



Susan Gaertner

Senior Counsel

Minneapolis

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Susan Gaertner represents companies, institutions, and individuals facing federal and state court enforcement actions, and she conducts internal investigations when allegations of misconduct are raised. Susan also leverages her vast dispute resolution experience to serve as a Qualified Neutral in alternative dispute resolution proceedings.

Susan's practice spans a wide range of white-collar matters, including allegations of mail fraud, wire fraud, and visa fraud. She also assists clients with civil and criminal tax matters in state and federal jurisdictions, including foreign bank account disclosure filings and issues relating to unreported income. In addition, her experience includes defending religious and other nonprofit organizations facing internal and external investigations, with a particular focus on allegations of sexual misconduct. Susan is accustomed to working on high-profile matters, and is experienced in dealing with the media in conjunction with and on behalf of her clients.

An experienced trial attorney, Susan served as Ramsey County (Minnesota) Attorney from 1995 to 2011. The fourth person to hold the office since 1933 and the first woman to hold the office, Susan successfully prosecuted many high-profile and complex cases in civil and criminal court. In addition, she spearheaded initiatives aimed at improving system-wide responses to sexual misconduct allegations, and gained particular experience in child abuse prosecution and prevention. She previously served as an assistant county attorney for 10 years, successfully trying scores of cases to juries. In recognition of Susan's trial experience, she has been admitted into the American College of Trial Lawyers.

With her experience managing the myriad of civil litigation and advisory practice challenges faced by a major metropolitan county, Susan understands the impact that investigations and litigation have on an organization. Her experience allows her to create solutions to legal problems and ensure they are provided in a cost-effective manner, whether handled in-house or through outside counsel.

Areas of Focus

Services

[White-Collar Defense & Investigations](#)

[Litigation](#)

[Investigations](#)

[General Business & Complex Commercial Litigation](#)

[Neutral Alternative Dispute Resolution Services](#)

[Employment Counseling & Personnel Management Advising](#)

Sectors

[Health Care](#)

[Agribusiness & Food](#)

[trainED](#)

[Higher Education](#)



Susan has also counseled health care providers on issues related to health care fraud and regulatory enforcement. She has represented health care professionals in district court and licensing board matters, and before the United States Drug Enforcement Administration.

Susan previously worked as a criminal defense attorney for the William Mauzy Law Office and served as a law clerk for the Honorable Gerald W. Heaney of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Credentials

Education

- University of Minnesota Law School, J.D., 1980, cum laude
 - *Minnesota Law Review*
 - Order of the Coif
- University of Minnesota - Duluth, B.A., Political Science, summa cum laude

Bar Admissions

- Minnesota

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Federal Claims
- U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota
- U.S. Tax Court

Recognition

- Peace Officer Grievance Arbitration Roster, Minnesota State Legislature
- *Thomson Reuters*, "Minnesota Super Lawyers®," 2004-2009, 2014-2024
- Minnesota State Bar Association, "North Star Lawyers," 2016-2023, 2025
- *Minnesota Monthly*, "Minnesota's Top Lawyers," 2022
- Norm Maleng Minister of Justice Award, Criminal Justice Section of the American Bar Association, 2009
- Prosecutor of Excellence Award, Public Law Section of the Minnesota State Bar Association, 2007
- Women of Distinction Award, Century College, 2007

- Distinguished Service Award, Minnesota County Attorneys Association, 2004
 - Attorney of the Year, *Minnesota Lawyer*, 2003
 - Hall of Fame, Harding High School, St. Paul, MN
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Presentations

- Moderator, "Perspectives of MN US Attorney on Health Care Fraud," Lathrop GPM Health Law Seminar, September 22, 2022
- Presenter, "Tales from the Front Line: Dueling Perspectives on Health Care Enforcement," Gray Plant Mooty Health Law Conference, July 20, 2017
- Panelist, "Wrongful Conviction in the Political Context," The Innocence Project of Minnesota CLE, July 13, 2017
- Panelist, "Critical Conversation: The Mall of America as Constitutional Battleground—When Rights Collide," Minnesota CLE, June 16, 2017
- Presenter, "Medication Thefts: Prevention, Investigation, Reporting and Best Practices," Aging Services of Minnesota 2013 Institute, February 8, 2013
- Panelist, "Responding to Government Investigations: A Practical Anatomy," GPM White Collar Roundtable, October 30, 2012
- Presenter, "Maintaining Control of Controlled Substances: Drug Diversion Prevention and Enforcement Issues," Care Providers of Minnesota 2012 Assisted Living & Senior Housing Summit, August 22, 2012
- Presenter, "Controlled Substances and Enforcement: Drug Diversion Reporting Requirements," Aging Services of Minnesota Institute, February 8, 2012
- Presenter, "Human Trafficking: Today's Hidden Slavery," 41st Annual Criminal Justice Institute, Bloomington, MN, August 22, 2006
- Presenter, "Progress in Combating Domestic Abuse," Symposium on Domestic Violence, St. Paul, MN, September 9, 2005
- Presenter, "The Sudafed's Gone, but Meth Lingers On: Where Do We Go From Here?" 40th Annual Criminal Justice Institute, Bloomington, MN, August 22, 2005
- Presenter, "Sex Offenders: Myths, Realities, and Reflections," 39th Annual Criminal Justice Institute, Bloomington, MN, August 24, 2004
- Presenter, "Domestic Violence and the Invisible Victims," American Association of University Women, St. Paul, MN, April 14, 2004

Publications

- Author, "Effective Witness Interviews," Minnesota CLE Manual "Handling Internal Investigations: Best Practices for Investigating Alleged Fraud, Bribery, Regulatory Noncompliance, and Other Types of Corporate Wrongdoing," June 1, 2017
 - Chapter author, "Adapting to New Eyewitness Identification Procedures," Reforming Eyewitness Identification Procedures to Strengthen Prosecutions, Thomson Reuters/Aspatore, January 1, 2010
 - "Successful Eyewitness Identification Reform: Ramsey County's Blind Sequential Lineup Protocol," Police Chief Magazine, April 1, 2009
 - "Three Strikes Against Juvenile Crime: Prevention, Intervention, Detention," The Prosecutor, November 1, 1996
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Professional Activities

- American College of Trial Lawyers
- American Arbitration Association – Arbitrator
- Qualified Neutral, Minnesota Supreme Court Roster
- American Bar Association, Criminal Justice Section, advisory board and past vice chair
- Minnesota County Attorneys Association, board member and past president
- National District Attorneys Association, board of director

Community Involvement

- Minnesota Interagency Task Force on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention
- Minnesota Criminal & Juvenile Justice Information Task Force
- Joint Domestic Abuse Prosecution Unit, cofounder, 2000
- National Symposium on Female Offenders, delegate, 1999
- White House Leadership Conference on Youth, Drug Use, and Violence, participant, 1996
- University of Minnesota Law School, Board of Visitors, 1996–2001
- Presidential Scholarship Commission, by appointment of President Clinton, 1995–2000
- Minnesota Attorney General's Arson Task Force, 1995–1998