

Pennsylvania Powerhouse: Kline & Specter

By **James Boyle**

Law360 (September 23, 2026, 4:00 PM EDT) -- Kline & Specter PC earned more than \$100 million in jury verdicts and successfully preserved more than \$200 million in verdicts on appeal in the last 12 months for clients involved with a wide range of personal injury cases including product liability and medical malpractice.



For more than 30 years, the firm founded by Tom Kline and Shanin Specter has built a reputation as one of the largest plaintiffs firms in Pennsylvania and carried that reputation into another strong year that saw the firm take on complex cases against opponents such as Boeing, the University of Pennsylvania and the state's election system, earning it a spot on **Law360's list of Pennsylvania Powerhouses**.

The founding attorneys established the firm in 1995 after working together at the Beasley Firm LLC, launching the office in the same building currently housing Kline & Specter's Philadelphia headquarters on Locust Street. Kline & Specter now has 55 attorneys in Pennsylvania, split between its Philadelphia and Pittsburgh locations, and also has outposts in New York, New Jersey and Delaware.

In a recent interview with Law360, Kline credited his firm's business-like approach to its structure and operations with its success through the years and in the last 12 months. That strong infrastructure gives Kline & Specter attorneys the support and autonomy they need to concentrate on client service, he said.

"We have a disciplined and very well-structured system," Kline said. "What you see in our offices is the equivalent of any larger organization. Most personal injury and wrongful death firms have a handful of lawyers and some support staff, with some ad hoc procedures. We have a formalized pyramid of organization that works brilliantly and emancipates our firm lawyers to do the best work possible for our clients."

That includes Specter and partner Elizabeth Crawford's work securing two multimillion-dollar verdicts against Boeing on behalf of two victims who died in the 2019 crash of Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302. In November, an Illinois federal jury awarded the estate of United Nations environmental scientist Shikha Garg more than \$28 million. A few months later, another Illinois federal jury awarded \$49.5 million to the family of global health worker Samya Stumo.

Specter told Law360 in a recent interview that Kline & Specter's aggressive approach to litigation has led to the firm's courtroom success over the last three decades.

"We have very talented lawyers who contribute a lot of hard work with the commitment to Kline & Specter being a trial firm," he said. "We are not a sue-and-settle firm."

The firm's wrongful death and products liability practices have been steadily active over the years, Specter said, but its medical malpractice work has been its strongest department. Kline & Specter boasts five doctor lawyers, or attorneys with medical degrees, giving the firm an extra advantage in litigation.

"Medical malpractice has been our biggest strength since our inception," Specter said. "Our five doctor lawyers are the most of any firm in the country, and it has been a huge advantage for us in analyzing and developing malpractice matters."

The strength of Kline & Specter's medical malpractice team led it to defend a record \$207 million verdict against the Hospital of University of Pennsylvania in 2023 in a case where it was accused of causing an infant to suffer catastrophic birth injuries. Kline & Specter successfully upheld the verdict in Pennsylvania Superior Court in July 2025.

"Pennsylvania has a fair and balanced justice system," Kline said. "We also have appellate courts, which have finely honed the law over the decades. It's not easy to uphold a verdict, and there's no room for error in the system. It remains a challenge to convince juries of meritorious cases. We believe in every case we approach as we go about the business of persuading the juries of the rightness and righteousness of the cause."

Kline & Specter's steady and organic growth has allowed it to expand its resources into other areas, including representing victims of sexual assault, catastrophic injury and motor vehicle accidents. Last year, the firm's democracy practice took on Pennsylvania's closed primary system for elections.

Kline & Specter attorneys led a legal team representing Pennsylvania independent voters, including radio and television personality Michael Smerconish, in a lawsuit seeking to make the state's primary elections open to all voters. The current system only allows voters affiliated with a political party to vote for that party's nominee. The lawsuit filed in Commonwealth Court argued that approach denies independent voters their constitutional right to vote.

"We've available to assist on a number of important public causes," Specter said. "The number of cases has grown in recent years. One of those efforts is to democratize Pennsylvania's voting process. We are one of the few states that doesn't permit unaffiliated voters to vote in primaries. The Pennsylvania Constitution calls for free and equal elections, and we believe the current system is not free and equal."

--Editing by Adam LoBelia.