Preface

This book is a deep dive into the world of divorce and the federal employee (current, former, or retiree) or spouse. This book is intended for any family law practitioner who may touch any of these topics in a case involving a current or former federal employee. The information contained in this book is critical to representing the interests of your client no matter what side you're on. By reading this book, you will understand the benefits at stake: retirement, health insurance, life insurance. The fact that this book has never been written is surprising in and of itself. Those of us practicing in this area have been forced for many years to cobble together the information we need from various and sundry sources, mostly 20 years old or more. Now it's all in one place.

I've included the full range of information, so that a recent law school graduate, all the way up to the experienced, partner-level attorney, can find information of critical use in such cases. In most cases, I begin with the elementary aspects of the topics being discussed and work from there to the highest level of detail. I've also included relevant citations so you can delve even deeper into the law should the need arise. I have attempted to make this information easy to digest and understand, and I have included various checklists, glossary terms, and definitions as easy reference. I have also provided samples that you may use in your practice. I hope that less experienced practitioners will use the book to learn the basics they may not yet know or have been too afraid to ask. More experienced practitioners may keep the book on their shelves and be confident that in reaching for it from time to time, they will find what they need.

Beyond the basics, if you understand the nuances, you can help your client negotiate the best possible outcome and divvy up assets in a settlement in the most advantageous way. There are a lot of ways you can add value to your client that are outlined in this book. Perhaps a TSP loan can be used to buy your client a new home or pay off attorney's fees. If your client is the nonemployee spouse and is in fear of losing his or her health insurance, you can help him or her maintain that benefit. This book will help you cover all of the bases.