MASLONLLP



STEVEN L. SCHLEICHER

Partner
Chair of Investigations & White Collar Defense Group

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OVERVIEW

Steve Schleicher is a renowned trial lawyer with deep experience in high profile cases. He concentrates his work on high stakes criminal and civil litigation, government and internal investigations, and appellate practice, and leads Maslon's Investigations & White Collar Defense Group.

Steve's extraordinary trial skills are well known throughout the United States and the world. He was recognized for his role as a special prosecutor in the internationally televised homicide trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin for the murder of George Floyd. Steve received high praise for his prominent role conducting jury selection and witness examination. His devastating cross-examination of the defense use-of-force expert received national acclaim, and his powerful closing was viewed as a pivotal factor in the trial verdict.

In his white collar criminal defense practice, Steve represents individuals accused of financial crimes involving health care, agriculture, and corporate embezzlement. As a business litigator, Steve served as liaison defense counsel for a leading corn seed developer in a consolidated action involving over 65,000 plaintiffs, and he has represented a leading medical device manufacturer in product liability lawsuits in numerous state and federal courts across the country.

Steve's investigations practice has included a high-profile investigation of a private security company holding a contract at a major NFL venue that resulted in its termination; a data security breach and IP theft conspiracy at a major automobile manufacturer; and internal investigations and government compliance on behalf of health care providers, including hospital systems and physicians. Across all, he leverages deep experience and an acute skillset honed through both public service and private practice.

A former federal prosecutor, Steve worked for 13 years in the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota, serving as the

AREAS OF PRACTICE

Litigation

- Appeals
- Business Litigation
- Investigations & White Collar Defense
- Tort & Product Liability

BAR ADMISSIONS

Minnesota, 1995

U.S. District Court, 1999

- Minnesota

EDUCATION

William Mitchell College of Law
J.D., *cum laude*, 1995

University of Minnesota, Duluth
B.A., *magna cum laude*, 1992
Criminology and Political Science

Deputy Criminal Chief of the Special Prosecution Section (2014-2016) and as the St. Paul Branch Chief. Prior to joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, he was a prosecutor at the Minnesota Attorney General's Office and the Winona County Attorney's Office. Steve also has experience in military courts, having served as a JAG Corps Officer in the United States Army Reserve for 10 years.

Throughout his career, Steve has tried a diverse variety of criminal cases, including homicide, criminal sexual conduct, armed robbery, assault, and other violent crime; complex narcotics conspiracies; racketeering; organized crime; fraud; money laundering; and civil rights violations. He has had numerous jury trials and has conducted hundreds of investigations.

In 2016, Steve served as a prosecutor on the Jacob Wetterling case, prosecuting Danny Heinrich on federal child pornography charges that led to his confession to Jacob’s kidnapping and murder as well as the recovery of his remains. Steve was recognized as an "Attorney of the Year" by Minnesota Lawyer for his dedicated work.

Steve is often interviewed by the media for insight and commentary relating to high profile litigation matters. He served as an on-air commentator during the internationally watched trial of Mohamed Noor, the former Minneapolis police officer who was prosecuted for murder in connection with the on-duty shooting death of Justine Ruszczyk Damond.

SELECTED EXPERIENCE

Investigations & White Collar Defense

- As a former federal prosecutor, conducted hundreds of investigations on behalf of the United States, including complex fraud matters, money laundering, organized crime, and violent crime.
- Investigated a security company holding a multimillion-dollar contract at a major NFL venue on behalf of a worldwide venue management company.
- Investigated a data security breach and complex intellectual property theft conspiracy on behalf of a major automobile manufacturer.
- Represents health care providers and pharmacies in investigations conducted by government agencies.
- Assists financial institutions with Bank Secrecy Act and Anti-Money Laundering Act compliance to include investigation and reporting.
- Represents clients under investigation by federal and state entities, including United States Attorneys' Offices; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Drug Enforcement Administration; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Department of Justice; Department of Health and Human Services; Federal Trade Commission, and Securities and Exchange Commission.

