of Veteran Affairs. He is proud that he has assisted numerous disabled veterans in acquiring total unemployment benefits after their initial claims were entirely denied.

PRACTICE AREAS

- Workers' Compensation

EDUCATION

- Stetson University College of Law, J.D., 1983
- McNeese State University, B.S., Accounting, 1979

ADMISSIONS

- The Florida Bar
- U.S. District Court Middle District of Florida
- Accredited Attorney by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Certified Public Accountant