



Thomas B. Heffelfinger **Attorney**

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Tom Heffelfinger has devoted most of his 41-year career to investigating, prosecuting and defending white collar criminal misconduct and violent crime. In addition, he has focused his career upon issues facing Native American communities. Tom has served as an Assistant Hennepin County Attorney, as an Assistant United States Attorney in Minnesota and, on two separate occasions, as the Presidentially-appointed United States Attorney for the State of Minnesota. During Tom's service as United States Attorney from 2001 to 2006, he also served as Chairman of the United States Department of Justice's Native American Issues Subcommittee and was responsible for the development and implementation of a wide range of policies related to public safety in Indian Country. In his private practice of more than 27 years, Tom specializes in the representation of individuals and organizations who have been the victims of white collar crime, accused of such crime or are seeking to prevent such crime within their organization. Tom conducts internal and background investigations for such clientele and counsels them in the development of crime prevention programs such as ethics and compliance programs.

Areas of Practice

Litigation
Government and Internal Investigations & Defense

Education

J.D., University of Minnesota Law School, 1975
B.A., History, Stanford University, 1970

Admissions

State of Minnesota
Forest County Potawatomi Community Tribal Court
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Court
White Earth Band of Chippewa Tribal Court
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota
U.S. District Court, Eastern and Western Districts of Wisconsin
Supreme Court of the United States

Firm News/Articles

› 2025 Edition of Best Law Firms® Includes 16 Best & Flanagan Practice Areas

BEST & FLANAGAN

- › Best & Flanagan Ranked in 2024 Edition of Best Law Firms® by Best Lawyers®
- › Sixteen Best & Flanagan Attorneys Included in The Best Lawyers in America® 2024 Edition
- › Nineteen Best & Flanagan Attorneys Recognized as 2023 Super Lawyers and Rising Stars
- › Best & Flanagan Ranked in 2023 “Best Law Firms” by U.S. News – Best Lawyers®
- › 2023 Edition of The Best Lawyers in America® Includes Eleven Best & Flanagan Attorneys
- › Fifteen Best & Flanagan Attorneys Recognized as 2022 Super Lawyers and Rising Stars
- › Best & Flanagan Ranked in 2022 “Best Law Firms” by U.S. News – Best Lawyers®
- › Eleven Best & Flanagan Attorneys Included in 2022 Edition of The Best Lawyers in America®
- › Best & Flanagan Attorneys Recognized as 2021 Super Lawyers and Rising Stars
- › Ten Best & Flanagan Attorneys Included in The Best Lawyers in America® 2021 Edition
- › Twenty Best & Flanagan Attorneys Recognized as 2020 Super Lawyers and Rising Stars
- › Tom Heffelfinger and Former U.S. Attorneys File U.S. Supreme Court Amicus Brief on behalf of Muscogee Nation
- › Best Lawyers in America 2019 List Includes Seven Best & Flanagan Attorneys
- › Ten Best & Flanagan Attorneys Named 2019 Minnesota Super Lawyers
- › Nine Best & Flanagan Attorneys Named 2018 Minnesota Super Lawyers
- › Ten Best & Flanagan Attorneys Named 2017 Minnesota Super Lawyers
- › Heffelfinger Named Co-Chair of The Judicial Selection Committee
- › Ten Best & Flanagan Attorneys Named 2016 Minnesota Super Lawyers
- › Tom Heffelfinger Discusses Federal Officials Decision
- › D.C. Circuit Again Defends Attorney-Client Privilege Protections in Internal Investigations
- › Confidentiality Agreements Should Not Discourage Whistleblowers
- › Best & Flanagan Attorney and Former U.S. Attorney, Thomas Heffelfinger, Appointed by Senators Klobuchar and Franken to Join Advisory Committee for U.S. Attorney
- › “Attorney of the Year” Ceremony, Best & Flanagan’s Thomas B. Heffelfinger Honored

Professional Associations

- › American, Minnesota, Hennepin County, Federal and Minnesota American Indian Bar Associations
- › Ethics Officers Association, 1994 to 2001
- › National Association of Former United States Attorneys, 1993 – 2001; April 2006 – present
- › National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, 1997 –2001; November 2006 – present
- › Citizen Member, Civil War Commemoration Task Force/Minnesota Historical Society; June 2011 –

Community Associations

Non-Profit Board Memberships:

- › Family Advocacy Center of Northern Minnesota, Bemidji, Minnesota (501(c)(3) medical-based Center for Indian and non-Indian victims of child abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence in rural northwest Minnesota, serving entire 9th Judicial District and Red Lake, Leech Lake and White Earth Reservations), 2005 - Present
- › Board of Directors Member, 2006 – present Twin Cities Area Chapter, American Red Cross; Board of Directors Member, 1988 – 2001; 2006 – Present; Chair, 1999 – 2000; Capital Campaign Chair, 2000 – 2001
- › Judicial Selection Committee for the United States District Court Co-Chair, 2014 – 2015 (appointed by United States Senators Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken)
- › Metropolitan Council, Transportation Advisory Board (the Transportation Advisory Board was created by the Minnesota State Legislature in 1974 to advise the Metropolitan Council on transportation planning and programming matters for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area); Appointed Member, 2010 – 2012

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- › Minnesota Advisory Task Force on School and Staff Emergency/All Hazard Preparedness, established by 2006 Session Law to recommend to the Legislature proposals for strengthening K-12 crisis management and school safety efforts, Member October 2006 – February 2007
- › Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board, Member, 1998 – 2000 (Appointed by the Governor; confirmed by the State Senate)
- › Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission, Member, 1996 – 2000; Chair, 1998 – 2000 (Appointed by the Eden Prairie City Council)
- › Minnesota Commission on Judicial Selection, Chair, 1990 – 1991 (Appointed by the Governor)

Awards & Recognition

- › AV Preeminent® - Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Rating™
- › One of Minnesota's Attorneys of the Year, 2011, *Minnesota Lawyer*
- › Honoree, Minnesota Super Lawyers, 2001-2023
- › One of *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 2009 – present, in the specialty of Native American Law
- › One of *Minnesota's Best Lawyers*, 2010 – 2011, 2019-2020, *Minnesota Monthly*
- › Testified before the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs:
 - › July 2002 related to Criminal Jurisdiction
 - › July 2003 related to Homeland Security
 - › April 2005 related to Indian Gaming
 - › June 2007 related to Criminal Justice Reform
 - › September 2008 related to Prosecution of Crimes
 - › November 2011 related to SAVE Native American Women Act
- › Featured in "200 Minnesotans You Should Know," April 2010, Twin Cities Business Magazine
- › Public Service Award, 2007, Minnesota County Attorneys Association
- › United States Department of Justice Special Achievement Award, 1986
- › Candidate, Hennepin County Attorney, 1986
- › Special Prosecutor Assignments
 - › Sherburne County (1981 –1982);
 - › Hennepin County (1983);
 - › Stearns County (1984 –1985);
 - › Washington County (1984 –1985);
 - › Carver County (1987);
 - › Steele County (2007);
 - › Cook County (2013 –2014);
 - › Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (2013)



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2025

RECOGNIZED BY
Best Lawyers®

After Hours

- > I enjoy traveling.
- > I am a history buff.
- > I love sailing, under-water diving and photography, big mountain skiing, and golfing.

Thomas's Team

- > Amy Conners, Attorney