

**Steven P. Rice**

Partner  
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**Orange County**

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**Practice Areas**

- Litigation
- Bankruptcy
- Insurance/Reinsurance
- Labor & Employment
- Construction
- Corporate/Securities
- Complex Litigation
- Class Actions
- Trial Practice
- University Practice

**Steven P. Rice** is a partner in Crowell & Moring LLP's Irvine, California office and serves as the Orange County Chair of the firm's Litigation Group. Steve specializes in complex business litigation, including issues arising from claims of unfair competition, unfair business practices, interference with contract and other business torts, breach of fiduciary duty, violation of state and federal securities laws, RICO, insurance coverage and bad faith, bankruptcy, labor and employment, construction, and government contracts.

Steve has extensive bench and jury trial experience in state and federal courts throughout California, the western United States, and the nation. He has also handled numerous arbitrations, mediations, and other form of ADR.

At the appellate level, Steve has argued many high-profile cases, resulting in several published opinions, before state and federal appellate courts, including the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the California Supreme Court, and the California Court of Appeal, involving such diverse issues as insurance coverage and bad faith, bankruptcy, breach of fiduciary duty, common law fraud, federal securities law, RICO, attachment law, property taxation, and ERISA.

Steve has also worked extensively on a pro bono basis in matters involving senior citizen and homeowner's rights, veteran's rights, predatory lending, and securities fraud, among others. In 2002, Steve was named the Attorney of the Year by the Public Law Center of Orange County for excellence and dedication in pro bono work. He is also a volunteer arbitrator for the Mandatory Fee Arbitration Committee of the Orange County Bar Association.

Steve earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics, *summa cum laude*, from Occidental College in 1977. In 1980, he earned his law degree from Harvard Law School. Steve joined Crowell & Moring in 1996, having

previously been a partner in the Los Angeles and Orange County offices of Kindel & Anderson LLP, where he had practiced since graduating from law school.

### Representative Recent Matters

- Successfully represented \$8 billion public employee pension fund in various litigation, including:
  - Bench trial of petition for writ of mandate asserting a constitutional challenge to employer contribution policy and decision-making process and seeking recovery of \$80 million, resulting in entry of judgment in client's favor, affirmed on appeal.
  - Hearing on petition for writ of mandate challenging interpretation of benefit statutes as applied to court reporters, resulting in denial of all claims against client.
  - Special settlement counsel in class action involving allocation of excess earnings, resulting in:
    - Favorable settlement on the merits and settlement of attorney's fees with one class counsel.
    - Defense of motion seeking pre-judgment attorney's fees by another class counsel, and obtained order limiting award to a multiplier of less than one (*i.e.*, discount off regular hourly rates).
    - Defense of motion seeking post-judgment attorney's fees by class counsel, and obtained order providing for no recovery of fees by class counsel.
  - Numerous individual disability writs and appeals.
  - Special counsel to the Board of Trustees in connection with various risk management and policy issues.
  - Currently representing pension fund as plaintiff in securities fraud action seeking to recover \$150 million in damages.
- Represented insurance carriers in numerous asbestos bankruptcies, including cases in Texas, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and California involving litigation of standing, discovery, and confirmation issues in bankruptcy court, district court, and Court of Appeals.
- Obtained full reversal, as appellate counsel, of \$15 million bad faith verdict against insurance company.
- Represent insurance carrier in numerous California state and federal court bad faith actions.
- Currently representing national telecommunications company in a series of class actions under the Consumer Legal Remedies Act, Section 17200, and other statutes and legal theories.
- Successfully defended client in action arising from asset sale agreement for dry cleaning company, resulting in settlement in which our client received payment of full amount claimed in cross-complaint, interest, and 100% of attorney's fees and costs.

- Successfully defended defense contractor in application by subcontractor for temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction in Section 17200 unfair competition action arising from allegedly fraudulent test certifications, resulting in dismissal of the action.
- Successfully defended prime defense contractor, in district court and Court of Appeals, against subcontractor interest claim.
- Successfully represented health care advocacy company in obtaining dismissal of trademark infringement action under first to file rule.
- Successfully represented securities broker-dealer in Section 17200 unfair competition claim arising from electronic trading practices, obtaining an order compelling arbitration of legal claims and then dismissal, with no payment, of entire action.
- Successfully represented law firm in Section 17200 action brought by former law firm, obtaining dismissal with prejudice of all claims.
- Obtained summary judgment, and award of attorney's fees and costs, for defendant Japanese hi-tech company in age and sex discrimination action.
- Successfully represented through trial and appeal on a *pro bono* basis seven residents of senior citizens community to establish community's document access and corporate governance procedures in compliance with California law.
- Successfully represented contractor in multi-million dollar arbitration claim arising from construction of 120-mile natural gas pipeline.

### Recognitions

- 2002 Orange County Public Law Center "Attorney of the Year" for *pro bono* legal services to the community.
- Orange County Bar Association, Mandatory Fee Arbitration Program. (Arbitrator) (2002-present)
- Member, Board of Directors, Legal Aid Society of Orange County (2007-present)
- Pro Bono Angel Award, California Lawyer Magazine (2006)

### Education

- Occidental College, B.A. Economics (1977) *summa cum laude*
- Harvard Law School (1980)

**Affiliations**

Admitted to practice: California

**Publications**

- Pre-Litigation Preparation during the Construction Job - How to Position Yourself to Win, (Fall 2001). Author: Steven P. Rice.

**Alerts & Newsletters**

- "Alert for Clients Engaged In Retail or E-Commerce Credit/Debit Card Transactions," *Privacy Law Alert* (January 16, 2007). Contacts: Steven P. Rice, Daniel A. Sasse, Kris D. Meade, Lynn Parseghian.

**Speaking Engagements**

- "Current Issues Concerning Asbestos Bankruptcies," University of San Francisco School of Law, Asbestos Litigation (2004). Moderator: Steven P. Rice.
- "Litigation 2003," State Association of County Retirement Systems Conference (Fall 2003). Panelist: Steven P. Rice.
- "Alternative Dispute Resolution," Western Construction Consumers Conference (Spring 2003). Speaker: Steven P. Rice.
- "Litigation Update," Western Ounce of Prevention Seminar, Crowell & Moring LLP (2002). Panelist: Steven P. Rice.
- "Litigation Avoidance Practices in the Construction Industry," Crowell & Moring LLP Construction Seminar, *also provided to clients in-house on a fee basis* (2002). Speaker: Steven P. Rice.