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**Gregory Gilston** built his law firm on three distinct pillars: his background in counseling, his desire to help clients find peace in their existing familial conflict, and technology designed to simplify clients' lives.

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# A NOVEL APPROACH TO FAMILY LAW

**Gregory Gilston** built his law firm on three distinct pillars: his background in counseling, his desire to help clients find peace in their existing familial conflict, and technology designed to simplify clients' lives.

by **Matt Cosentino**  
photos by **RayLynn Photography**

**A** family law attorney, perhaps more than any other type of lawyer, is required to wear many hats: trusted advisor, fierce advocate, sympathetic listener. While some struggle to navigate the many roles of the profession, the transition from one to the other comes quite naturally to Gregory Gilston.

Gilston has a background not often found in the legal profession. Before discovering his true calling, he spent nearly five years as a mental health counselor in Philadelphia. When a former professor encouraged him to think about law school because of his inquisitive mind, he realized he could have an even bigger impact by following a different path.

"I was working with a variety of populations as a mental health counselor," he says. "The common thread was that people were experiencing conflict in their own lives and relationships as a result of family law issues that touched their lives. Some were children who were products of divorce or child custody disputes, or parents who were at odds with their spouse for whatever reason. So when I went to law school it made perfect sense to me to be a family law attorney because I felt I could really utilize my skills as a counselor in the field of family law to make a difference."

Gilston served as a paralegal in various family law departments while attending law school, and after graduation he began his career as an associate to further learn the ins and outs of the field. In November 2023, he went out on his own and founded Gilston Legal. His goal: to practice a brand of family law based on personal connections with clients, professionalism with other lawyers, and efficient processes using modern technology.

Gilston Legal, which is located in Plymouth Meeting, handles cases in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, and Philadelphia counties. The firm's areas of expertise include prenuptial and postnuptial agreements, amicable divorce, child custody, child support, domestic violence/protection from abuse, and more.

"We've experienced a lot of success and a lot of creative ways to help our clients achieve positive outcomes," Gilston says. "My motto in any case I take on is, 'Hit it hard, hit it fast, and be efficient so we can get results,' because family law cases have a tendency to get dragged out. I think there's always a hidden toll with the unanticipated length of the process and the unanticipated emotional conflict that occurs."

Gilston Legal stands out from similar firms in numerous ways, one of which is its specialty in crafting and reviewing prenuptial agree-



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—GREGORY GILSTON, GILSTON LEGAL



ments. Gilston explains that these “future planning tools” are on the rise not only with older couples who are remarrying after a divorce, but also with younger professionals who are getting married for the first time.

“The name of the game when it comes to a prenuptial agreement is enforceability, because it’s a private contract that governs the terms of divorce or death before the marriage occurs,” he says. “With prenuptial agreements in Pennsylvania, the courts care more about the process rather than the contents therein. The way it’s negotiated, signed, and reviewed is more heavily emphasized than what the agreement actually says—unless, of course, the terms are either unconscionable or unenforceable.”

He lists four foundational pillars of getting an enforceable prenuptial agreement in Pennsylvania: full and fair disclosure of existing assets and liabilities at the time of the marriage; opportunity for attorney review and consultation; the absence of duress, fraud, or misrepresentation prior to signing the agreement; and compliance with the contract principles of execution, consideration, offer, and acceptance.

At the other end of the spectrum, Gilston handles many divorce cases, where he strives to make clients feel safe, protected, and heard. He builds rapport from the first consultation; rather than pressuring them to sign on, he encourages them to speak to

other lawyers and find the right fit.

He also limits his caseload in order to give each client the personalized attention they deserve. He expects his clients to be active participants in the process, especially because they are the ones who have to live with the results.

“I’m an authentic guy, and I don’t see the need to make my clients’ lives any more difficult than they already are,” he says. “My goal is to bring the temperature down and help them find opportunity on the other side.”

Gilston Legal is a virtual law firm, with all attorneys and staff members wired to work from home as well as from the office. Gilston has taken diligent steps to accommodate his clients’ needs, including a secure portal to send and receive documents and a detailed cybersecurity policy. Almost all meetings are done via Zoom rather than in person for convenience reasons.

“The way I see it, clients don’t want to leave their office in the middle of the day to come to my office and meet about things that they don’t even want to discuss,” he says. “Talking to a lawyer is not a fun subject for someone who’s not a lawyer, so I try to make it more palatable by meeting my clients where they’re at—physically in terms of the Zoom meetings, and emotionally in terms of letting them produce information at their own speed and in a method in which they’re most comfortable.”

As the firm grows, Gilston expects to bring on more staff with the same philosophy toward family law. He envisions a full-time paralegal and another attorney to expand the estate planning aspect of the practice.

“I always say the same thing when I speak to [prospective employees],” he says. “‘You’re not coming to work *for* me; you’re coming to work *with* me, because I’m building a team. I want you to be bought in to the extent that you feel like you’re part of something bigger than yourself and you’re excited to grow this firm.’”

“My name may be on the firm, but it’s not about me here,” he continues. “It’s about making the legal process more palatable for people who need our assistance. Whether that’s prenuptial agreements or family law cases like divorce or child custody, every type of legal matter requires a custom approach that’s catered to the needs and accommodations of our clients.” ■



## Gilston Legal

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