Criminal Defense

- Represents clients accused of crimes in federal and state court, including complex financial crimes, health care fraud, narcotics violations, and all serious felony matters.
- Secured a rare acquittal on all charges for a "Feeding Our Future" pandemic meal fraud defendant following a seven-week federal jury trial.
- Criminal constitutional law expertise; obtained complete dismissal of “dark web” narcotics distribution charges on Fourth Amendment grounds.
- Respected criminal trial attorney with experience handling sensitive, high profile criminal cases, including homicide, organized crime, fraud, and official misconduct.
- Experienced appellate advocate; successful practice before the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals, Minnesota Supreme Court, and Minnesota Court of Appeals.

Business Litigation

- Following a three-week trial in Texas state court, won a zero-liability verdict for a major corporation defending against claims by property and business owners related to a deadly propylene gas explosion at an industrial facility, at which our client had serviced certain gas detection equipment. Jury held operator of the manufacturing facility liable for plaintiffs' full damages claims after we successfully asserted it bore complete responsibility due to safety violations committed by its workers and leadership failures.
- Successfully defended Polaroid against a $300 million breach of contract dispute brought by one of its former licensees, C&A Marketing, winning a complete defense verdict after a two-week jury trial in Hennepin County.
- Served as liaison defense counsel for leading corn seed developer in Minnesota state court consolidated action involving over 65,000 individual U.S. corn growers and various entities that purchased, stored, transported, and exported corn grown in the U.S., along with a class of Minnesota corn growers alleging tort and consumer fraud claims against client.

Tort & Product Liability Litigation

- Represented leading medical device manufacturer in nationwide lawsuits involving both implanted and external medical devices in multiple state and federal courts across the country.

LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY

- American College of Trial Lawyers: Fellow; Minnesota Chapter Vice Chair 2026
- Law360: Editorial Board, Trials, 2026
- American Bar Association
- Minnesota State Bar Association
- Hennepin County Bar Association

SELECTED HONORS

- **Ranked in *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*,** Ranked Band 1 for Litigation: White Collar Crime & Government Investigations, Minnesota, 2023-2026; Ranked in Litigation: General Commercial, Minnesota, 2026
- **Legal 250**, Defense Attorneys, *Minnesota Lawyer*, 2026
- **Recognized on Minnesota Super Lawyers® list**, 2022-2026 (*Minnesota Super Lawyers® is a designation given to only 5% of Minnesota attorneys each year, based on a selection process that includes the recommendation of peers in the legal profession.*)
- **Recognized as a Top Lawyer**, *Minnesota Monthly*, 2025 (The research for the Top Lawyers list, created by Professional Research Services, is based on an online peer-review survey sent to all attorneys in Minnesota.)
- **Joe Friedberg Special Achievement Award,** Minnesota Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, 2024
- **500 Leading Litigators in America**, Lawdragon, 2025-2027, for White Collar, Investigations, Litigation, and Appellate
- **Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America®,*** 2022-2027
- **Fellow**, American College of Trial Lawyers, 2023-Present
- **Notable Military Veterans**, *Twin Cities Business*, 2024
- **Special Achievement Award**, International Association of Prosecutors, presented to the Minnesota Attorney General team that successfully prosecuted the murder of George Floyd, 2023
- **Invited to join the International Association of Defense Counsel,** 2022
- **2021 Attorney of the Year**, *Minnesota Lawyer*
- **2021 Distinguished Service Award**, Pennsylvania Innocence Project
- **2021 Outstanding Service Award,** Minnesota Justice Foundation
- **Praeses Elit Award**, Law Society of Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, 2022

- **Advocate Award**, Civil Litigation Section of Minnesota State Bar Association, 2021 (*The award honors those who have made a significant contribution to improving the system of civil justice in Minnesota*.)
- **Truth and Justice Award,** Urban League Twin Cities, 2021
- **North Star Lawyer,** Minnesota State Bar Association, 2020-2022 *(North Star Lawyer is a designation that recognizes members who provide 50 hours or more of pro bono legal services in a calendar year.)*
- **Presidents Award,** Minnesota State Association of Narcotics Investigators, 2017
- **Julius E. Gernes Prosecutor Award**, Minnesota State Bar Association Public Law Section, 2017
- **Attorney of the Year**, *Minnesota Lawyer*, 2016
- **Arson Prosecutor of the Year**, International Association of Arson Investigators, Minnesota Chapter, 2004
- **Pro Bono Award,** for commitment to pro bono service, Maslon LLP, 2022

