

JOSEPH H. SEROTA

FOUNDING PARTNER

FIRM GENERAL COUNSEL

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As a founding member of the firm and the firm's first managing director, Joe Serota's leadership over the past three decades has helped to grow Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman into a leading Florida law firm for business and government clients.

An accomplished litigator and trial lawyer with dozens of successful trials and appeals to his credit, Joe represents private and public clients across a broad range of subject areas. Joe has been honored as one of HistoryMiami's Legal Legends and is a recipient of the Dade County Bar Association's highest honor, the David W. Dyer Professionalism Award. Joe has been recognized as a Distinguished Leader by the Daily Business Review and is also a member of Florida Trend's Legal Elite Hall of Fame.

Joe has been a leader in many professional organizations and in civic affairs. He served as general counsel to the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. He is a former president of the Dade County Bar Association, a former member of The Florida Bar's Board of Governors, and served as chair of the Judicial Nominations Commission, Third District Court of Appeal. Joe also chaired the 11th Judicial Circuit Centennial Celebration and led successful campaigns

PRACTICE AREAS

- Administrative Proceedings
- Appellate
- Civil Rights and Torts
- Complex Commercial
- Construction Claims and Defense

ADMISSIONS

Florida, 1978

to restore both the lobby and the ceremonial courtroom of the Miami-Dade County Courthouse. He is a past chair of the Miami-Dade County Community Relations Board and the Miami-Dade County Independent Review Panel, and served as chair of the nominating committee for the City of Miami Civilian Investigative Panel.

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Dade Community Foundation (now Miami Foundation), Board of Directors, Member, 2004-2012
- Cleveland Orchestra of Miami, Board of Directors, 2015-2018
- Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Of Counsel, 2012-2014; New World Center Committee (Downtown Development Committee), Chair, 2009-2011; Chair of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, 2006-2008
- Bet Shira Congregation, President, 2012-2013
- Miami-Dade County, Florida, Centennial Celebration of the 11th Judicial Circuit,Chair, 2010-2011
- Dade County Courtroom 6-1 Restoration Project, Co-Chair, 2003-2008
- Dade County Bar Association Commission on Public Funding of Judicial Elections, Chair, 2002-2003
- City of Miami Civilian Investigative Panel Nominating Committee, Chair, 2002-2003
- Alliance for Ethical Government, 2000-2001
- Judicial Nominations Commission, Third District Court of Appeal, Chair, 1999-2002
- Task Force to Establish Blue Ribbon Committee on Ethics, 1999-2001; Miami-Dade County School Board Appointee
- Special Commission on Judicial Elections, Chair, 1997-1998
- Dade County Courthouse Lobby Restoration Project, Chair, 1996-1998
- Dade County Bar Association, President, 1996-1997
- Metropolitan Dade County Community Relations Board, Chair, 1995-1996
- City of Miami, Mayor's Transition Team, 1994-1995
- Coordinated Miami-Dade County's response and preparation for the verdict in the case of *State of Florida v. William Lozano*, 1991-1993
- The Florida Bar, Board of Governors, 1988-1993
- Princeton Club of South Florida, President, 1988-1990
- Citizens' Task Force, appointed by the Dade County Commission to recommend changes to the Independent Review Panel, 1989
- Metropolitan Dade County Independent Review Panel, Vice-Chair, 1986-1989
- Metropolitan Dade County Independent Review Panel, Chair, 1986-1989

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, 1978

U.S. Court of Appeals, 1lth Circuit, 1980

U.S. Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit, 1980

U.S. Supreme Court, 1978

EDUCATION

University of Miami School of Law, J.D., 1978

Princeton University, A.B., 1975

LANGUAGES

Spanish

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- *Daily Business Review*, Best Mentor, 2022
- *Daily Business Review*, Most Effective Lawyers - Appellate, 2020
- D*aily Business Review*, Professional Excellence Awards, Distinguished Leader, May 2020
- Dade County Bar Association, David W. Dyer Professionalism Award, 2018
- Florida Trend, Legal Elite Hall of Fame, 2012-present
- *Daily Business Review*, Professional Excellence Awards, Distinguished Leader, May 2017
- HistoryMiami, Legal Legend, 2016
- *Florida Trend's*, Legal Elite, 2004-present
- South Florida Legal Guide, Top Lawyers, 2004-present
- Florida *Super Lawyers*, 2004-present
- Best Lawyers in America®, Commercial Litigation, 2013-present

- Press Mentions
- Selected Reported Decisions
- Representative Experience
- Publications

