Maryland Divorce Attorneys for Business Owners

Divorce becomes more complicated when a business is involved. Beyond the personal side of the case, business owners must also consider cash flow, ownership interests, valuation issues, and the long-term impact the divorce may have on operations. Working with a divorce attorney who understands business assets helps protect not only your personal interests but also your company's interests.

What Happens When a Business is Part of the Divorce

A business is often one of the largest assets that a divorcing couple has to think about resolving, which makes it difficult for everyone to come to an agreement. For some, a business can represent a lifetime of work or even the primary source of income.

Because of this, property division often becomes significantly more complex than in divorces involving only traditional marital assets. Dividing assets becomes more complex when business liabilities, future earnings, or ownership interests are involved. Questions also arise about whether the business is marital property, how much of it is subject to division, and whether one spouse contributed to its growth directly or indirectly during the marriage.

How Maryland Courts Handle Business Interests

Maryland follows the doctrine of equitable distribution, which means courts divide marital property based on what is fair, not necessarily equal. The first step is determining whether a business interest qualifies as marital property, separate property, or a combination of both.

In many cases, a business started during the marriage may be considered part of the marital estate, even if only one spouse operated it. A business established before marriage may remain partially non-marital, but some portion of the appreciation in value may be considered marital depending on factors such as marital contributions, labor, financial investment, and the ability to trace separate ownership interests.

Maryland courts look at the overall financial picture when addressing business assets. That includes the ownership structure, the business's income, each spouse's contributions, and whether marital funds were invested in the company over time. The court may also consider existing partnership agreements, prenuptial and postnuptial agreements, or shareholder agreements that affect ownership rights.

Valuing a Business in Divorce

Business valuation is often one of the most disputed parts of a divorce involving business ownership. Before the court can determine how to address a business interest, the business itself must be valued. That process may involve reviewing business debts, contracts, financial records, future earning potential, profit and loss statements, and tax returns.

In some cases, outside experts such as forensic accountants or valuation professionals are brought in to determine fair market value, as well as the existence of owner compensation, the existence of goodwill, retained earnings, etc. The valuation can significantly affect the outcome of the case, especially when the business has fluctuating income, multiple owners, or substantial goodwill attached to the company name or reputation.

Once a value is established, the court or parties can address how the interest will be handled. One spouse may buy out the other's interest, certain assets may be offset against the business value, or the parties may negotiate another arrangement that allows the business to continue operating without disruption.

What Issues Business Owners Should Expect During a Divorce

Business owners going through a divorce should prepare for a detailed financial review and disclosure. Business expenses, compensation structures, financial records, and ownership documents often become important parts of the case.

There may also be concerns about protecting confidential business information, maintaining daily operations during litigation, and limiting disruptions that could affect employees or clients. In some cases, issues arise over whether a spouse is undervaluing income or attempting to hide assets through the business structure. Addressing these issues early can help reduce conflict and avoid unnecessary damage to the business itself.

Why Business Owners Choose JGL's Maryland Divorce Lawyers

Divorce cases involving business ownership require more than a standard approach to property division. Issues such as business valuation, cash flow, ownership interests, and the long-term stability of the company can have significant financial consequences. JGL has experience handling complex divorce matters involving closely held businesses, high-value marital estates, partnerships, and professional practices.

Our attorneys focus on developing solutions that account for both the business and personal aspects of the case. We work with financial professionals and valuation experts when necessary, carefully evaluate the marital estate, and help clients navigate property division while protecting their financial interests. Throughout the process, we emphasize preparation, communication, and strategies tailored to each client's goals and circumstances.

Speak With a Maryland Divorce Attorney

If you own a business and are considering divorce, getting legal guidance early can make a significant difference. Decisions made at the beginning of the case can affect valuation, property division, and the future stability of the business itself.

To speak with a Maryland divorce attorney, you can contact us, or you can learn more about our family law services, including divorce matters and high-asset divorce cases.

First name*

Last name*

Email*

Phone number*

*
Geographic location

○ Maryland

○ District of Columbia

○ Virginia

○ Other

Briefly discuss your issue

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