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Mastering Family Law

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Dedicated to my precious family.

JLR

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Series Editor's Foreword

The Carolina Academic Press Mastering Series is designed to provide you with a tool that will enable you to easily and efficiently “master” the substance and content of law school courses. Throughout the series, the focus is on quality writing that makes legal concepts understandable. As a result, the series is designed to be easy to read and is not unduly cluttered with footnotes or cites to secondary sources.

In order to facilitate student mastery of topics, the Mastering Series includes a number of pedagogical features designed to improve learning and retention. At the beginning of each chapter, you will find a “Roadmap” that tells you about the chapter and provides you with a sense of the material that you will cover. A “Checkpoint” at the end of each chapter encourages you to stop and review the key concepts, reiterating what you have learned. Throughout the book, key terms are explained and emphasized. Finally, a “Master Checklist” at the end of each book reinforces what you have learned and helps you identify any areas that need review or further study.

We hope that you will enjoy studying with, and learning from, the Mastering Series.

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Mastering Family Law

Editor's Foreword

Family law is largely governed by state law and, in many areas, differs significantly from state to state. There are some areas, however, particularly child support and child custody jurisdiction, where the federal government has become involved and Congress has acted to bring some uniformity among the laws of the various states. As a result of the state variations, it is difficult to talk about family law from a national perspective, except in fairly broad strokes. As a result, throughout the book, many statements begin with “generally” or “usually.” In other places, the text will discuss all of the alternate approaches, saying that some states do it one way, some another, and still others do something else. This approach may not sound helpful if a student is looking for specific answers to what the law is in a given state, but that is not the goal of this book. The goal is to give the student an overview and a general understanding of the topics and issues to prepare the student to understand the materials found in the assigned text and statutory materials selected by the professor teaching the Family Law Course.

In teaching this course, some professors focus on the law of a particular state while other professors take a more national perspective on the subject matter, surveying the law of several states. This book covers all of the major topics that are included in each of the family law books currently in publication. Students will need to consult the relevant state statutes and cases, however, in those courses that emphasize the law of a particular state.

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