Rusty Hardin

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Rusty Hardin is the name partner of his 14-attorney firm in Houston, Texas. He has 50 years of litigation experience, having begun his career as an assistant district attorney for Harris County in 1975. He served as chief of one of the office's felony divisions for eight years and was named Prosecutor of the Year in 1989. In 1991, Hardin moved into private practice, and he established Rusty Hardin & Associates in 1996.

The firm manages a wide variety of cases and appeals, focusing primarily on civil matters, including complex commercial litigation, contract disputes, and claims involving serious personal injury. The firm also engages in a substantial white collar criminal defense practice in both federal and state court. Hardin has tried over 190 jury trials in addition to a number of commercial arbitrations. His clients have been as varied as Arthur Andersen in both civil and criminal cases; Dow Jones, for whom the firm won a new trial in the face of the largest libel verdict in history; the J. Howard Marshall II estate in the nationally-followed probate trial involving claims made by Anna Nicole Smith; ExxonMobil Corporation; Rice University; Las Vegas Sands; Arkema, Inc. in both the civil and criminal matters related to the incident at its Crosby plant during Hurricane Harvey; and a lengthy roster of professional athletes that includes Vernon Maxwell, Otis Thorpe, Wade Boggs, Warren Moon, Rudy Tomjanovich, Scottie Pippen, Calvin Murphy, Adrian Peterson, Roger Clemens, Michael Bennett Jr., James Harden, Deshaun Watson,

and the family of Los Angeles Angels pitcher Tyler Skaggs. In 2023, Hardin was chosen by the Texas House of Representatives to lead the prosecution in the impeachment trial of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton before the Texas Senate.

Hardin's reputation and skill have led to numerous honors. He is one of only four attorneys in the U.S. and the only attorney in Texas honored as a 2018 Global Elite Thought Leader in litigation by the international legal research firm *Who's Who Legal*. Hardin is a member of the American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL), the International Academy of Trial Lawyers (IATL), the Litigation Counsel of America (LCA), and the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA). He served as chief trial counsel for Independent Counsel Robert Fiske and his successor Kenneth Starr in the Whitewater investigation. Since 2009, Hardin has served on the Texas Supreme Court Advisory Committee. In 2024, the Texas Bar Foundation awarded him the Ronald D. Secrest Outstanding Trial Lawyer Award. Hardin was named one of the 100 Most Influential Lawyers in America by *The National Law Journal* in 2013, and he was named one of "The 25 Greatest Texas Lawyers of the Past Quarter-Century" by *Texas Lawyer* in 2010. The London-based Chambers and Partners Publishing has recognized Hardin as a top U.S. trial lawyer and as a Texas Band 1 lawyer in both general commercial litigation and white-collar criminal defense. *Best Lawyers* has consistently recognized him in both commercial litigation and white-collar criminal defense, and it named him 2019 Lawyer of the Year in the Houston area for white collar criminal defense. The Litigation Section of the State Bar of Texas inducted Hardin as a Texas Legal Legend, and *Benchmark Litigation* selected him as a Litigation Star in Texas in General Commercial Litigation. Hardin was also the recipient of the 2013 Lifetime Excellence in Advocacy Award from the Texas Association of Civil Trial and Appellate Specialists. In 2016, the firm was selected as a Litigation Department of the Year honoree by the publishers of *Texas Lawyer*, and Hardin was selected as a member of America's Top 100 Attorneys. Hardin earned recognition in the 2019 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America* for both commercial litigation and white-collar criminal defense work. Additionally, he was ranked as one of the Top Ten "Super Lawyers" in Texas by *Texas Monthly* for four consecutive years and was named by *Texas Lawyer* as a "Go-To Lawyer" for civil defense litigation in 2002 and commercial litigation in 2007. In 2011, Hardin received the *Houston Press* Readers' Choice award for Best Lawyer in Houston, and in 2009, he received the *Houston Press* Readers' Choice awards for Best Civil Attorney and Best Criminal Defense Attorney in Houston.

Hardin has held a number of leadership positions on committees for the State Bar of Texas and has served on the faculty of numerous public and professional institutions. He is also a highly sought-after speaker for national and regional bar associations and business groups.

A native of North Carolina, Hardin received his undergraduate degree from Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut and his J.D. from Southern

Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. Rusty and his wife, Tissy, were married in 1970. They have two sons, Russell and Thomas. Russell is a high school teacher in Houston and Thomas is an officer in the Houston Police Department.