Press Mentions

- *Litigation Departments: Having a 'Lasting and Broader Impact' Is What Drives Lawyers at Weiss Serota Helfman Cole + Bierman*, Daily Business Review, May 25, 2023
- *Judge Won't Block Miami Beach 2 AM Alcohol Cutoff*, Law360, March 14, 2023
- *Nightclub Asks Court To Block 2 A.M. Miami Beach Booze Law*, Law360, March 13, 2023
- *Jeffrey Soffer's Fontainebleau buys Story nightclub building*, The Real Deal, March 3, 2023
- *Celebrating the Life of Gail D. Serota With Library Reading Room Dedication*, Miami Law Magazine, February 24, 2023
- *GO Bond lawsuit once again rejected, clearing path for Village to move on resiliency infrastructure projects*, Islander News, July 20, 2022
- *Grove Isle Legal Battle is Over: South Florida Court Affirms Settlement After 6-Year Fight*, The Daily Business Review, June 2021
- *Introducing the DBR's 16th Annual Most Effective Lawyers Award Winners*, Daily Business Review, October 30, 2020
- *Distinguished Leader: Joseph Serota*, Daily Business Review, October 12, 2020
- *South Florida's War with Airbnb*, The Real Deal, June 19, 2017
- *The McDuffie riots*, The Miami Times, May 16, 2016
- *Citrus canker battle finally goes to trial*, Miami Herald, May 10, 2016
- *Judge sides with Homestead in fraud case*, South Dade Newsleader, April 22, 2016
- *Already rich Miami art dealer Gary Nader wants what's next: a museum*, Miami Herald, April 13, 2016
- *Homestead Wins Dispute Over Traffic Patterns*, Daily Business Review, March 17, 2016
- *Old Feuds Turn Into Contested Races,* Daily Business Review, January 4, 2016
- *Toll Contractor Rests Miami Case with $58M Push*, Law360, September 24, 2015
- *Developer: 'They Declared War,'* Miami Herald, August 22, 2015
- *Facing South Florida: Miami-Dade Courthouse,* CBS-WFOR, November 2, 2014
- *Power Lunch: Joe's Synonymous with Deals Over Lunch*, Daily Business Review, February 22, 2013

- *Legal Legends vs. Young Guns*, Daily Business Review, December 5, 2012
- *Judge Throws Out Case Filed by Former Homestead Official*, Daily Business Review, November 20, 2012
- *UM Scandal Could Hinder Future Fundraising Efforts*, South Florida Business Journal, August 26, 2011
- *Deerfield Beach Hiring Lawyers to Defend Utility Tax*, Sun-Sentinel, August 18, 2011
- *WTVJ-NBC 6 v. Shehadeh*, Leagle, March 9, 2011
- *Joe's Stone Crabs Battle Begins*, Courtroom View Network, October 1, 2010

