

# LANDLORD LEGAL SERVICES A PRIORITY

At the law firm of Ainsworth, Thelin & Raftice, P.A., located at 7 Ocean St. within view of the Casco Bay Bridge in South Portland's Knightville neighborhood, it's easier to ask what its ten attorneys do not do.

Whether business law, municipal law, elder law, personal injury law, real estate law, divorce and family law, defense of clients charged with operating under the influence, drug possession and other crimes, creditor services, patent law or admiralty law - ATR does it all, backed by a

in the ownership of rental properties, both commercial and residential.

"It's really a soup-to-nuts package that we offer to landlords for legal services," says ATR partner Michael Vaillancourt, who joined the firm in 2002.

"When somebody comes to us and says they're thinking of getting into the landlord game, or investing in commercial properties, we help them create the legal entity they should have to own that particular property,"

Vaillancourt, can help clients navigate the labyrinth of construction contracts, deed work, easement and boundary disputes, title insurance and other issues. ATR often frequently aids clients with litigation related to property ownership and landlord needs.

"We assist clients with preparing leases with prospective tenants, as well as with any negotiations and resultant contracts with vendors, servicers, contractors and others," Vaillancourt said. "And, in the unfortunate instance where perhaps somebody isn't paying their rent or the client is having other problems with a tenant, we represent them in all legal proceedings related to those issues."

"We know the subject matter cold and we stay very up to date on it," Vaillancourt said. "Maine law regularly changes on the topic of leases and the state is always throwing additional requirements into the mix."

"There's plenty of reactivity in this area of the law, but we try to be as proactive as possible." ATR does not merely wait for its phone to ring when a property owner has a problem. It also keeps its clients notified of changes in Maine law.

Finally, ATR is there to assist when it comes time to sell a property.

"It's a never-ending cycle of need," Vaillancourt said. "Most of the landlord clients who we work with have placed their trust in us for a very long time, in some cases upwards of 20 years or more."

At the foundation of such longstanding relationships is not just ATR's mastery of the law - constantly in flux thanks to the state Legislature in terms of what landlords need to know - but its commitment to speaking straight.

"From the outset of any matter, we are



objective and candid with our clients, so they know what to expect and how best to proceed," said Vaillancourt.

"An attorney's job is to educate the client as to expectations and to discuss the varying options and approaches to achieve desired goals," he said. "You don't want to confuse a situation by creating unrealistic expectations."

An Otisfield native, Vaillancourt graduated from the University of Maine School of Law in 2000 and has been practicing law and advising on landlord-tenant relations, among his other areas of expertise, ever since. Locally, Vaillancourt is the most recent past president of the South Portland-Cape Elizabeth Community Chamber of Commerce, is on the zoning board of appeals in Cape Elizabeth, where he lives, and serves in an advisory role on the South Portland Economic Development Committee.

The attorneys with Ainsworth Thelin & Raftice, P.A., including Vaillancourt, can be reached by calling 767-4824. More information on the firm can be found online at [www.atrlaw.pro](http://www.atrlaw.pro).



14-person support staff, with clientele largely made of families and small businesses across southern Maine.

One of the firm's areas of practice is landlord services. In fact, of the hundreds of business entities that ATR serves, many are involved

Vaillancourt said. ATR will work with the client and their accountants to pick the correct form of entity, then set up the entity and oftentimes represent the client through the purchase process.

ATR's attorneys, including Attorney



## *Ainsworth, Thelin & Raftice, P.A.*

*Counselors at Law*

website: [www.atrlaw.pro](http://www.atrlaw.pro)

7 Ocean St., South Portland, ME 04106 • 207-767-4824 • Mail: P.O. Box 2412, South Portland, ME 04116-2412