



Stephen P. Brown

Partner

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Hartford, CT

Steve Brown has a diverse civil litigation practice representing clients in a variety of industries in state and federal courts in Connecticut and across the country. During his career, Steve has represented and advised clients in litigation matters involving a wide array of subject matter areas and substantive legal issues. These include insurance coverage, professional liability, employment issues, fair housing and discrimination claims, sexual molestation and abuse claims against businesses and other entities, general liability, medical malpractice, transportation, construction, and environmental and toxic tort matters. He has extensive, hands-on courtroom experience arguing complex, high-exposure cases in trials, arbitrations, mediations and appeals.

Steve has an excellent working knowledge of the court system and jurisdictions in Connecticut, and trains and supervises all of the Stamford office associates in a variety of procedural matters.

Professional/Community Activities

Steve has been active in a variety of local political affairs, previously serving as a commissioner of the Wetlands and Water Course Commission. He also previously served on the board of directors of the Kennedy Center, a program in Bridgeport, CT, that assists disabled youths and adults, and has worked on a number of fundraisers with the Kennedy Center. Steve has spoken at a variety of seminars in the United States and Canada addressing transportation and insurance industry topics.

Insurance Coverage

Steve's insurance coverage practice focuses on policy drafting and coverage services in connection with high-exposure claims against attorneys, insurance brokers and insurance companies. He also provides coverage advice with respect to commercial general liability insurance policies. His experience in this area extends to construction loss, fire loss, environmental and employment claims.

Services

- Accountants
- Design Professionals
- Asbestos & Talc
- Asia
- Complex Tort & General Casualty
- Cybersecurity & Data Privacy
- e-Discovery
- Employment & Labor
- Environmental
- Fair Housing & Discrimination Claims
- Lawyers' Liability
- National Trial Team
- Product Liability, Prevention & Government Compliance
- Professional Liability & Services

Fair Housing & Discrimination

Steve has represented property management and housing entities in matters alleging discrimination before the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, HUD, and state and federal courts. The matters he has handled over the years include age, disability, race and national origin discrimination claims.

Product Liability

Steve defends manufacturers, distributors and sellers in personal injury and wrongful death cases involving a range of products, including power tools, consumer appliances, recreational vehicles and watercraft, and construction equipment. He also has experience in environmental and toxic tort matters, including the representation of a number of manufacturers and distributors in the Connecticut Asbestos Litigation.

Professional Liability

Steve represents agents and brokers in connection with malpractice and errors and omissions (E&O) claims. His practice includes complex attorney malpractice and E&O claims arising from underlying securities law, real estate transactions and corporate governance issues.

Employment & Labor

Steve represents employers before state and federal courts, administrative agencies, and in arbitrations and mediations in matters involving all aspects of employment law, including discrimination, harassment and wrongful discharge. He has handled matters pertaining to non-compete and non-disclosure agreements as well. Steve also assists clients with their day-to-day management of employment issues and policies, internal investigations and audits, and employment policy manuals and contracts.

Medical Malpractice

Steve's medical malpractice experience involves nursing homes, visiting nurses, nurse's aides, and various medical providers and facilities. He also has dealt with wrongful death actions, personal injury actions, hospital liability, insurance coverage litigation, and commercial and corporate disputes in the health care industry.

Industry Focus

Steve has represented national transportation industry clients in connection with litigation in state and federal courts in New York and Connecticut involving a range of issues, including catastrophic personal injury and cargo loss.

Steve also has experience litigating construction-related matters in state and federal courts. He has defended architects, engineers, construction managers and other parties involved in the design and construction process in connection with delay claims, personal injury claims and other matters.

Education

- Quinnipiac University School of Law (J.D., 1996)
- University at Albany (B.A., 1992)

- Toxic Tort
- Transportation
- Commercial Litigation

Bar Admissions

- Connecticut
- New York

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, District of Connecticut

Professional Affiliations

- Connecticut State Bar Association: Litigation and Insurance Section
- Connecticut Defense Lawyers Association
- Professional Liability Underwriting Society
- Westchester/Fairfield American Corporate Counsel
- Stamford Chamber of Commerce
- DRI

Awards & Honors

- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 2024-2026
- 2023 Lawyer of the Year, Insurance Law, *The Best Lawyers in America*®
- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in the area of Insurance Law and Product Liability Litigation, 2021-2023
- Selected for inclusion in Connecticut *Super Lawyers*, 2016-2018

Representative Matters

Obtained summary judgment on behalf of a realty company in a personal injury case involving crushing injuries sustained by a non-employee transporting I-beams on a forklift owned by the co-defendant.

Successfully represented a bank that owned a residential property in a premises liability suit. The judge granted Wilson Elser's motion for summary judgment on the grounds that the plaintiff failed to establish a defect on the staircase that caused her injuries and that, in fact, there was no defect. Wilson Elser further argued that the plaintiff failed to establish that the bank, as property owner, had notice, actual or constructive, of an alleged defect on the staircase.

Successfully handled a number of personal injury matters involving golf carts.

Defended small and large organizations in harassment and discrimination claims before the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Defended professional insurance agents and brokers against allegations they failed to bind coverage or to appropriately obtain coverage as requested.

Defended attorneys in claims of legal malpractice related to professional negligence.

Handled a variety of high exposure matters related to applicable insurance coverage and /or exclusions in the policy period.

Successfully brought and defended declaratory judgment actions in state and federal courts.

