

Best Lawyers®



IN THE LAW
page 5



"LAWYER OF THE YEAR" AWARDS
page 6



NEW! ONES TO WATCH
page 18

GENUINE LEADERSHIP

ADAM MALONE'S success leading
Malone Law was matched by his contributions
to Georgia's COVID-19 Judicial Task Force

page 11



GENUINE LEADERSHIP

Adam Malone's success leading Malone Law was matched by his contributions to Georgia's COVID-19 Judicial Task Force, which shaped how the state approached legal proceedings during the most disruptive time in modern U.S. history.

by Justin Smulison

ADAM MALONE OF MALONE LAW began 2020 by preparing for trials and litigating catastrophic injury claims. But by March, that came to a halt when the COVID-19 pandemic was declared a national emergency, causing the shutdowns of most courthouse operations and statewide lockdowns.

Malone Law already had its remote capabilities in place, so the firm had no technological disruptions. "Without the ability to present a case to a jury, I had to get creative and find new ways to bring cases to resolution," notes Malone, who in 2016 was named a Best Lawyers® "Lawyer of the Year" in Medical Malpractice Law – Plaintiffs in Atlanta. "The lawyers and staff of Malone Law stayed focused, faced the challenges, and we resolved several significant injury and malpractice matters."

And while the firm continued to litigate their clients' cases, Malone found himself answering the call of Georgia's legal community.

He was already serving as an officer of the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association, a 2,000-member organization composed of his peers, when he recommended to its president that guidelines be drafted to help reduce court backlog, keep the civil justice system moving, and to reduce the possibility of insurance companies exploiting the shutdowns by delaying

payment of valid claims. His quick action, fair proposals, and pragmatic solutions were well-received by all sides and resulted in his nomination to serve as a member of the COVID-19 Judicial Task Force for the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court. He accepted the nomination in May 2020 and immediately went to work with the entire task force comprised of esteemed judges from around the state and many respected members of the bar in each practice area of the law. The work of the task force has assisted Chief Justice Harold D. Melton in developing the safest and most efficient ways for Georgia's entire judicial system to remain active amid regular uncertainty and rising COVID infections.

the guidance provided by the task force has provided a path to keep the wheels of justice turning—turning safely in the midst of this pandemic—and prevented what otherwise might have been a total shutdown of our third branch of government."

With the accomplishments and continued progress of the task force and the cooperation of the bench, many cases will be ready for trial when safety thresholds are met. Malone's leadership during such a chaotic time in American history, on top of running his own firm, benefited everyone throughout the entire state on all sides of a legal dispute and brought a new dimension to the tradition of excellence for which Malone Law is known for.

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"We've all been working together to promulgate and suggest guidelines to Chief Justice Melton for lawyers and judges to keep moving cases even without having in-person jury trials," Malone says. "We had many common goals, and it has been an honor and a privilege to work with such well-respected professionals. Ultimately,

"The goal was to get back to work, and we found ways to keep the system functioning," Malone notes. "It was very gratifying to know our results led to lawyers, firms, and court officers remaining active and employed, and that injured people and their families could get adequate representation, compensation, and closure." **B**

MALONE LAW IS A BOUTIQUE INJURY FIRM that that upheld its reputation as Georgia's plaintiffs' powerhouse in 2020. Adam Malone charted a path for his firm to be proactive during the COVID-19 shutdowns and secured justice for injury and medical malpractice victims through settlements and mediation.

This tradition of excellence began when Adam's father, Thomas "Tommy" Malone, founded the firm in 1965 and successfully led it for more than 50 years. Tommy Malone passed away in 2019 and will always be revered as a trailblazer among Georgia's legal community.

"In order to stand up for somebody else, you have to really know yourself and be aware of your strengths and those areas where you need improvement," Adam Malone said. "My dad was a great role model for that philosophy."

Adam and Malone Law's attorneys practiced alongside Tommy for 17 years and continue to build on the legacy through various courtroom milestones. This includes a \$24.5 million record verdict in Adam's hometown of Albany against a local hospital for the needless amputation of a 14-year-old football player's leg. His efforts also influenced positive change for Georgian residents. One of his proudest accomplishments was securing a verdict that led the Georgia Supreme Court to declare arbitrary legislative caps on quality of life damages unconstitutional in medical malpractice cases. This unanimous ruling ensures the right to a trial by jury and a full verdict for those negligently injured by the carelessness of others.

