



Derek Schmidt

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

With a background as Kansas' second-longest-serving Attorney General, Derek represents clients before State Attorney General Offices across the country.

Growing up in Independence, Kansas, Derek was surrounded by public service: his dad was a business leader, city council member, and later the mayor, and his mom an active community volunteer. Derek's own 30-year public service career includes time as a legislative aide in the U.S. Senate, 10 years in the Kansas State Senate—including six as Majority Leader and four as Agriculture Committee chair—and a role as special counsel to the Kansas governor.

In 2010, Derek was elected the 44th Kansas Attorney General and went on to serve three terms through 2022. During his time in office, he significantly strengthened the state's enforcement capabilities in elder abuse and child sexual abuse. The office under his leadership also argued eight cases at the U.S. Supreme Court, including three personally argued by Derek and four he second chaired.

Derek joined Husch Blackwell in 2023, eager to help build the firm's State Attorneys General team into a top-tier national practice. His mindset remains just as service-focused in private practice as it was in the public sector: Derek is passionate about helping clients grow and protect their businesses. He represents clients in regulatory, licensing, or permitting matters before their State Attorney General's Office; assists with contracting processes in states where the Attorney General serves as a contracting authority; and supports clients in general government relations needs and relationship building

Industries

Manufacturing
Technology
Transportation

Services

Appellate
Consumer Financial Services
Government Solutions
State Attorneys General Practice

with their State Attorney General's Office. Derek's goal is to provide clients with the representation and counsel they need to remain on good terms with their State Attorney General's Office, helping them avoid or minimize the cost and uncertainty of investigations and litigation.

Thanks to his own time in office, Derek has an in-depth understanding of how State Attorney General Offices function. His knowledge is tremendously valuable to clients and extends far beyond Kansas: he also served as president of the National Association of Attorneys General and built relationships with his colleagues in both political parties across the country. Derek is ideally positioned to help clients navigate state systems in the most effective manner possible.

Experience

- Served as Kansas' second-longest-serving attorney general from 2011 to 2023.
- Led successful efforts to strengthen Kansas laws against human trafficking, toughen penalties for defrauding senior citizens and for stealing from taxpayers, build a modern forensic science laboratory for the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, strengthen consumer-privacy laws, and improve investigation of crimes against children.
- Built a strong and effective Kansas Attorney General appellate practice that included multiple cases argued before the U.S. Supreme Court, three of which Derek argued personally and four others he second chaired.
- Chaired the Kansas Intelligence Fusion Center Oversight Board and held the appropriate security clearance.
- Served as Kansas State Senate Majority Leader and Chair of the Agriculture Committee.
- Served as counsel to Kansas Governor and as an Assistant Attorney General for consumer protection, charities enforcement, and antitrust.
- Served as municipal court prosecutor for the City of Independence, Kansas.
- Served as legislative director and general counsel in the U.S. Senate.

Recognition

- President's Award, Kansas Sheriffs Association, 2020
- Outstanding Attorney General, National Association of Attorneys General, 2019
- Distinguished Service to Kansas Children Award, Kansas Children's Service League, 2019
- Criminal Justice Professional of the Year Award, Wichita Crime Commission, 2015
- Policy Maker of the Year Award, Kansas County and District Attorneys Association, 2013
- Guardian of Small Business Award, National Federation of Independent Businesses - Kansas, 2004

Education

- S.J.D., University of Kansas School of Law
- J.D., Georgetown University Law Center
- M.A., University of Leicester
- B.S., University of Kansas

Admissions

- Kansas
- District of Columbia
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Kansas

Community Leadership

- Kansas Law Enforcement Memorial Foundation, Board of Directors, 2017-present
- Independence Industries, Board of Directors, 2002-present
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, Law Enforcement Advisory Council, 2018-2022
- Kansas Republican Party, Executive Committee, 2005-2022

*Derek works remotely and is licensed in Kansas, practicing in Independence. Contact Derek via email or phone for in-person/virtual meetings. Use our Washington, D.C. address for mail/deliveries only.