Client Wins

Brown and Maier Prevail on Motion to Dismiss in Federal Court Action

Stephen Brown (Partner-Stamford, CT) and Irena Maier (Associate-Stamford, CT) secured a defense victory in the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut, obtaining the dismissal of a complaint with prejudice in favor of Wilson Elser's client, a Connecticut Attorney. In this action, the plaintiff alleged that our client, who represented the plaintiff's adversary in an underlying matter, violated the plaintiff's civil rights under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and engaged in conspiracy, racketeering, legal malpractice, and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Steve and Irena filed a motion to dismiss on all counts. They argued that the plaintiff failed to state a claim upon which relief could be granted under Rule 12(b)(6) with respect to the conspiracy, racketeering and civil rights violation claims, and that the legal malpractice and intentional infliction of emotional distress claims were barred by Connecticut's litigation privilege doctrine, and therefore should be dismissed for lack of subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to Rule 12(b)(1). Steve and Irena also filed additional moving papers challenging the plaintiff's counterarguments. The court agreed with Wilson Elser's arguments and granted the motion to dismiss in its entirety, dismissing the case with prejudice.

Hill and Brown Secure Summary Judgment for Engineering Client After Establishing No Connection to Incident Property

Michael A. Hill (Associate-Stamford, CT) and Stephen P. Brown (Partner-Stamford, CT) obtained summary judgment in Bridgeport Superior Court, Connecticut, for an engineering firm client. In 2021, the plaintiff was injured when a trench allegedly collapsed while he was performing excavation and water main installation work at a property. The plaintiff named our client in the lawsuit, but preliminary discussions revealed the engineering firm was not associated with the property at the time of the incident. After confirming this with the client, Michael contacted the plaintiff's counsel to determine the basis for naming the client as a defendant. Plaintiff's counsel advised that the codefendant's counsel provided

our client's name. After conducting limited discovery with the parties to establish the client's lack of involvement, Michael and Steve moved for summary judgment on that basis. Plaintiff's counsel acknowledged that he had no basis to oppose the motion and allowed it to enter on the record without objection. After Michael argued the motion, the presiding judge concurred with Wilson Elser's arguments, granting summary judgment absent the plaintiff's objection. The plaintiff informed counsel he would not object.

Brown and Maier Defeat Legal Malpractice Claim on Summary Judgment

Stephen Brown (Partner-Stamford) and Irena Maier (Associate-Stamford) secured summary judgment in the Superior Court of Connecticut, Hartford Judicial District, on behalf of Wilson Elser's client, a Connecticut attorney. In this legal malpractice and breach of fiduciary duty action, the plaintiff claimed that our client, who represented the plaintiff in an underlying product liability matter, failed to file a timely objection to a summary judgment motion, resulting in the dismissal of the case. Irena and Steve moved for summary judgment on both counts, arguing that the plaintiff could not establish that he would have prevailed in the underlying action – an essential element of the plaintiff's claims. In support of their motion, the Stamford team relied on the plaintiff's deposition testimony in the present case and the expert disclosures from the underlying matter, and submitted additional moving papers addressing the plaintiff's counterarguments. The Court agreed with Steve and Irena's arguments, finding that the record was devoid of evidence supporting a rational inference that the plaintiff would have succeeded in the underlying case, and granted the motion for summary judgment in its entirety.

Brown and Hill Obtain Dismissal for Youth Baseball League on Standing Grounds

Stephen P. Brown (Partner-Stamford, CT) and Michael A. Hill (Associate-Stamford, CT) obtained dismissal in Danbury Superior Court, Connecticut, for a nonprofit youth baseball league client, based on the plaintiff's lack of standing. The plaintiff, an unincorporated association formed solely for the purpose of this lawsuit, filed suit against our client, its local league affiliate, and 23 individual board members. The plaintiff's complaint alleged negligence, fraud, and violations of the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act. Recognizing that the parties' defenses were aligned, Michael coordinated with the codefendant's counsel to research dismissal of the matter based on jurisdictional grounds. After meticulous review of case law and drafts, Wilson Elser and the codefendant's counsel filed motions to dismiss. During oral argument, Michael further articulated the firm's position on the plaintiff's standing, including its attempt to assert claims on behalf of a proposed class. The court agreed with the arguments, holding that the plaintiff lacked standing to bring this action and entered a judgment of dismissal in favor of our client and all other defendants.

Brown and Velturo Secure Affirmance of Dismissal of Vermont Attorneys in Connecticut Plaintiff's Suit

Colleen Velturo (Of Counsel-Stamford, CT) and Stephen P. Brown (Partner-Stamford, CT) represented a Vermont-based attorney and firm that handled the sale of a Connecticut man's second home in Vermont. The Appellate Court affirmed the trial court's decision, which held that the Vermont-based attorney could not be brought into court in Connecticut because Connecticut's long-arm statute could not provide personal jurisdiction over the Vermont defendants. The plaintiff, the girlfriend of the man whose property was sold, failed to demonstrate sufficient facts such that any of the sections of

the long-arm statute could apply. Specifically, the Vermont firm did not transact business in Connecticut, enter into a contract in Connecticut, solicit business from Connecticut residents, derive substantial revenue from Connecticut, nor did they commit a tort in Connecticut. Accordingly, the Appellate Court affirmed the trial court's dismissal of the action as to the Vermont attorneys.