



## KANSAS CITY

2345 Grand Blvd.  
Suite 2200  
Kansas City, MO 64108

T: 913.451.5102  
F: 913.451.0875

### Assistant

Karen Marx  
913.451.5181

## PRACTICE AREAS

Entrepreneurial Services

Trusts, Estates & Legacy  
Planning

Trust & Estate Litigation

## COURT MEMBERSHIPS

- Kansas
- Missouri

## EDUCATION

University of Missouri-Kansas  
City School of Law, LL.M., 1986

University of Notre Dame Law  
School, J.D., 1983

Creighton University, B.A.,  
*summa cum laude*, 1980

# James B. Betterman

Senior Counsel | [jim.betterman@lathropgpm.com](mailto:jim.betterman@lathropgpm.com)

James Betterman's Trust and Estate practice can best be summarized as follows:

- Preparation of estate planning instruments including wills, revocable trusts, durable powers of attorney for financial matters and durable powers of attorney for health care. Estate tax and income tax planning for use of the marital deduction and estate tax exemption.
- Sophisticated estate planning for high net worth individuals including structure and documentation of family limited partnerships, discount planning, gifting programs, generation-skipping tax planning, private annuities, installment sales, grantor retained annuity trusts, qualified personal residence trusts and grantor trusts.
- Succession planning for owners of closely-held businesses including structure and documentation for corporate reorganizations, recapitalizations, voting trusts, stock sales, asset sales, and non-qualified deferred compensation plans.
- Life insurance planning including preparation of irrevocable life insurance trusts and premium financing arrangements.
- Charitable planning, including structure and documentation of charitable remainder trusts, charitable lead trusts, supporting organizations and private foundations.
- Estate planning with retirement assets including planning for minimum required distributions, generation-skipping tax planning and conduit trusts, spousal rollovers, inherited IRAs, preparation of beneficiary designations and structuring charitable gifts.
- Trusts and Estates litigation.
- Preparation of estate tax returns and gift tax returns.
- Administration of trusts and estates.

- Resolution of tax controversies with the Internal Revenue Service.
- Presenter of estate planning seminars.

## Presentations

- University of Missouri-Kansas City, School of Law - Adjunct Professor of Law (Pro Bono), *Estate Planning and Practice*; Kansas City, Missouri, 1999-2000 school year (spring semester)
- University of Missouri-Kansas City, School of Law - Adjunct Professor of Law (Pro Bono), *Valuation for Federal Transfer Tax Purposes*, Kansas City, Missouri, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 (fall semester)
- Annual Estate Planning Internship Program, University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, *Estate Planning After Hubert*, Kansas City, Missouri, 1998
- Annual Estate Planning Internship Program, University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, *How to Make the Qualified Family Owned Business Deduction Work for the Family Farm or Other Business*, Kansas City, Missouri, 1999
- Annual Estate Planning Internship Program, University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, *Marital Deduction Planning to Maximize the Section 2013 Credit for Previously Taxed Property*, Kansas City, Missouri, 2001

- Annual Estate Planning Internship Program, University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, *Marital Deduction Planning Under the Economic Growth & Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001*, Kansas City, Missouri, 2002
- Annual Estate Planning Internship Program, University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, *Valuation Adjustment Formula Clauses*, Kansas City, Missouri, 2003
- Kansas Bar Association CLE Slam Dunk, *Current Events in Charitable Planning*, Manhattan, Kansas, February 2002
- Kansas Bar Association 20th Annual Plaza Lights Institute, *Current Developments for Closely Held Corporations*, Kansas City, Missouri, December 2002
- Kansas Bar Association 120th Annual Meeting, *Charitable Gifts to a Community Foundation, Private Foundation or Supporting Organization; Gift of S Corporation Stock to a Supporting Organization; and Use of Single Member Limited Liability Companies by Charitable Organizations*, Overland Park, Kansas, June 2002
- Greene County, Missouri, Estate Planning Society, *Marital Deduction Planning Under the Economic Growth & Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001*, Springfield, Missouri, 2001
- The Children's Mercy Planned Gift Council, *Planning for Minimum Required Distributions Under the New Proposed Regulations*, Kansas City, Missouri, May 2001
- Kansas Bar Association 18th Annual Plaza Lights Institute, *Generation-Skipping Tax: A Transactional Analysis*, Kansas City, Missouri, December 2000

## Publications

- Author, "Bliss Dairy: The Supreme Court's Golden Egg," 36 Tax Executive 99 (1984)

## News Releases

- Eight Lathrop GPM Attorneys Named Lawyer of the Year, 89 Ranked as The Best Lawyers in America©  
August 17, 2023
- Chambers High Net Worth 2023 Legal Guide Ranks Lathrop GPM LLP and 10 Attorneys  
July 20, 2023

