



Stephen D. Charnoff

Associate
Civil Litigation

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Steve represents businesses, partnerships, homeowners' associations, estates, and individuals involved in breach of contract, fraud, conspiracy, and business disputes in state courts, federal courts, and alternative dispute resolution settings.

Steve successfully defended a national retail chain against a \$500,000 negligence claim in one of its Virginia stores, winning a jury trial that relieved Steve's client of all liability. He recently represented a law firm and its partners sued for breach of contract, conspiracy, and tortious interference. The claim for over \$3,500,000 was brought by an expelled former partner. The plaintiff agreed to settle the case five days into the trial on terms favorable to Steve's clients. In another recent case that resulted in a published Virginia opinion, Steve assisted in the representation of a client involved in a seven-figure estate dispute in Virginia's highest court. The Virginia Supreme Court ultimately reversed a lower court judgment against our client, based on Steve's research and argument. (*Dolby v. Dolby, et al.*, 280 Va. 132 (2010)) recently represented a law firm and its partners sued for breach of contract, conspiracy, and tortious interference. The claim for over \$3,500,000 was brought by an expelled former partner. The plaintiff agreed to settle the case five days into the trial on terms favorable to Steve's clients. In another recent case that resulted in a published Virginia opinion, Steve assisted in the representation of a client involved in a seven-figure estate dispute in Virginia's highest court. The Virginia Supreme Court ultimately reversed a lower court judgment against our client, based on Steve's research and argument. (*Dolby v. Dolby, et al.*, 280 Va. 132 (2010))

One of Steve's clients, a condominium owners association in an upscale District of Columbia neighborhood, presented Steve with a tough problem. One of the condominium building's walls was leaking rainwater into a stairwell, creating a slippage and mold hazard. Unfortunately, the wall represented the property's boundary, meaning that repairing the wall required access to an alleyway owned by an unfriendly hotel property. After preliminary negotiations were unsuccessful, Steve filed a lawsuit in the District of Columbia Superior Court raising issue of first impression: can a property owner gain access to adjoining property in order to remedy a construction defect that presents a health hazard? The hotel defendant moved to dismiss the case on the grounds that the lawsuit was based on a doctrine that had not yet been recognized in the District of Columbia. Steve prevailed in Superior Court; the hotel agreed to settle the dispute and the repairs were made.

Professional Credentials

- Graduate, Mary Washington College
- Graduate, University of North Carolina School of Law
- Barred in state and federal courts in Virginia and the District of Columbia, including the U.S. Bankruptcy Court and the U.S. Supreme Court