

## Maria S. Bellafronto

Shareholder

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- **Industries**

- Banking & Financial Services
- Food & Beverage
- Industrial & Manufacturing
- Retail
- Technology

- **Services**

- Litigation & Trial Practice
- Real Estate
- Trust & Estate Litigation

## Overview

Maria Bellafronto is Co-chair of Hopkins & Carley's Litigation Department. Her litigation practice focuses on real estate, commercial and trust and estate disputes. She has more than 20 years of experience in jury and bench trials, and also serves as a Judge Pro Tempore for the Santa Clara County Superior Court.

Maria regularly represents property owners and developers, as well as buyers and sellers in commercial disputes involving:

- Purchase and sale transactions
- Real estate investment fraud
- Commercial landlord-tenant disputes

Maria's strength in litigation is built on her relentless inquisitiveness. She worked as a private detective during law school and honed her investigative skills prior to joining Hopkins & Carley when she worked as an associate for an insurance fraud claims

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law firm and as in-house counsel for Farmers Insurance Group.

## Experience

- Successfully defended a commercial real estate developer against allegations of fraud and breach of contract in a six week jury trial in Shasta County. Client was awarded all of its attorney fees and most costs to defend the action.
- Successfully defended high tech startup company in a commercial eviction lawsuit brought by its landlord in San Francisco, claiming that the client's office lease was illegal because the City of San Francisco's zoning ordinances did not permit "office" use. Client was awarded all of its fees and costs incurred in defending the eviction action in trial.
- Represented a shopping center commercial landlord in a settlement of \$3.5 million after its anchor tenant, a major grocery chain, ceased operations and abandoned the premises.
- Represented client in a probate court trial against the client's sister, invalidating the sister's power of attorney on grounds of lack of capacity and enabling client to receive half of the estate.
- Won a \$250,000 claim in binding arbitration for client against former girlfriend for failing to repay him for improving her property.

## Professional Activities

- Santa Clara County Superior Court, Judge Pro Tempore
- Santa Clara University Real Estate Advisory Board
- Thirty One Women, Co-Founder
- Graceful Giving, Co-Founder
- De Anza Force Soccer Club, Board Member
- Little Italy San Jose, Advisory Board Member
- ICSC (International Council of Shopping Centers)
- SVBA (Silicon Valley Bar Association)
- Santa Clara County Bar Association
- American Bar Association

## Bar Admissions

- State Bar of California (1992)

## Court Admissions

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- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California

## Education

- J.D., Santa Clara University
- B.A., University of California, Davis