



Anthony L. Cochran

Partner | Atlanta

acochran@sgrlaw.com

Tel: 404-815-3799

Fax: 404-685-7099

Areas of Practice

Administrative Law | Health Care | Litigation/Trial Practice | White Collar Law

Anthony (Tony) L. Cochran is a Partner in the Litigation Practice of Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP and Co-Leader of the White Collar, Government & Internal Investigations Practice.

During the 50 years he has been practicing law in Atlanta, Tony has represented many individuals and businesses on a wide variety of complex matters. He has tried dozens of jury trials in many areas of the law (both civil and criminal, federal and state), bench trials (in federal and state courts), administrative and regulatory hearings (before both federal and state agencies and boards), and medical peer review hearings at hospitals. His unique experience allows him to handle parallel civil, administrative and criminal proceedings, which are common in today's legal environment. Being able to competently handle civil, administrative and potentially criminal matters for a client simultaneously can be an enormous savings to a client by preventing duplication of effort.

Tony is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers. In addition to his law practice, he served as former Chair and Director for the Zaban Paradies Center which assists homeless couples obtain housing and employment.

Tony regularly appears on continuing education panels, speaking at a large number of seminars on a variety of topics, including summary evidence under Federal Rule of Evidence 1006, the application of *Daubert* to expert testimony, representing individual physicians, white-collar criminal defense, and internal investigations.

Tony graduated *magna cum laude* from Northwestern University Law School in 1976, beginning his legal career in Atlanta with the firm Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy. From 1982 to 1985, he served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia, prosecuting a variety of criminal cases. While an Assistant United States Attorney, Tony received commendations from the U.S. Attorney General in a Department of Defense procurement fraud prosecution, and from the Director of the F.B.I. in a vote fraud prosecution.

He has also served as an Adjunct Faculty Member of the Emory University School of Law from 1986-2000.

Experience

- Recently represented an individual physician who was a high-ranking corporate officer for Navicent, a large corporate health care conglomerate based in Macon and Charlotte. Tony was lead counsel during a 3-week jury trial in which the physician successfully sued for breach of contract and fraud. The physician won a \$5M+ jury verdict, which was successfully affirmed on appeal, recovering even more attorney fees (making the physician whole) during a post-appeal mediation.
- Recently represented the President of a family-owned and run recycling business who was indicted in federal court in an 8-count Indictment for various environmental violations. Tony obtained dismissal of 3 counts during a 3-week trial. The President was convicted of two misdemeanors (lesser included offenses) and at sentencing received a short period of home confinement and a small fine.
- Recently represented a physician under criminal indictment, whose hospital privileges and medical license were at risk. Tony successfully arranged for the felony charges to be reduced to misdemeanors avoiding incarceration and any problem with the State Composite Medical Board, Medicare, Medicaid, and the National Practitioners Data Bank, allowing the physician to regain active privileges at the local hospital and return to practice.
- Recently represented a midwife under investigation by the Georgia Nursing Board. Tony successfully negotiated a Voluntary Consent Order allowing the midwife to continue her practice.
- Recently represented a County Attorney under investigation by the SEC concerning a bond issue. Tony successfully obtained a declination.
- Successfully represented a physician accused of violating a covenant not to compete in 2019. The physician was served at 5:00 p.m. with a Complaint and Motion for TRO for a hearing scheduled the next day at 1:00 p.m. Prepared overnight and successfully convinced the Superior Court to deny injunctive relief.
- Successfully defended a CPA before the AICPA for alleged violation of an AICPA Rule, with the CPA fully vindicated in 2018.
- Successful representation of Smith, Gambrell & Russell in a 2017 arbitration against Cousins Properties stopping the installation of "building signature signs" on the Promenade in Midtown Atlanta. Smith, Gambrell & Russell sought enforcement of its Lease against the Landlord who proposed to allow another, smaller tenant, to install "building signature signs" with its logo at the top of the Promenade.
- Representation of a corporate defendant in the largest whistleblower action brought under the False Claims Act since the Act was enacted during the Civil War, which resulted in our client successfully settling by paying less than 10% of damages sought by the Government and whistleblower.
- In 2017, successfully represented a corporate officer accused of participating in a criminal violation of the environmental laws. The Government was convinced not to indict the officer, although the corporation was charged.
- In 2017, successfully represented a health care provider accused of invasion of computer privacy. The District Attorney's Office was convinced to dismiss the charges.
- In 2017, successfully represented a CPA accused of insider trading. The U.S. Attorney's Office declined to prosecute after an extensive and lengthy investigation.