Selected Reported Decisions

- *Champlain Towers South Collapse*, 2021-015089-CA-01 (Fla. 11th Cir. Ct. May 18, 2022)
- *Preserve Grove Isle, LLC v. Grove Isle Yacht & Tennis Club, LLC*, 2015 WL 5769084 (Fla. 11th Cir. Ct. Aug. 13, 2015)
- *Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services v. Lopez-Brignoni*, 114 So. 3d 1138 (Fla. 3d DCA 2012)
- *School Bd. of Miami-Dade County v. Rise Academy of South Dade Charter School*, 90 So. 3d 1001 (Fla. 3d DCA 2012)
- *La Gorce Palace Condo Ass'n., Inc. v. QBE Ins. Corp.*, 2011 WL 1522564 (S.D. Fla. Apr. 12, 2011)
- *WTNJ-NBC 6 v. Shehadeh*, 56 So. 3d 104 (Fla. 3d DCA 2011)
- *In re Ginsberg*, 2010 WL 4973495 (S.D. Fla. Bkrtcy. Nov. 30, 2010)
- *Department of Agric, and Cons, Servs, v. Patchen*, 25 So. 3d 1283 (Fla. 3d DCA 2010)
- *Florida Dept. of Agric. and Cons. Servs. v. Citrus Canker Litigation*, 20 So. 3d 864 (Fla. 3d DCA 2009)
- *City of Marco Island v. Dumas*, 13 So. 3d 108 (Fla. 2d DCA 2009)
- *United Real Estate Ventures, Inc. v. Village of Key Biscayne*, 26 So. 3d 48 (Fla. 3d DCA 2009)
- *Companion v. City of Hollywood Police Officers' Retirement System*, 1 So. 3d 1283 (Fla. 4th DCA 2009)
- *Simcox v. City of Hollywood Police Officers' Retirement System*, 988 So. 2d 731 (Fla. 4th DCA 2008)
- *Hames v. City of Miami*, 281 Fed. Appx. 853 (11th Cir. 2008)
- *Hames v. City of Miami Firefighters' and Police Officers' Trust*, 980 So. 2d 1112 (Fla. 3d DCA 2008)
- *Goldsmith v. Brockhouse*, 979 So. 2d 1135 (Fla. 3d DCA 2008)
- *Feldman v. City of North Miami*, 696 So. 2d 495 (Fla. 3d DCA 2008)
- *Bates v. Islamorada*, 939 So. 2d 171 (Fla. 3d DCA 2006)
- *Miami-Dade County v. Redland Estates, Inc.*, 964 So. 2d 701 (Fla. 3d DCA 2006)
- *TNT USA, Inc v. TrafiExpress, S.A. de C.V.*, 434 F.Supp.2d 1322 (S.D. Fla. 2006)
- *Redland Estates, Inc. v. Lynn*, 920 So. 2d 1218 (Fla. 3d DCA 2006)
- *Homer & Bonner, P.A. v. Miami-Dade County*, 884 So. 2d 425 (Fla. 3d DCA 2004)
- *Pritchett v. City of Homestead*, 855 So. 2d 1164 (Fla. 3d DCA 2003)
- *Jasinski v. City of Miami*, 269 F.Supp. 1341 (S.D. Fla. 2003)
- *Merkin v. First Equitable Realty III, Ltd.*, 843 So. 2d 360 (Fla. 3d DCA 2003)
- *Thompson v. Lincoln at Doral, L.P.*, 786 So. 2d 605 (Fla. 3d DCA 2001)
- *The Palms v. Magil Const. Fla., Inc.*, 785 So. 2d 597 (Fla. 3d DCA 2001)
- *Carpenter v. Community Bank of Homestead*, 710 So. 2d 65 (Fla. 3d DCA 1998)
- *Dade County Police Benev. Ass'n v. Town of Surfside*, 721 So. 2d 746 (Fla. 3d DCA 1998)
- *Davis v. City of Hollywood*, 120 F. 3d 1178 (11th Cir. 1997)
- *Village of Key Biscayne v. Dep'r of Community Affairs*, 696 So. 3d 495 (Fla. 3d DCA 1997)
- *Key Colony No. 1 Condominium Ass'n, Inc. v. Village of Key Biscayne*, 651 So. 3d 779 (Fla. 3d DCA 1995)
- *Village of Key Biscayne v. Dade County*, 627 So. 2d 1180 (Fla. 3d DCA 1993)
- *City of Homestead v. Ramirez*, 621 So. 2d 548 (Fla. 3d DCA 1993)
- *Chernov v. City of Hollywood*, 819 F.Supp. 1070 (S.D. Fla. 1993)
- *Universal Bldg. Management, Inc. v. American Bankers Life Assur. Co.*, 586 So. 2d 1352 (Fla. 3d DCA 1991)
- *Burger King Corp. v. Lee*, 766 F.Supp. 1149 (S.D. Fla. 1991)
- *Coral Way Properties, Ltd. v. Roses*, 565 So. 2d 372 (Fla. 3d DCA 1990)
- *B.G.H. Ins. Syndicate, Inc. v. Presidential Fire & Cas. Co.*, 549 So. 2d 197 (Fla. 3d DCA 1989)

- *Rodriguez v. City of Hialeah*, 716 F. Supp. 1425 (S.D. Fla. 1989)
- *Trend Coin Co. v. Fuller, Feingold & Mallah, P.A.*, 538 So. 2d 919 (Fla. 3d DCA 1989)
- *Matalon v. Greifman*, 509 So. 2d 985 (Fla. 3d DCA 1987)
- *Rusty Food Products, Inc. v. Florida Plantation Storage Center, Ltd.*, 501 So. 2d 72 (Fla. 4th DCA 1987)
- *Florida State Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police on Behalf of Hialeah Lodge 12 v. City of Hialeah, Fla.*, 815 F.2d 631 (11th Cir. 1987)
- *Simon v. Florida Memorial College*, 498 So. 2d 459 (Fla. 3d DCA 1986)
- *Williams v. Florida Memorial College*, 453 So. 2d 541 (Fla. 3d DCA 1984)
- *Adrian Inv. Corp. v. Jacomino*, 427 So. 2d 335 (Fla. 3d DCA 1983)

Representative Experience

- Successfully defended an owner of a famous restaurant against $19 million in claims of breach of contract and breach of fiduciary duty.
- Successfully defended bank president and bank against claims for breach of fiduciary duty.
- Successfully defended city sued for breach of contract to sell city liens.
- Successfully defended police officers accused of civil rights violation.
- Successfully defended city in class action based upon alleged unconstitutionality of ordinance.
- Successfully defended a city in a collective action for violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- Successfully defended a city sued by a labor union for alleged due process violations.
- Successfully defended a city accused of racial discrimination.
- Successfully defended bank accused of breach of contract by another bank in loan participation.
- Successfully defended lawyers accused of significant disciplinary violations by The Florida Bar.
- Successfully defended developer accused of violating land use regulations.
- Successfully prosecuted claims on behalf of a city against a county based upon violation of the County's Development Master Plan.

Publications

- From the Herald archives: Our only choice: Legalize marijuana, Miami Herald, October 15, 2021