



# ***Federal Practice is Fabulous in Tampa Bay!***

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**T**he Federal Bar Association Tampa Bay Chapter members look forward to hosting all of you in September, and we want to advise you that federal practitioners in the Tampa Bay legal market can claim the top spot in professional and lifestyle satisfaction ratings!

Tampa Bay Chapter lawyers are absolutely friendly, welcoming, and active bar members. These exceptional attorneys love being involved with the Federal Bar Association and practicing federal law in downtown Tampa! There are countless association events honoring the initiatives of its members and the judiciary. There are also ongoing educational events that bring in some of the most influential practitioners within Tampa Bay and the state of Florida. Some of these events include: pro bono and pro se clinics; community outreach programs; veteran re-entry programs; brown bag lunches with judges; Coffee at the Courthouse; annual seminars on federal sentencing; and a multitude of CLEs, including “Staying in the Game.”

This chapter has a very strong mentoring organization that allows young attorneys to feel immediately included in the legal community and often develop into strong legal and philanthropic practitioners. Two of Florida’s law schools are located in the Tampa Bay area, which allows those law students to jump into many legal internship

and employment opportunities. Satellite campuses for Western Michigan University Cooley Law School and Stetson University College of Law provide law students with countless opportunities to work for government agencies and law firms and develop the rising crop of the next generation of lawyers.

The Sam M. Gibbons Federal Courthouse is absolutely magnificent, and entry into its exquisitely detailed and opulent courtrooms often evokes a reimagining of the critically important function that this courthouse serves for its local citizens and the legal community.

Occasionally, practicing in Tampa Bay requires a healthy understanding that the state of Florida has some of the most wonderfully creative criminal masterminds. For example, you may routinely read curious headlines, such as “Florida Man Says He Punched ATM for Giving Too Much Cash”; “Man Clings to Hood of a Car as it Speeds Down a Florida Highway”; “Florida Man Tries to Break Into Car, Arrested by Deputies Waiting Inside”; “Florida Woman Arrested for DUI on a Horse”; and “Two Caught With Stolen Apes in Lee County”!

Most legal practitioners rightly observe that Tampa is a big city with a small-town approach to its surrounding community. When federal practitioners are not litigating motions and trials, they are enjoying an incomparable work-life balance. The aptly named Sunshine State tends to have the happiest group of lawyers you’ll ever meet. Perhaps the overabundance of vitamin D dancing on one’s skin brings out the greatest geniality possible in ambitious lawyers. Floridians love the sunshine and can tolerate the summer heat waves because we simply do not have strong enough constitutions to accept any lev-

el of cold weather; we Floridians tend to shiver and shake like leaves when the thermometer dips below 60 degrees.

Tampa Bay provides an excellent venue to experience the best that life has to offer! It only requires traveling a relatively short distance to the Gulf beaches or to Disney World in the other direction. Tampa is truly a cosmopolitan city, with every type of entertainment you may wish to experience. Its professional sports teams include the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Tampa Bay Lightning, Tampa Bay Rays, and Tampa Bay Rowdies. The Amalie Arena hosts a multitude of events and music concerts. The nearby Straz Center for the Performing Arts presents Broadway and Tony Award-winning musicals. Many museums, such as the Salvador Dali Museum and the Tampa Museum of Art, contain precious artifacts worth millions of dollars.

For those seeking edible delights while attending the convention, there are many culturally diverse restaurants to experience, including Chez Faby, Urban Cantina, and Paninoteca. In fact, the historic federal courthouse and its Bizou Brasserie restaurant is truly something to experience! Tampa's Riverwalk is always a wonderful location to enjoy an evening stroll, with an excellent view of the University of Tampa's minaret architecture.

You may notice many skyscrapers in Tampa; however, it still retains many of its historic brick buildings, some of which are exemplified in the culturally diverse Ybor City. This colorful venue was created during the initial stages of the United States' conflict with Cuba, where Vicente Martinez-Ybor began the proliferation of the hand-rolled Cuban cigar trade. Ybor City's cultural impact on Tampa is unparalleled and it is certainly worth a visit (although you may wish to escape with your children after sunset, as Ybor City becomes rather lively at night).

Underneath the glitz and glamour of Tampa, it is the quiet places where the magic happens, and it is usually near the water. Florida's average sea level elevation is only three feet, and there is water, water, water everywhere! This is conducive to enjoying many sunsets at the beach, with Jimmy Buffett's music playing in local establishments. There are endless water activities, including cruising around Tampa Bay and stopping at Beer Can Island (officially known as Pine Key). Be sure to keep your eyes open to catch dolphins frolicking in the surf!

For the sophisticated set, there are plenty of delightful shops and high-scale eateries at Lido Key's St. Armands Circle. The famous Columbia restaurant or the cheesy goodness found at Venezia Pizzeria are hard to beat. Or a quicker trip can be found in Tampa's Hyde Park, with the Wine Exchange, Bartaco, and On Swann providing oodles of sophistication to the upper end of the urbane spectrum.

Florida has the best beaches in the nation, and routinely finds many of its offerings in top 10 travel ratings. Some of the most beautiful areas include Clearwater, Siesta Key, and Anna Maria Island. And don't worry, you won't have to re-enact a Roy Scheider "Jaws" scene and ask for "a bigger boat" because those pesky little man-eaters prefer their human hors d'oeuvres on the Atlantic side of the state! But you certainly should be careful and download a lightning or weather app, as the afternoon storms and lightning are rather severe (nearby Lakeland is the lightning capital of the United States). The weather may be hot when you visit, so always be prepared with water and sunscreen!

Pier 60 on Clearwater beach has diverting sunset shows every evening that feature daredevils who routinely amaze and shock audiences of all ages! Fishing is abundant there, even for first-time anglers. If you are particularly lucky, you can often find an old salty character who can tie a thousand knots and teach you everything you need to know to become a successful fisherman. Your odds are very high that the fish will be jumping onto to your hook and a trusty pair of fish pliers will allow you to release the fish back into the ocean (to avoid extra baggage fees at the airport).

As you might expect, Tampa Bay has a fixation with ice cream shops. To discover where the best ice cream is served, just follow the surfer kids with sun bleached hair and no shoes, who are living the dream. Clearwater Beach's Ice & Cream Creamery, Siesta Key's Big Olaf Creamery, and Anna Maria Island's Joe's Eats and Sweets are the perfect venues to refresh yourself after some scalding hot beach fun!

After you have had your fill of seafood pastas, apéritifs, and gelatos, you may find yourself stranded on the sand. Not to worry, a local weatherworn creature will be sure to roll you into the salty water for a brief respite until you are ready to repeat this joyful experience in a few more hours!

The members of the Tampa Bay Chapter look forward to meeting all of you in September and sharing why Florida—and particularly Tampa Bay—is the best place to practice federal law! ☺



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