
Hughes Hubbard & Reed

Firm Helps Ex-Offender Regain Full Custody of Her Daughter

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Hughes Hubbard helped a pro bono client participating in a re-entry program for ex-offenders regain full custody of her 11-year-old daughter after a seven-year separation.

With a prior conviction for marijuana possession, the client was imprisoned in 2003 for selling drugs. Custody of her daughter was first granted to her grandmother in Georgia, then to her mother in the Bronx. The firm began representing the client a month after she was released from prison in October 2011.

The client gained temporary custody of her daughter in December after HHR filed for transfer of the custody order from Georgia to New York. In January 2012, the firm persuaded a judge to modify the order, giving the client full custody of her daughter. Another judge affirmed the order at a hearing this May.

U.S. Judge Harold Baer Jr. helped start the SDNY re-entry program in 2010 to help ex-offenders get on their feet and avoid being arrested again. The voluntary, intensive supervision program includes biweekly meetings with Judge Baer, frequent meetings with assigned probation officers and participation in cognitive behavior therapy. Upon successful completion of the program, participants are given a year of reduced probation.

The client, who is still in the program, is now enjoying her relationship with her daughter and her mother, who initially opposed her taking custody.

Vilia Hayes supervised the matter.

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Vilia B. Hayes