

THERESA B. STEPHENSON

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EDUCATION

Campbell University School of Law; Buies Creek, North Carolina; Juris Doctor; May, 1986

North Carolina State University; Raleigh, North Carolina; Bachelor of Arts, *Magna Cum Laude* (Philosophy and Multi-Disciplinary Studies); May, 1981

Peace College; Raleigh, North Carolina; Associate of Arts; May, 1979

PROFESSIONAL LICENSES AND HONORS

- North Carolina State Bar, admitted 1987
- Certified Mediator, North Carolina Dispute Resolution Commission, since 1995
- AV Preeminent Rating by Martindale-Hubbell
- 2016 Recipient DPS Badge of Excellence, Innovation and Efficiency

LEGAL EMPLOYMENT

North Carolina Division of Employment Security, Chair, North Carolina Board of Review, Raleigh, North Carolina (2019–present).

Nominated by Governor Cooper and unanimously confirmed by the General Assembly As Chair from 2019 to the end of 2022, reviewed and issued decisions in over 16,000 Higher Authority appeals within 3-5 days of receipt from the Division. Put in place a system to increase efficiency and responsiveness to all inquiries, telephone phone calls and emails to the Board. Increased hours to deal with the increase in appeals resulting from the Pandemic. Allowed oral argument presentations and conducted in-person employer tax hearings. All cases that were reviewed by the Court of Appeals and the N.C. Supreme Court upheld the Board's decisions. Made several modifications in procedures which resulted in greater responsiveness and quicker disposition of cases. Implemented a tracking system for all cases and the results of each appeal.

North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Special Deputy General Counsel, Raleigh, North Carolina (2015-2019).

Responsibilities included providing the Secretary and executive management with verbal and written legal opinions on laws, constitutional provisions, administrative rules and regulations, court decisions, and other precedents impacting the Department's policies and operational procedures. Drafted Departmental rules, operational guidelines, contracts, proposed

legislation, and other legal documents. Advised on all aspects of proposed Federal and State legislation as the same related to the Department. Actively involved in all aspects of the Counsel's Office, including Personnel issues, Workers' Compensation, Law Enforcement, Post Release and Parole Commission, and Corrections. Spearheaded the Agency's Workers' Compensation initiative by developing policies and procedures with the Office of State Human Resources. Provided litigation advice, mediation support, and strategical guidance to the Attorney General's staff in Workers' Compensation, Tort Claims and the Public Safety Sections. Responsible for achieving over \$37.6 million in Departmental cost avoidance/savings in 2015 by settling old Workers' Compensation claims with lifetime benefits. From January 1, 2016-September 30, 2016 achieved additional savings of over \$43 million for the Department. Recognized by the Department for these achievements with the Badge of Excellence Award, the highest honor which can be accorded an employee. Along with the Office of State Human Resources and the Attorney General's Office, developed and led a training program specially designed to assist the Third Party Administrator and agency Workers' Compensation Administrators across the state.

North Carolina Industrial Commission, Senior Deputy Commissioner, Raleigh, North Carolina (1996-2015).

Responsible for the judicial resolution of controversies between workers, employers, carriers, providers, and citizens having claims under the North Carolina Workers Compensation Act and the North Carolina State Tort Claims Act. As Deputy Commissioner, responsible for conducting full evidentiary hearings throughout the State, filing written opinions and decisions, hearing administrative motions, hearing administrative appeals, reviewing complex agreements, reviewing settlement agreements, and other matters. From April, 2009 until July, 2014, in addition to holding regular hearings, was one of two Deputy Commissioners who determined Expedited Medical Matters, personally decided over 5,000 Expedited Medical Matters in compliance with all legislatively mandated timelines. Served on the Full Commission in temporary capacity as needed. Presenter at numerous Workers Compensation Continuing Legal Education Seminars. Authored the section on Medical Motions in First and Second Editions of *North Carolina Workers Compensation Law, A Practical Guide*.

North Carolina Department of Human Resources, Division of Personnel Services, Personnel Director, Caswell Center, Kinston, North Carolina (1993-1996).

Responsible for the administrative and legal aspects of all personnel matters in the State's largest institution (1,750-1,800 employees). Areas of responsibility included overseeing compliance with the State Personnel Act, State Personnel Manual, Chapter 115C (teacher employment), Workers Compensation, OSHA, Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VII, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, wage and hour, and all other aspects of employment law which apply to a State agency. Responsible for overseeing recruitment and posting of positions, employee relations as well as the employee insurance, and benefits and disability programs. Received certifications as an Analyst, an EEO Officer and Supervisory training regarding the Performance Management System. This position entailed supervisory responsibility for an office of ten (10) people.

Theresa B. Stephenson, Attorney at Law, Kinston, North Carolina (1990-1993).

Limited practice of law concentrating in the areas of administrative law and personnel law. Handled and assisted in matters involving the State Personnel Act, Title VII, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Employment Security Commission.

District Attorney's Office for the Eighth Prosecutorial District, Assistant District Attorney, Kinston, North Carolina (1987-1990)

PERSONAL

- Born Lumberton, North Carolina
- Married to James B. Stephenson II, Principal of StephensonLaw, LLP, Attorneys at Law, Cary, North Carolina
- Two Daughters
- Advanced Certified Equestrian Coach and Volunteer, Special Olympics North Carolina