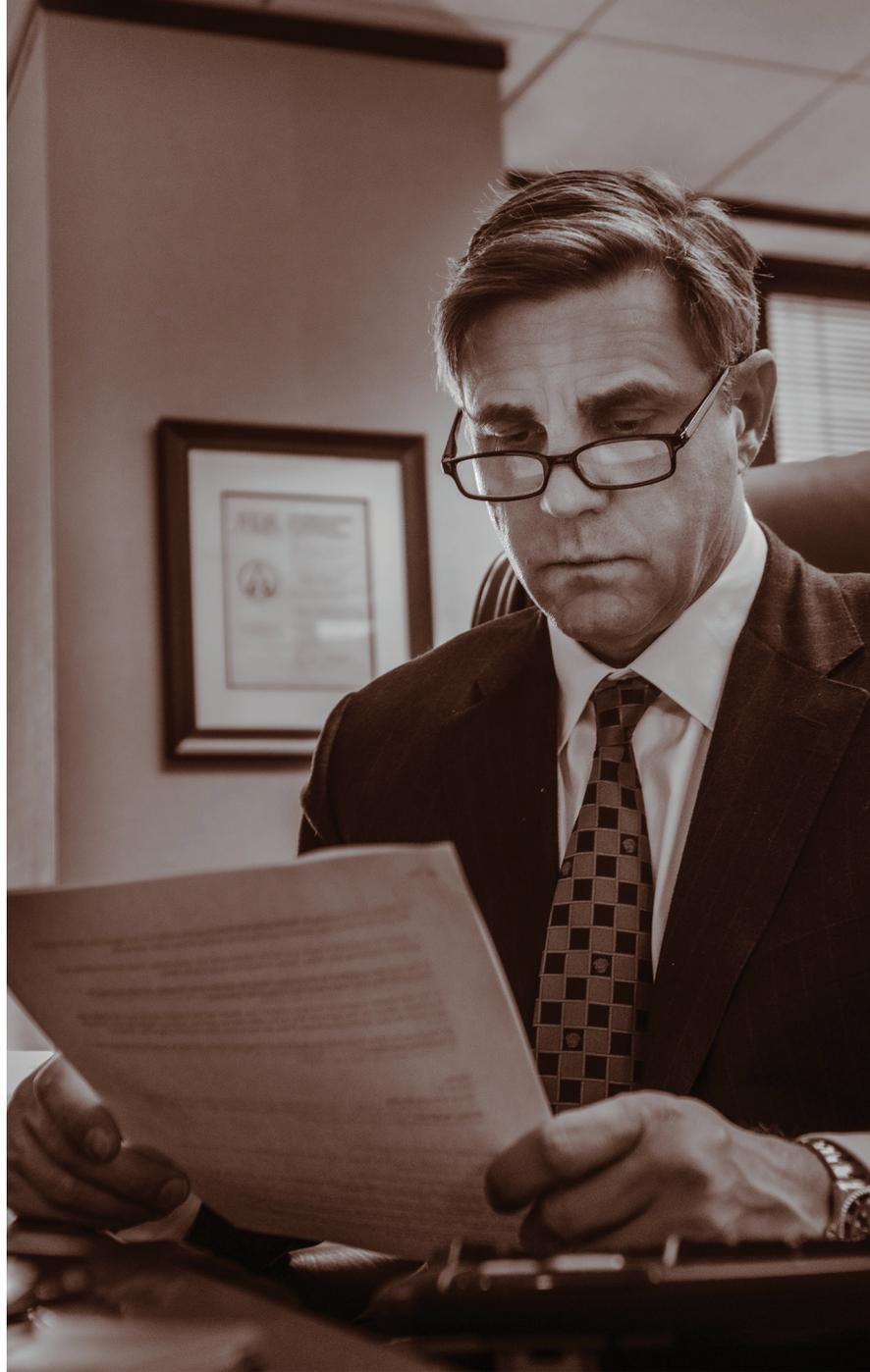
Adam made history outside the courtroom last year, as well. His appointment to the COVID-19 Judicial Task Force for the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court helped chart the course for how the state bar could safely resume its hearings and processes. This led to several solutions across the state and helped reduce some of the bottleneck of cases that would have awaited trial.

"An insurance company's failure to resolve a case – which pre-pandemic would have otherwise settled – simply because of the inability to proceed with a jury trial now would be taking advantage of deserving people," Malone said. "Most responsible insurance companies realize that and do not want to be held liable for bad faith handling of a claim. As advocates for injured people and those who care about them, we showed insurers we would not tolerate any exploitation."

Throughout the firm's history, Adam Malone and Malone Law have received countless accolades and honors for their impact. Adam has been an annual fixture in *The Best Lawyers in America*®, listed in the areas of Personal Injury Litigation - Plaintiffs and Medical Malpractice Law - Plaintiffs since 2010. In 2016, he was named a Best Lawyers® "Lawyer of the Year" in Medical Malpractice Law - Plaintiffs in Atlanta. For years he served on the Board of Governors and its Executive Committee for the American Association for Justice—the nation's largest organization for lawyers representing the injured.

Malone noted that his actions are always rooted in exceptional client service, no matter what disruptions he encounters.

"Clients comment how the firm's family dynamic puts them at ease and builds their confidence during their recovery and the litigation process," Malone said. "It is heartwarming to know that, even in remote settings, we have maintained that family atmosphere."



MALONE LAW

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MALONELAW.COM

770.390.7550

Two Ravinia Drive • Suite 300 • Atlanta, GA 30346