

## Jonathan

Partner

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**HOUSTON**

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Jonathan Frels has spent his entire legal career focused on public law, public finance and state legislative matters, both in private practice and through government service in Texas. He serves as bond counsel, underwriter's counsel and disclosure counsel in public finance transactions for school districts, cities, counties, state agencies, navigation districts, port authorities, economic development corporations, water districts and water authorities. He also represents political subdivisions as general counsel with respect to public law issues. In addition to helping governmental entities and developers meet their infrastructure and financing needs, Jonathan assists governmental bodies, nonprofit corporations and entities that contract with governmental bodies with respect to Public Information Act issues.

In addition to his experience in private practice, Jonathan served as deputy attorney general for legal counsel at the Texas Office of the Attorney General, 2008 – 2010. In this role, he acted as counsel to the attorney general and supervised the Office of the Attorney General's non-litigation civil legal divisions, including the agency's Public Finance Division, Opinion Committee, General Counsel Division and Open Records Division. While with the Office of the Attorney General, Jonathan frequently testified before and served as a resource to members and committees of the Texas Legislature on a variety of subjects, including public finance and open government matters.

He also served as chief of the Office of the Attorney General's Public Finance Division, where he oversaw the division's review and approval of all bonds and similar financial obligations issued by state agencies, political subdivisions and institutions of higher education, as well as certain nonprofit corporations created to act on behalf of political subdivisions.

### **Industries**

[Finance](#)

[Healthcare](#)

### **Practices**

[Healthcare & Life Sciences](#)

[Public Finance](#)

[Tax-Exempt Organizations](#)

[Bond Counsel](#)

[Disclosure Counsel](#)

[Economic Development](#)

[Underwriter's Counsel](#)

## Credentials

### Education

- Tulane University, J.D., 2001, *with honors, Order of the Coif*
- Union College, B.A., 1998, *magna cum laude*

### Bar Admissions

- Texas

### Chambers USA

- Texas Public Finance, 2024

### BL Rankings

- *Best Lawyers*, Public Finance Law, 2013 – 2025
- Houston Lawyer of the Year, Public Finance Law, 2022

### Thomson Reuters

- *Texas Super Lawyers*, Rising Stars, 2014 – 2015, 2005 – 2009

### The State Bar of Texas

- Pro Bono College, 2015, 2007

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## Publications & Speeches

- "Extraordinary Redemption of Build America Bonds," Texas Women in Public Finance's Lunch and Learn Event, April 25, 2024.
- "Your Election Passed! What Are the Next Steps for Bond Issuance," 2024 Bonds, Buildings and Beyond Academy, March 27, 2024.
- "Overview of Texas Anti-Boycott Contracting Laws," Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas, February 27, 2024.
- "Analyzing the Latest Texas' Legislative and Regulatory Developments and Their Repercussions," Texas Public Finance Conference, April 12, 2023.
- "Bonds 101: Bond Authorization, Issuance and Regulation," Coalition for Responsible Infrastructure Finance, February 17, 2023.
- "Bonds 101 Training Program," Texas Office of the Attorney General, October 26, 2022.
- Bonds 101: Bond Authorization, Issuance and Regulation," Coalition for Responsible Infrastructure Finance, March 5, 2021.

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- "A New Proposition: Bond Elections Following the 86th Legislative Session," *Texas Association of School Business Officials Annual Conference*, Houston, Texas, March 4-6, 2020.
- "86th Legislative Session Recap," *Bracewell webinar*, August 14, 2019.
- "New World of Disclosure – Preparing for the Amendments to Rule 15c2-12," *Government Treasurers Organization of Texas*, February 25, 2019.
- "Spotlight on Public Finance: Rule 15c2-12 Amendments," *Bracewell Lunch and Learn*, January 8, 2019.
- "Process and Utilization of Bonds in Public Financing," *Coalition for Responsible Infrastructure Finance presentation to Texas Senate and House of Representatives Staff*, January 3, 2019.
- "Disclosure Training," *Bracewell webinar*, November 13, 2018.
- "Bonds, Buildings & Beyond," *Texas Association of School Business Officials program*, Fort Worth, Texas, March 27-28, 2018.
- "Bond Elections 101," *Texas Association of School Business Annual Conference*, Fort Worth, Texas, February 26 – March 2, 2018.
- "Process and Utilization of Bonds in Public Financing," *Coalition for Responsible Infrastructure Finance presentation to Texas House of Representatives Staff*, November 15, 2017.
- "Recap: The 85<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session," *Texas Bond Review Board*, October 17, 2017.
- "Hurricane Harvey – After the Storm, Disclosure Considerations for Bond Issuers," *The Bond Buyer*, September 7, 2017.
- "The Law as a Bond," *The Texas Lawbook*, June 14, 2017.
- "Bond Issuers: How Does the SEC's "Bold and Unrelenting Enforcement Agenda" Affect You?," December 7, 2016.
- "Municipal Market Legal and Regulatory Update," *Government Finance Officers Association of Texas*, February 25, 2016.
- "Municipal Market and Regulatory Update: Understanding Section 2252.908, Texas Government Code," *Gulf Coast Government Finance Officers Association*, January 21, 2016.
- "Disclosure Updates," *2015 Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas Winter Seminar*, December 6-9, 2015.
- "Bond Elections 101," *2015 Annual School Law Section Retreat*, July 25, 2015.
- "SEC Enforcement and Continuing Disclosure," *Texas School District Accounting and Auditing Conference*, June 2, 2015.

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- "A Practical Guide to Successful Tax and Disclosure Post-Issuance Compliance," *Gulf Coast Government Finance Officers Association Training Session*, October 30, 2014.
- "MCDC SEC Enforcement Offer, What It Means for You," *Texas Association of School Business Officials 2014 Business Managers Academy*, October 28, 2014.
- "MCDC SEC Enforcement Offer - What it Means for You," *Texas Association of School Business Officials, Municipalities Continuing Disclosure Cooperation Initiative Webinar*, September 10, 2014.
- "How the SEC Came to Treat a Small Local School District the Same as a Corporate Fraudster – and How to Make Sure it Doesn't Happen to You," *Texas Association of School Business Officials, Bonds, Buildings and Beyond Information*, February 26, 2014 and March 27, 2014.
- "Tax-Exempt Bonds: Federal Securities Law Enforcement and Tax Law Update," *Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas Winter Seminar*, December 10, 2013.
- "Access to Non-Profit Corporate Records: Current Development in Public Disclosure," *State Bar of Texas, 11th Annual Governance of Non-Profit Organizations Seminar*, Chapter 10, August 23, 2013.