

DAVID S. MORALES Partner

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Austin



BIOGRAPHY

David S. Morales is a partner in the Litigation, Administrative Law, and Public Law practice groups. Based in the Austin office, Mr. Morales brings over 23 years of experience in complex litigation, general counsel matters, and state agency dispute resolution to his practice. Mr. Morales was confirmed to serve as United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas in April 2019.

Morales principally focuses his practice on complex litigation, administrative law, as well as public and higher education law. Having previously managed and directed all civil litigation for the State of Texas while at the Texas Attorney General's Office, as well as having been the chief legal advisor to the Governor of Texas, Morales provides Kelly Hart clients with a unique blend of seasoned litigator, government dispute resolution expert and executive-level legal advisor.

Prior to joining Kelly Hart, Mr. Morales was Deputy General Counsel to the Texas System Board of Regents where he advised and provided legal analysis to the board on system policy and governance, litigation, state and federal legislation, and higher education law.

From 2011-2014, Mr. Morales was General Counsel to the Governor of Texas, serving as chief legal counsel on more than 1,600 legislative bills passed during the 83rd Legislative Session. Mr. Morales also advised the Governor on all criminal justice issues, including reprieves and commutations, as well as managing all in-house and outside counsel.

From 2007-2011, Mr. Morales served as Texas' Deputy Attorney General for Civil Litigation and Deputy First Assistant Attorney General. As Deputy Attorney General for Civil Litigation, Mr. Morales supervised all trial and appellate matters for the State of Texas, managing over 300 civil litigation attorneys and over 15,000 litigation matters.

Mr. Morales graduated from St. Edwards University where he received his B.B.A. in Marketing and earned his J.D. from St. Mary's University School of Law in 1994. He attended the University of Texas, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs Governor's Executive Development Program in 2007.

EXPERIENCE AND HIGHLIGHTS

- United States District Judge, Southern District of Texas
- Chief Litigation Counsel to the Attorney General of Texas
- Chief Legal Counsel to the Governor of Texas
- Successfully negotiated with the Department of Justice, resulting in a statewide resolution of the Department's long-standing civil rights investigations of Texas' 13 State Supported Living Centers
- Successfully argued at the Texas Supreme Court, resulting in the Court's recognition of a previously unrecognized common-law safety exception to the Public Information Act
- Lead trial and appellate counsel for Texas state agencies and universities in over 150 federal and state litigation

matters, including trying 13 cases to verdict

AFFILIATIONS AND HONORS

- Texas Access to Justice Commission, *Ex Officio* Commission Member, 2012-2014
- Texas Film Commission, Director (Interim), 2012
- Eagle Scout Award, Boy Scouts of America, 1983

EDUCATION

- University of Texas, GEDP, 2007
- St. Mary's University School of Law, J.D., 1994
- St. Edward's University, B.B.A., 1990

ADMISSIONS

- State Bar of Texas, 1994
- U.S. Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Texas