- In 2016, successfully represented a former corporate employee who was alleged to have violated a covenant not to compete. The lawsuit was dismissed and the former employee was allowed to continue in her new position with a competitor.
- In 2016, represented a shareholder of a closely-held corporation who successfully sued her fellow shareholders for wrongful distributions, misappropriation of corporate assets, and self-dealing.
- In 2015 and 2016, successfully represented physicians in peer review proceedings involving potential loss of clinical privileges.
- In 2015, successfully represented a former Professor at Georgia Tech who was not charged by the Georgia Attorney General's Office in an alleged racketeering scheme involving theft of more than \$1 million from the University by the former Director of the Georgia Electronic Design Center at the University.
- In 2014, successfully resolved a False Claims Act matter with the DOJ and HHS OIG where the United States agreed to accept an amount from the physician which was one-half of the alleged overpayment, with no multiplier, and less than the cost to take the case to a jury trial. There was no Corporate Integrity Agreement. No criminal charges were filed, either.
- In 2014, successfully resolved an Insider Trading case with the SEC on behalf of an alleged tippee/businessman, with the SEC agreeing to accept an amount that was only 5% of the amount claimed by the SEC, and less than the cost to take the case to a jury trial. No criminal charges were filed by DOJ, either.
- In 2014, successfully resolved an environmental matter with the EPA and DOJ involving alleged violations of the Clean Water Act over a large geographic area allegedly occurring over several years, with the Government agreeing to accept an amount that was a small fraction of the amount claimed by the EPA, and far less than the cost to take the case to a jury trial. No criminal charges were filed by DOJ, either.
- In 2012 and 2013, successfully represented 3 large physician practices from around the State involving false claims/ potentially criminal parallel investigations. All 3 matters were resolved favorably for the healthcare clients.
- In 2011-2014, successfully defended an international pharmaceutical manufacturer in Georgia sued under product liability theories in Multi District Litigation.
- In 2011-2014, successfully represented former CEO of First National Bank of Savannah, concerning FDIC and DOJ.
- In *Mayfield v. Heiman* (2011), successfully obtained summary judgement in complex financial litigation involving securitization of copyrights and thousands of documents spanning over a decade.
- In *State of Georgia v. [Physician]* (2011), successfully obtained a plea in which a physician did not admit guilt and received probation where the State Medicaid Fraud Unit sought a sentence of 4 years of incarceration.
- In 2010 and 2008, successfully sued State agencies under the Open Records Act obtaining public records and large attorney's fee awards.
- Obtained a \$650,000 verdict in favor of a physician against the Board of Regents for violation of MCG's Rules and Procedures governing unsubstantiated allegations of research fraud. Affirmed on appeal.

- In *State of Georgia v. Riner* (2009), successfully obtained a plea agreement involving no incarceration for a business man alleged to have been involved in a securities scheme in which investors lost more than \$4.5 million.
- In re Holbrook (2007), successfully tried a case against the Georgia Medical Board on behalf of an individual physician. The board sought to revoke the physician's license. The physician was completely exonerated.
- *U.S. v. Griffin Industries* (2004). A company had been indicted in an 8-count indictment for alleged felony environmental violations. Successful Daubert motions led to dismissal of these charges.
- In *U.S. v. Ray* (2003). Represented a physician charged of accepting an alleged kickback in return for patient referrals was dismissed after a Daubert motion was filed, challenging the statistical evidence on which the prosecution was based.
- *Gibbons v. Alta Anesthesia*, 245 Ga. App. 79, 537 S.E.2d 388 (2000) – Represented an individual physician, challenged unfair competition by a competing group of anesthesiologists. A State Court jury awarded the physician compensatory damages and \$875,000 in punitive damages. She also recovered her attorney's fees.
- *Thebaut v. Dental Board*, 235 Ga. App. 194, 509 S.E.2d 125 (1998) and *Thomas v. Dental Board*, 197 Ga. App. 589, 398 S.E.2d 730 (1990) – In both of these matters, successfully prevented the Georgia Dental Board from denying dentists fundamental rights, preserving the dentists' licenses.
- *General Electric Co. v. Joiner*, 864 F. Supp. 1310 (N.D. Ga.), rev'd, 78 F.3d 524 (11th Cir.), rev'd, 522 U.S. 136 (1997) – successfully represented a manufacturer in this toxic tort litigation establishing the standard of review on Daubert.

Admissions

Georgia

U.S. Court of Appeals 4th Circuit

Supreme Court of Georgia

Georgia Court of Appeals

U.S. Court of Appeals 11th Circuit

U.S. District Court Middle District of Georgia

U.S. District Court Northern District of Georgia

U.S. Tax Court

U.S. Court of Appeals District of Columbia Circuit

U.S. District Court Southern District of Georgia

U.S. District Court Northern District of Mississippi

U.S. Court of Appeals 3rd Circuit

Memberships

State Bar of Georgia, Member

Atlanta Bar Association, Member

Zaban Couples Center, Advisory Board Member

Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

Recognitions

The Best Lawyers in America®, Administrative/Regulatory Law, Atlanta (2007 – 2011, 2024-2026); Criminal Defense: White-Collar, Atlanta (1995-2011, 2020, 2024-2025) Both (2014, 2015, 2017-2019, 2021-2026); Commercial Litigation, Atlanta (2023-2026)

Chambers USA, Litigation: White Collar/Criminal Investigations, Georgia (2010, 2011, 2021, 2022); Litigation: White-Collar Crime/Government Investigations, Georgia (2023-2025)

Best Lawyers®, Atlanta "Lawyer of the Year" Administrative/Regulatory Law (2013,2020)

Georgia's Super Lawyers, Business Litigation, (2004-2022)

Georgia's Super Lawyers, Top 10 lawyers in the state of Georgia (2018)

Georgia's Best Lawyers, Criminal Defense: White-Collar (2014, 2016)

Named in The International Who's Who of Business Crime Lawyers (2011- 2012)

Georgia Top 100 Super Lawyers, Atlanta Magazine (2011 – 2018)

American College of Trial Lawyers (2005 – 2020)

30 Years of Being Rated AV Preeminent (Martindale-Hubbell) (1987 – 2011)