



James A. Rhodes

Of Counsel

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Overview

James Rhodes' practice is concentrated in the representation of local government entities and their officials in all areas of municipal law.

Representing numerous municipal boards and officials within the state of Illinois, Jim has extensive experience advising clients on a myriad of local government issues, including land use and redevelopment, real estate, construction, contracts and financing, economic development, employment matters and police and fire hiring and discipline. He works with clients on matters relating to the general operations, including practices and procedures, the Open Meetings Act, the Freedom of Information Act. He also counsels local governments on compliance with State and Federal law and regulatory requirements including but not limited to the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Equal Opportunity Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act and Federal Communications Commission Regulations.

Assisting municipalities with economic development, he has worked to create a number of Tax Increment Financing Districts including the Wheeling Milwaukee Avenue Corridor, the Park Ridge Uptown Redevelopment, the Carpentersville Route 25 Corridor Redevelopment Project and the Carol Stream North Avenue-Schmale Road Redevelopment Project. Jim has also negotiated economic incentive agreements for several municipalities.

Jim has also represented municipalities, officials and individuals with Illinois Election Code matters involving campaign and ballot questions and regularly serves as a Court-Appointed Public Member for Local Government Electoral Boards.

He has been a certified Illinois Municipal Administrative Hearing Officer since 2002.

Jim counsels both private and non-profit corporations on general corporate matters and he currently represents the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance.

Jim served as a DuPage County Assistant State's Attorney in both the Criminal Division and the Civil Division, where he acted as counsel to the DuPage County Sheriff's Merit Commission, the DuPage County Zoning Board and then the Sheriff of DuPage County. He successfully represented the Sheriff in a number of civil rights cases brought by pretrial detainees.

In 1981, Jim went into private practice concentrating in the representation of municipalities, their officials and employees in civil rights, employment and constitutional law litigation in both the state and federal courts and before the Illinois Human Rights Commission and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Jim served as Village Attorney for the Village of Wheeling from 1982 to 2002. He currently serves as the Village Attorney for the Villages of Carol Stream and Mettawa and serves as special counsel to a number of municipalities throughout Illinois.

James received his J.D. from The John Marshall Law School in 1976 and a B.A. from Loyola University of Chicago in 1973. Jim is admitted to practice in Illinois as well as before the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and the United States Supreme Court.

Professional Affiliations

- Jim is actively involved in a number of professional organizations. He is a current Director of the Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association and the Chairman of the Membership and Awards Committee. He is a member of the International Municipal Lawyers Association serving on the Construction Law Committee and a member of the Illinois Municipal League's Home Rule Attorneys Committee as well as the Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association. He has also served as a member of the Northwest Municipal Conference Attorneys Committee and as the Illinois State Chairman of the International Municipal Lawyers Association.

Awards and Recognition

- In 2017, Jim was recognized for his outstanding contributions, achievements and distinguished service to local government law over his career by the Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association who awarded him the Association's highest award, the Robert J. Mangler Distinguished Service Award for Lifetime

Achievement.

- In 2019 Jim was recognized by the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police for his work in negotiating legislative amendments to the Illinois Juvenile Expungement Law.

Publications

Illinois Municipal League Publications

- Manual on Liquor Licensing and Regulation – co-author, 2017 Ed.
- The Sunshine Laws: Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act – co-author, 2016 Ed.
- Manual on Home Rule versus Non-Home Rule Status (What’s Best for your Municipality?) – co-author, 2014 Ed.
- Manual on Municipal Forms of Local Government – co-author, 2014 Ed.
- Manual on Police and Fire Disciplinary Matters – co-author, 2010 Ed.

Journal of the Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association

- A Local Government Lawyer’s Guide to Incompatibility of Offices – November 2022
- “Illinois Workplace Transparency Act” – co-author, February 2020
- “Recent Cases of Interest” – co-author, May 2019
- “Recent Cases of Interest” – co-author, August 2019
- “Recent Cases of Interest” – co-author, December 2018
- “Recent Cases of Interest” – co-author, October 2018
- “Recent Cases of Interest” – co-author, August 2018
- “Director’s Column” – co-author, Continuing Contributor
- “Warrantless Vehicle Searches” – co-author, January 2011

Illinois Municipal Review-Journal

- “Getting on the Ballot: Top Ten Mistakes for Candidates to Avoid When Circulating and Filing Nominating Petitions” – co-author, September 2016
- “Official Duties of the Municipal Clerk as the Local Election Official” – co-author, November 2016
- “Navigating the Election Objection Process” – co-author, December 2016

Illinois Continuing Legal Education Publications

- “Chapter 1, Building Regulations,” Illinois Land Use Law Practice Handbook – co-author, 2017 Ed.

A New “Fix” for Klaeren – Judicial Review of Land Use Decisions Revisited, February 2008

Presentations

James has lectured extensively on local government law topics for a number of organizations including:

- The Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association
- The Illinois Municipal League
- The International Municipal Lawyers Association
- The Illinois Public Employers Labor Association

Related Practices

- Municipal Law
- Construction Law
- Labor and Employment
- Election Law
- Corporate Law
- Real Estate Law