

# Compassionate Family Advocates

**Collins Family & Elder Law Group** provides clients with understanding and expertise.

“**F**rom the beginning of Collins Family & Elder Law Group, prioritizing our clients’ needs has been a core principle,” explains Shawna Collins, founder. “I’ve noticed at some larger firms that clients’ needs can be secondary, like during mediations where a fair settlement is within reach but isn’t pursued. Reasons for this might be because of issues with the opposing attorney or a desire to go to trial. Our approach is different. We provide clients with the best possible advice for their case, while maintaining open dialogue. This gives clients ample opportunities to voice their wishes and needs for their case, which is fundamental to our firm.”

Collins founded the firm in 1995 and worked as a solo practitioner for 15 years. During that time, she earned

a reputation as one of Charlotte’s best family law litigation attorneys. Expanding the firm became a priority in 2011, when Collins’ mother’s sudden illness forced her to re-examine her practice.

“It dawned on me that the care our clients required necessitated the support of additional attorneys while I tended to my mother. I began the meticulous search for specialized attorneys who could meaningfully contribute to our expansion. It was strenuous to find competent attorneys who could provide necessary assistance,” Collins reflects.

Collins Family & Elder Law Group has grown considerably since then, now having 20 attorneys serving clients in 15 offices across the Carolinas. Many of the firm’s attorneys are licensed in both states, eliminating

the need for clients to hire multiple firms. Elder law has also become a major component of the practice over the last few years, with noted Elder Law Specialist Kathryn Cook DeAngelo leaving retirement to join the team as Senior Counsel in 2021.

“The demand for elder law services is substantial,” Collins says. “It’s not just estate planning and wills. There are numerous complex issues to address, like Medicaid planning, guardianship, establishing special needs trusts, asset protection, and tax-reduction strategies. It’s important for our clients’ peace of mind that these matters are handled correctly and with an attorney that has skill in the field of elder law.”

Another major element of the firm’s success is their focus on the client experience. Divorce, custody conflicts, and other family law matters can be incredibly stressful, and the firm prides itself on providing resources for managing that stress. The office even has a full-time “conciierge” who connects clients with the help they need, from childcare providers to real estate experts, financial planners, and therapists. For Collins, all of this comes back to the firm’s founding principle of putting clients’ needs first.

“As our firm has expanded, we’ve consistently brought on board the finest talent,” notes Collins. “Partners Isla Tabrizi, Candace Faircloth, and Rebecca Watts are all North Carolina Family Law Specialists, and Rebecca Watts is also a NC Specialist in Appellate Law, which speaks to our firm’s high level of expertise. Beyond their technical skills, our attorneys possess deep compassion toward our clients. We work in a collaborative and supportive environment. We believe this combination makes for a highly effective team.”



ABOVE, FROM LEFT: Shawna Collins, Isla Tabrizi, Candace S. Faircloth, and Rebecca Watts



**COLLINS** FAMILY & ELDER  
LAW GROUP

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