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- "Masters in Trial CLE," co-presenter, ABOTA (American Board of Trial Advocates), 2026
- "Food Fight, Fraud, and Focus: Mastering Trial Techniques," Douglas J. Amdahl Inn of Court, 2025
- "Food Fight: Inside the Feeding Our Future Fraud Trial," Academy of Certified Trial Lawyers of Minnesota, 2024
- Steve Schleicher Speaks to Rochester Legal Aid Group on George Floyd Murder Case
- "Believe Your Eyes: The Trial of the Murder of George Floyd," Bar Association of Queensland, 2024
- "Advocacy in Historic Cases: From Jacob Wetterling to George Floyd," Mid-Winter Conference, Minnesota Defense Lawyers Association, 2024
- "Big Brother Is Suing You - Trends in Government Enforcement Actions," moderator, Napa Litigation SuperCourse, The Trial Network, 2023
- "Conducting Efficient Internal Investigations," Association of Corporate Counsel Minnesota Chapter, 2023
- "Keynote Address: The Importance of Public Service," Law School Preparation Institute, University of Texas at El Paso, 2023
- "Reflections on Participating in High-Profile Trials," panelist, Minnesota State Bar Association Convention, 2023
- "The Art of Jury Selection: A Murder Trial Revisited," co-presenter, DRI Annual Meeting, 2022
- "Communicating Science," presenter, Mitchell Hamline School of Law, Expert Witness Training Academy, 2022
- Steve Schleicher Discusses Chauvin Murder Trial for International Association of Defense Counsel Annual Meeting
- "It's Been a Privilege: New Rules Create Privilege Risk," co-presenter, Association of Corporate Counsel-Minnesota, CLE Program, 2022
- "An Afternoon With Special Prosecutor Steve Schleicher," keynote speaker, University of California Hastings College of the Law, 2022
- "Insights from Steve Schleicher, Special Prosecutor for the Derek Chauvin Trial," keynote speaker, Black History Month Program, Meritas, 2022
- Maslon Partners Steve Schleicher, Stephanie Laws, and Melissa Muro LaMere to Present at the Trial Network's In-House and Outside Counsel: In Sync and In Person National Conference
- "Pursuing Accountability: The Chauvin Prosecution," keynote speaker, Minneapolis Policy Conference, Democratic Attorneys General Association, 2021
- "A Measure of Justice for George Floyd," co-presenter, U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Virginia
- "Negotiation Skills: De-Escalating Conflict," co-presenter, Mitchell Hamline School of Law, 2021
- "Corporation as Defendant," guest speaker, Business Regulation and Compliance Course, Mitchell Hamline School of Law, 2020
- "Telling the Corporate Story: Advantages and Potential Pitfalls of Good Conduct Evidence," Products Liability SuperCourse, ACC Minnesota and The Network of Trial Law Firms, 2018
- "Incident Management: From Initial Complaint to Litigation," 7th Annual ACC Minnesota In-House Counsel Conference, 2018
- "Surviving the Waves: Implied, Express, and Subject Matter Waivers of Attorney-Client Privilege," 2017

- "State and Federal Investigations," University of Minnesota Law School, 2017

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Featured in "Family of Alex Pretti speak out," Good Morning America (ABC), 2026
- Featured in "Alex Pretti family attorney: 'If there is no accountability, that's a dark picture for America,'" KARE 11, 2026
- Featured in "Pretti's family still asking for answers," WCCO (CBS Minnesota), 2026
- Featured in "Inside the Trump administration's deadly Minnesota surge," The Lead with Jake Tapper, CNN, 2026
- "5 Mistakes to Avoid in Responding to a Government Investigation," co-author, *Minnesota Lawyer*, 2025
- Profiled in "Justice in the George Floyd Trial: A Conversation with Steve Schleicher," *Re-Examination: Conversations with the Storytellers Behind Legal History* Podcast, 2024
- Quoted in "Our Great Get-Together," *Super Lawyers Minnesota* Magazine, 2024
- Featured in "Distancing client from food fraud scheme yielded acquittal," *Minnesota Lawyer*, 2024
- Quoted in "Jury finds five of seven defendants guilty in Feeding Our Future trial," *Star Tribune*, 2024
- "Big Brother Is Suing You - Trends in Government Enforcement Actions," co-author, The Trial Network, 2023