



Harlan I. Prater IV
Partner

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Harlan Prater's distinguished litigation career includes major defense wins in challenging cases.

One of a select few who are Fellows of the American College of Trial Lawyers, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers *and* the American Board of Trial Advocates, Harlan is a tireless advocate, defending clients and protecting their interests in high-stakes civil trials. A *Chambers USA* "Leading Lawyer," *Benchmark Litigation* "Litigation Star" and three-time *Best Lawyers* "Lawyer of the Year" by BL Rankings, clients have relied on Harlan's experience and skill in product liability, pharmaceutical, medical device, environmental and business litigation for more than 30 years. He also represents clients in consumer fraud, antitrust and patent actions.

Harlan's career includes a number of landmark trials and major victories in Alabama and other venues around the country. He served as defense counsel in the largest and longest-running trial in Alabama history — an environmental contamination case that involved thousands of plaintiffs and lasted more than 19 months. His record speaks for itself, obtaining defense verdicts in cases with millions of dollars at stake for clients throughout Alabama and the Southeast, including the first verdict in more than a decade in favor of a defendant product manufacturer in Lowndes County, Alabama. Harlan has served as national counsel for various product manufacturers and is one of only 13 Alabama lawyers selected as a member of the Product Liability Advisory Council (PLAC).

Even beyond the courtroom, Harlan is dedicated to the law. He chairs the Alabama State Bar Committee on Disciplinary Rules and Enforcement, and he is fascinated by the implications technology and social media have on juries and courtrooms. Harlan served as chair of the Board of Directors of the Birmingham YMCA, and he has served as the chair of the Board of Trustees for both Canterbury United Methodist Church and the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church. Harlan and his late wife, Alice, were married for 32 years and

PRACTICE AREAS

Product Liability
Catastrophic Injury
Pharma & Medical Device
Automotive
Environmental & Toxic Torts
Commercial Litigation
Banking & Financial Services

EDUCATION

Duke University School of Law
(J.D., *with honors*)
Duke University (A.B., *magna cum laude*)

BAR ADMISSIONS

Alabama
Mississippi
Tennessee

have two daughters, one of whom is a lawyer in Charlotte, North Carolina, and the other is an elementary school teacher in Durham, North Carolina. In 2022, Harlan married Ann Brock Prater, and the two enjoy life in Birmingham together.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American College of Trial Lawyers, Fellow

International Academy of Trial Lawyers, Fellow

American Board of Trial Advocates, Fellow

American Bar Foundation, Fellow

Alabama Law Foundation, Fellow

Birmingham Bar Foundation, Fellow



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AWARDS

Alabama Super Lawyers by Thomson Reuters, Top 50

Benchmark Litigation, “Local Litigation Star” – Environmental, General Commercial (2020), Product Liability (2008-21)

Benchmark Litigation, “Litigation Star” (2022-24)

The Best Lawyers in America© by BL Rankings — Environmental Litigation, Personal Injury Litigation, Product Liability Litigation, Commercial Litigation (2007-2024)

The Best Lawyers in America© by BL Rankings, “Lawyer of the Year” for Birmingham — Personal Injury Litigation, Environmental Litigation (2014, 2018, 2021)

B-Metro magazine, "Top Flight Attorneys" (2019)

Chambers USA, “Leading Lawyer” for Litigation (Alabama)

Mid-South Super Lawyers by Thomson Reuters — Product Liability (2008-24)