

LIZABETH N. DEVRIES

LizabETH N. de Vries practices law to advocate for vulnerable individuals and worthy causes. Her practice focuses on elder financial abuse and civil-rights litigation.

Before law school, Liza obtained a double bachelor's degree in French and Anthropology from the University of California at Santa Barbara. She worked in the legal community as a journalist, paralegal, and advocate for women's and children's rights. In 1994, Liza founded the local chapter of a statewide program that teaches high-school students about the law, called Youth & Government. The Embarcadero YMCA's delegation quadrupled in 2011 thanks to a grant which recognized the diversity and legal-community support fostered by local Mock Trial and Bill Hearing programs. Liza graduated *cum laude* from the University of San Francisco School of Law where she published a critique of Proposition 21 and held the position of Comments Editor.



Since she joined the Scott Law Firm in 2003, Liza has represented private and public employees, police officers, foster-care children, and victims of police misconduct. In her civil-rights practice, Liza represents private and public employees including police officers in a variety of settings to contest unlawful business practices, discrimination, whistleblower retaliation. In addition, Liza represents foster-care children and everyday victims of public agencies' Constitutional violations and egregious police misconduct.

Liza's practice focuses on representing elders who have been taken advantage of, often by those whom they trust most—care providers or “friends” who profit from their relationship with trusting, hard-working elders. She represents fiduciaries, elders, and their families to obtain remedies from employers, financial institutions, and individuals to recover elders' assets.

She has litigated cases under the Elder Abuse & Dependent Adult Civil Protection Act and other laws designed to protect elder consumers since 2004. For example, Liza represented an 81-year old woman who “agreed” to give a company 40% of her assets by retaining the company's lawyer. Early on the company conceded its business practices were unlawful under the Act *vis a vis* its elder clients. The company quickly settled the case and revised their corporate policies. The attorney who assisted in the abuse settled the matter during trial. Years later an appellate court agreed that lawyers (and fiduciaries) “assist” with elder abuse when they breach their duties of loyalty. In 2006, Liza took over a case representing a non-English speaking *pro per* mother of a deceased dependent adult. Liza was the appellate lawyer in one of the first dozen published decisions interpreting the Elder Abuse Act. Thereafter, the Legislature clarified who has standing to pursue and recover for elder abuse by revising the Act.

In addition, Liza has represented families of deceased psychiatric patients for violating the Act. For example, she represented one family who sued a public hospital for neglecting obvious signs of overmedication, and administering sedatives to a patient who was falling asleep in her

breakfast and sitting slumped over in her bed. On the eve of trial, the parties settled this dependent-adult abuse case for \$500,000. Staff at another private facility sedated another patient with powerful psychotropic medications which killed him. The matter settled for \$225,000.

Committed to serving her community, Liza donates her time by speaking at elder-abuse-prevention conferences and consulting with non-profit and government entities and their constituents to prevent and civilly prosecute elder financial abuse.

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