- Six Lathrop GPM Attorneys Named Lawyer of the Year, 95 Ranked as The Best Lawyers in America©  
August 18, 2022
- Lathrop GPM Achieves Chambers High Net Worth 2022 Rankings in Three States, for Nine Attorneys  
July 14, 2022
- Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers Recognizes 30 Lathrop GPM Attorneys  
November 16, 2021
- Seven Lathrop GPM Attorneys Named Lawyer of the Year, 100 Ranked as The Best Lawyers in America©  
August 19, 2021
- Lathrop GPM Achieves Chambers High Net Worth 2021 Rankings in Three States, for Nine Attorneys  
July 22, 2021
- Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers Recognizes 34 Lathrop GPM Attorneys  
November 16, 2020
- Lathrop GPM Attorneys Named to The Best Lawyers in America©, Lawyer of the Year, and Ones to Watch for 2021  
August 20, 2020
- Lathrop GPM Achieves Rankings in Three States with Six Attorneys Recognized in Chambers High Net Worth 2020  
July 9, 2020
- Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers Recognizes 42 Lathrop Gage Attorneys  
November 13, 2019
- Best Lawyers in America 2020 Names 72 Lathrop Gage Attorneys; 13 Lawyers of the Year  
August 15, 2019
- Lathrop Gage, Three Private Wealth Attorneys Receive Adulation Among Chambers High Net Worth Rankings  
August 15, 2019
- Super Lawyers Recognizes 47 Lathrop Gage Attorneys in Missouri and Kansas  
November 14, 2018
- Best Lawyers in America Recognizes 70 Lathrop Gage Attorneys  
August 15, 2018
- Chambers High Net Worth Recognizes Three Lathrop Gage Private Wealth Attorneys

July 25, 2018

- Super Lawyers Recognizes 57 Attorneys from Lathrop Gage in Missouri and Kansas  
November 9, 2017
- Three Lathrop Gage Attorneys Recognized as Leading Practitioners of Private Wealth Law by Chambers USA in High Net Worth Guide  
October 20, 2017
- Best Lawyers in America Recognizes 78 Lathrop Gage Attorneys  
August 15, 2017
- Best Lawyers in America Recognizes 78 Lathrop Gage Attorneys  
August 16, 2016
- Super Lawyers Recognizes 71 Lathrop Gage Attorneys  
October 14, 2013
- 81 Lathrop Gage Attorneys Named “Best Lawyers in America”  
August 15, 2013
- 75 Lathrop Gage Attorneys Named Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers  
October 15, 2012
- Six Lathrop Gage Attorneys Named “Lawyers of the Year” by Best Lawyers  
September 12, 2012
- 80 Lathrop Gage Attorneys Named “Best Lawyers in America”  
August 22, 2012
- 54 Lathrop Gage Attorneys Named Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers  
November 1, 2011
- 59 Lathrop Gage Attorneys Named Best Lawyers in America  
August 6, 2010
- 56 Lathrop Gage Attorneys Named Best Lawyers in America  
August 3, 2009

### Professional Affiliations

- Eastern Kansas Estate Planning Society, President 2004-2005; Vice President 2003-2004; Treasurer 2002-2003; Secretary 2001-2002; Member 1997-present
- Kansas Bar Association, Member, 1999-present
- Johnson County Bar Association, Member, 2003-present

- American Bar Association, Member, 1983-present
- The Missouri Bar, Member, 1983-present
- The Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association, Member, 1983-present
- Estate Planning Society of Kansas City, Missouri, Member, 1987-present

## Community Involvement

- Greater Kansas City Chapter of the American Red Cross, Board of Directors, 2001-2004; Financial Development Committee, 2000-2004; Volunteer, 1998-present
- Rockhurst High School Board of Trustees, 2014; Advancement Committee, 2005-2007, 2012-present
- Children's Mercy Planned Gift Council, 2001-2006
- Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, Professional Advisor, 2000-present
- Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Diocesan School Board, President, 2000-2002; Vice President, 1999-2000; Secretary-Treasurer, 1998-1999; Board Member 1996-2002
- Leave a Legacy, Speakers' Bureau Committee, Co-Chair, 2000; Volunteer Speaker, 1998-2003
- Notre Dame Club of Kansas City, Board Member, 1985-1988
- St. Peter's, Endowment Committee, Chair, 2014; Youth Group, Small Group Leader, 1998-2002

## Honors

- *Chambers High Net Worth Guide*, "Leading Practitioner of Private Wealth Law," 2017-2023
- American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC), Fellow
- Selected among *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 2005-2024
  - Trusts and Estates "Lawyer of the Year," 2024
  - Litigation-Insurance "Lawyer of the Year," 2017, 2020-2021
  - "Lawyer of the Year," 2013
- Martindale-Hubbell® "AV" Rating
- *Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers*, 2006-2018, 2021
- Selected for Best Attorneys Network Directory, 2005