



Stephen Hopper

Barrister

Call: 2001

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Stephen's practice is a mixture of criminal prosecution, criminal defence and professional disciplinary work.

| "Very clever and ferociously hardworking"

Specialist areas

Fraud, Business and Financial Crime
Crime
Professional Regulation

VAT number: 906142157

Bar council number: 43463

He has extensive jury trial experience across the full range of criminal offences; appearing as junior alone, led junior and leading junior. He has appeared in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division for both appellants and the Crown. He is a Level 4 Prosecutor and member of the CPS Specialist Fraud Panel.

Areas of expertise

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Stephen specialises in fraud and financial crime. He is frequently instructed by the Specialist Fraud Division of the Crown Prosecution Service in serious cases of VAT fraud, income tax fraud, money laundering and large-scale benefit fraud. As a consequence, he has acquired considerable experience of confiscation and forfeiture under the Proceeds of Crime Act. He has a detailed knowledge of the disclosure regime and related law.

Stephen has also been instructed for the defence in financial crime cases including a case of alleged tax evasion arising from claims for tax relief via a “film” scheme.

Aside from fraud cases, Stephen carries out a variety of other work. Recent prosecution instructions have included cases involving kidnap, firearms and money counterfeiting; as well responding to a historic murder appeal.

The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) frequently instruct Stephen in criminal prosecutions under the Medicines Act and related regulations. He has also provided pre-charge advice to the MHRA in cases involving patient deaths arising from either prescribing or drug manufacturing errors.

Notable cases

R v L (Portsmouth CC) Instructed as junior alone to prosecute a defendant accused of manufacturing and selling bogus remedies for Covid-19

Appeal of S (Court of Appeal Criminal Division) Led junior for the respondent in a historic, fresh evidence appeal of a murder conviction from the 1980s

Operation Epsom (Southwark CC) Led Junior for the Crown in a large-scale alcohol smuggling and VAT evasion case with 13 defendants.

R v P and others (St Albans CC) Junior alone prosecuting fraud relating to the sale of “build slots” for rare luxury sports cars.

R v H and others (Southwark CC) Led junior for the defence in multi-handed “film scheme” tax fraud

Operation Handrail (Southwark CC) Leading junior for the Crown in a pension liberation fraud and related money laundering based on a bogus eco-forestry scheme

Operation Sodergren (Blackfriars CC) Leading junior for the Crown in a case of money laundering via an international money transfer business with branches in six UK cities. The amount laundered through the business exceeded £100 million.

Operation Falcon (Isleworth CC) Instructed by the Crown in the case of a professional fraudster who deceived victims into taking up non-existent gold bullion and FOREX investments.

Operation Leonardo (Croydon CC) Leading Junior for the Crown in an NHS Protect fraud prosecution. The defendants defrauded the Epsom and St Helier Hospital by overcharging for work done at the Renal department and on behalf of dialysis patients. The lead defendant was an employee within that department responsible for the installation and maintenance of dialysis equipment.

Operation Fireball (Central Criminal Court) Leading Junior for the Crown in the prosecution of an organised crime gang who laundered the proceeds of a large-scale E Bay fraud.

R v Rasheed (Central Criminal Court) Leading junior. National Crime Agency investigation into an international money launderer who worked as part of a money transfer network including groups in the UK, Netherlands and UAE.

Operation Solent (Southwark CC) Leading junior for the Crown. Eleven defendants charged with a conspiracy to defraud the Royal Marsden NHS Trust. In excess of £600,000 of payments intended for the hospital's suppliers were diverted to bank accounts controlled by the defendants.

Operation Moonshot (Central Criminal Court) Junior alone prosecuting five defendants in VAT repayment fraud using shell companies.

Operation Beigy (Southwark CC) Conspiracy to defraud based on the Access to Work Scheme for disabled employees.

Appointments

Stephen is a Grade 4 CPS prosecutor and a member of the CPS specialist fraud panel

Education

Qualifications

BA (Oxon) Philosophy, Politics and Economics (2:1) – Christ Church, University of Oxford

Postgraduate Diploma in Law (CPE) – Distinction – University of North London

Bar Vocational Course – Very Competent – Inns of Court School of Law

Scholarships and Prizes

Open Exhibition – Christ Church, University of Oxford

School Prize for Law – University of North London