



DIRECTOR OF CIVIL CODE ENFORCEMENT

Charisse L. Smith

She/Her

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As the director of Best Best & Krieger’s Civil Code Enforcement practice, Charisse Smith skillfully assists California cities and public agencies with all aspects of complex code compliance and enforcement prosecution. Charisse has more than 20 years of experience handling a full range of sensitive health, safety and permitting issues, civil litigation, receiverships and more. She has successfully handled hundreds of code enforcement matters and related litigation on behalf of municipal entities. With additional background in business and real estate litigation, Charisse provides clients with well-rounded perspective, guidance and solutions. She is a skilled negotiator and gaining compliance with the municipal code is always her top priority.

Charisse previously founded and ran the Law Offices of Charisse L. Smith. In this role, in addition to firm management, she successfully represented clients in hundreds of code enforcement conflicts involving fraud, foreclosures, loans, property inheritances and more.

Charisse served in the U.S. Air Force Reserve for 17 years and served active duty for 5 years. She was assigned to the Judge Advocate General Corps, initially as a paralegal specialist and then as an assistant judge advocate, focusing on claims for and against the Air Force, military justice and legal assistance to eligible members. Charisse maintains the Air Force core values in her practice – “Integrity

CORE PRACTICES

- Code Enforcement & Receiverships
- Municipal Law
- Public Agency Litigation

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

- University of Southern California
Gould School of Law, J.D.
- Claremont McKenna College,
B.A., magna cum laude

Bar Admissions

- California

first, service before self, and excellence in all we do!”

Charisse is admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court, California Supreme Court and the U.S. Central District of California.

LANGUAGES

English

Notable Experience

- *City of Colton v. Sanchez*: Charisse worked with the city’s Code Compliance Department to attempt to gain voluntary compliance from owner who had purchased what she thought was a legal four-unit investment property. However, two of the four units were unpermitted, and a third unit was an unsafe and unpermitted garage conversion. Charisse filed a lawsuit and the court appointed a receiver under the *Health and Safety Code* to demolish the two unpermitted units, restore the garage and completely rehabilitate the property. The property was then sold, and all fees and costs of the receiver and public agency were recovered from the sale.
- *City of Ontario v. Huang*: After first attempting to gain voluntary compliance from owner concerning a commercial property containing three separate buildings, one of which was occupied and two of which were repeatedly broken into by transients, Charisse filed a lawsuit and the court appointed a receiver over the property. Shortly after, one of the vacant buildings was burned to the ground by transients, the fire-damaged building and the other vacant building were completely demolished by the receiver, and the occupied building was rehabilitated. The property was sold, and all fees and costs of the receiver and the city were paid from the sale of the property.
- *City of San Bernardino v. Super Property Solution*: After several tenants filed their own lawsuit against the owner and property manager for uninhabitable conditions, Charisse filed a separate lawsuit on behalf of the city against the property owner. The case involved three dilapidated apartment complexes owned by a single property owner operating under different corporate names and managed by the same property manager. In addition to obtaining relief from a bankruptcy court stay, Charisse worked with the owner and numerous lenders on appointing a receiver who then sold the property to an investment group to rehabilitate all of the apartment complexes. All of the receiver’s cost and city’s fees and costs were paid from the sale of the properties.
- *County of San Bernardino v. Krystoff*: The case concerned an old, abandoned lodge that had fallen into disrepair as well as several cabins in disrepair that were being used as housing. After the owner failed to voluntarily comply, Charisse filed a lawsuit and the court appointed a receiver. The receiver demolished the lodge and all cabins, and the court approved the sale of the property to a developer, which covered the cost of all demolition work, receivership costs, and the county’s fees and costs.
- *Town of Apple Valley v. Thi Le*: Charisse filed a lawsuit over a single-family residence that had been used for growing marijuana. The owner had failed to correct the violations after several city notices. The court appointed a receiver to rehabilitate and sell the property, and all receivership costs and public agency costs were recovered from the sale of the property.

Professional & Community Involvement

- Western San Bernardino County Bar Association