

Professionals > Jeh Charles Johnson

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Practices

Litigation

White Collar & Regulatory Defense

Internal Investigations

Securities Litigation

Professional Liability

Cybersecurity & Data Protection

Education

J.D., Columbia Law School, 1982

B.A., Morehouse College, 1979

*cum laude***Bar Admissions**

District of Columbia

New York

A partner in the Paul, Weiss Litigation Department, Jeh Johnson is the former Secretary of Homeland Security. Secretary Johnson advises clients, including management teams and boards of directors, on crisis management, government and internal investigations, high-stakes litigation and regulatory matters, and legal aspects of cybersecurity and other security matters. His legal career has encompassed both private law practice and public service, including three Senate-confirmed presidential appointments. He is resident in both the New York and Washington, D.C. offices.

EXPERIENCE

Secretary Johnson led the U.S. Department of Homeland Security from December 2013 to January 2017, where he was responsible for counterterrorism; cybersecurity; border, port, aviation and maritime security; enforcement and administration of immigration laws; response to national disasters; detection and prevention of nuclear, chemical and biological threats; and the protection of critical infrastructure and the nation's leadership. Secretary Johnson is credited with building a more effective, cohesive Department of Homeland Security and with raising morale. He served as the public face of the U.S. government's homeland security mission, engaging with the press on numerous occasions and testifying before Congress 26 times. Secretary Johnson managed 230,000 employees in 22 different components and agencies, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Transportation Security Administration, the Coast Guard, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Secret Service.

Between 2009-2012, Secretary Johnson served as General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Defense, where he was a primary legal architect for the military's counterterrorism missions in the Obama Administration, and was responsible for the prior legal approval for every military operation authorized by the President and the Secretary of Defense. He co-authored the 2010 report that paved the way for the repeal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law by Congress. In his book *Duty*, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates called Johnson "the finest lawyer I ever worked with in government - a straightforward, plain-speaking man of great integrity, with common sense to burn and a good sense of humor."

Between 1998-2001, Secretary Johnson served as General Counsel of the U.S. Air Force. He also served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York from 1989-1991, trying 12 cases before a jury and arguing 11 appeals in three years.

Over his many years at Paul, Weiss, Secretary Johnson has handled a variety of civil and white collar matters for some of the firm's most important clients. In 2005, he successfully defended Citigroup against a \$900 million arbitration claim - at the time the largest ever filed before the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD). That same year he successfully defended Citigroup against an \$86 million claim before

the NASD. In 2004, he was elected a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

Secretary Johnson has received numerous awards and acknowledgments, including three Department of Defense medals for distinguished public service and nine honorary degrees. Secretary Johnson has twice been a guest lecturer at the distinguished Oxford Union in England. He received a J.D. from Columbia Law School and a B.A. from Morehouse College.

BOARDS AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Secretary Johnson has served as a trustee, director and governor of Adelphi University, the New York Hall of Science, the Legal Aid Society, the Film Society of Lincoln Center, the New York Community Trust, the City Bar Fund, the Roosevelt Institute, the National Institute of Military Justice, the Federal Bar Council, the Fund for Modern Courts, Vera Institute of Justice and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. From 2001-2004, he chaired the Judiciary Committee of the New York City Bar Association, which rates and approves all federal, state and local judges in New York City. He has also served as a member of the Executive Committee of New York City Bar. He is currently a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

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