Cruel and Unusual Sentences: Tips for Improving Your Ordinance Drafting

U.T. Land Use Conference
April 20, 2023
Austin, TX

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Attorney Disclaimers

- Strictly my views
- Consult your attorney
- Use at your own risk

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Drafting is important

An American Bar Foundation survey of practicing lawyers concluded: "[o]ral and written communication skills are deemed to be the very most important skills necessary for beginning lawyers."

Bryant G. Garth & Joanne Martin, "Law Schools and the Construction of Competence," 43 J. Legal Educ. 469, 508-09 (1993).

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Drafting is important

The ABF survey also concluded: "[Law firm] partners expect those skills to be possessed by the associates…, even though they are not much taught in the law schools."

Bryant G. Garth & Joanne Martin, "Law Schools and the Construction of Competence," 43 J. Legal Educ. 469, 508-09 (1993).

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Many lawyers draft poorly

94% of federal and state judges surveyed reported that basic writing problems routinely marred the briefs they read.

Susan H. Kosse & David T. ButleRitchie, "How Judges, Practitioners, and Legal Writing Teachers Assess the Writing Skills of New Law Graduates: A Comparative Study," 53 J. Legal Educ. 80, 85–86 (2003).

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First appeared as part of the conference materials for the
27th Annual Land Use Conference session
"Cruel and Unusual Sentences: Tips for Improving Your Ordinance Drafting"