

Joanne Hopkins limits her practice to serving as an independent presiding/hearing officer and mediator for medical staff privileging disputes.

For over 30 years, Joanne's practice focused on the relationship between the medical staff and hospitals and other health care entities and she has represented clients in numerous medical staff hearings and mediations. Joanne has an in-depth knowledge of the procedural due process obligations of hospitals and health care entities to applicants to and members of the medical staff, medical peer review confidentiality and its limitations, and mandatory reporting to the National Practitioner Data Bank (and licensing agencies) of certain professional review actions. These issues significantly impact medical staff hearings and the options in mediation, and provide her with additional expertise when serving as an independent presiding/hearing officer and mediator.

In addition to her extensive work in medical staff credentialing and peer review, Joanne handled medical staff bylaws development and interpretation, medical staff consolidations and unifications, allied health professional issues, nursing peer review, state licensing and Medicare compliance, scope of practice issues, informed consent, advance directives, and emergency services and patient transfers (EMTALA).

Joanne has been Board Certified in Health Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization since 2005. She completed the hearing officer training sponsored by the American Health Lawyers Association. Joanne was trained as a mediator and also completed the AHLA's Alternative Dispute Resolution Service mediator training program.

She is a former Chair of the Health Law Section of the State Bar of Texas and former Chair of the Texas Board of Legal Specialization's Health Law Exam Commission. She served as Vice Chair of the Texas Medical Disclosure Panel, the state committee that establishes standards for informed consent, from 1998 to 2022. She is a long-standing member of the American Health Lawyers Association. She has been a frequent speaker at the state and national level on medical staff and operational issues, and serves on the education advisory board for *Credentialing Resource Center*.

Joanne graduated from the University of Virginia with a B.S. in Nursing with distinction and received a M.S. in Nursing from the University of Texas Health Science Center - San Antonio. She served as a critical care and emergency room nurse with the U.S. Army Nurse Corps for four years, stationed at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. She received her law degree with honors from the University of Texas School of Law in 1982 and was Order of the Coif. After working in large law firms for many years, Joanne established her own practice in 1999 in Austin. She is a former board member of Hospice Austin and currently serves on its Ethics Committee.