

Helen L. Gilbert

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Areas of Focus

Investigations, Compliance,
and Defense

Business Litigation

National Security and Crisis

Data Privacy and
Cybersecurity

Trade Secrets and
Restrictive Covenants



Overview

Helen Gilbert is a trial lawyer and investigations lawyer who served as a federal prosecutor in the Northern District of California from 2015 to 2026. Helen draws on that experience, including as Chief of the National Security, Cyber, and Special Prosecutions Section, to guide clients through government investigations, white-collar matters, and corporate crises. She uses that experience to help clients weigh referrals to law enforcement and civil tools, such as temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions, when sensitive technology is taken abroad or to a competitor. Her work focuses on trade secrets and economic espionage, nation-state and criminal cyber matters, and national security.

As Section Chief, Helen supervised investigations and prosecutions spanning economic espionage and trade secret theft, nation-state cyber activity, cybercrime and ransomware, sanctions and export control violations, and terrorism financing. She has worked with in-house and outside counsel at companies facing cyber incidents or insider theft, including AI, semiconductor, cybersecurity, and autonomous vehicle companies as well as companies across other industries, often in matters drawing significant media attention. She also served as a lead prosecutor responding with the FBI to crisis situations, including mass shootings and terrorism incidents.

Helen has tried federal jury cases to verdict on charges spanning wire fraud, money laundering, false statements, assault, and attempted kidnapping. She also supervised prosecutions involving public corruption and domestic and international terrorism. Her white-collar experience includes tax fraud, government program fraud, and other economic crimes, as well as evaluating *qui tam* cases under the False Claims Act for potential criminal referral. She previously served as Chief and Deputy Chief of the office's General Crimes section.

Earlier in her career, Helen spent six years in the US Department of Justice's Civil Division, the department's largest litigating unit, in Washington, DC. She began on the Appellate Staff as lead counsel on civil appeals before multiple US courts of appeals and a state supreme court. She went on to serve as Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General before a detail to the US Senate, where she advised Senator Al Franken on the Senate Judiciary Committee on national security matters. She then returned to the Civil Division as Chief of Staff, handling crisis management, national security litigation, Affordable Care Act litigation, and False Claims Act matters. Helen received the department's highest honor, the Award for Exceptional Service, for leading the department's response to the Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Windsor*.

Helen clerked for Judge William A. Fletcher on the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. She graduated with high honors from the University of Chicago Law School, where she was Editor-in-Chief of the *University of Chicago Law Review*. Before her government service, Helen was a summer associate at Jenner in 2007.

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- Business Litigation
- National Security and Crisis
- Data Privacy and Cybersecurity
- Trade Secrets and Restrictive Covenants
- Critical and Emerging Technologies

Representative Matters

- Supervised the prosecution in *United States v. Linwei Ding*, in which a former Google engineer was convicted of stealing Google's AI and supercomputing trade secrets.*
- Led the team that investigated the DarkSide ransomware attack on Colonial Pipeline, which forced the shutdown of an East Coast fuel pipeline and led to the recovery of a significant portion of the ransom payment.*
- Served as co-lead trial counsel in the prosecution of David DePape for the assault on Paul Pelosi and the attempted kidnapping of then-Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, resulting in a federal jury conviction and a 30-year prison sentence.*
- Led the prosecution of two individuals for acting as undisclosed agents of a foreign government within the United States.*
- Led the US Department of Justice's litigation over the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act and, following *United States v. Windsor*, coordinated the federal government's implementation of that decision across the affected agencies.*

**Matter handled prior to joining Jenner & Block LLP.*

Credentials

Admissions

- California
- New York

Education

- University of Chicago Law School, JD, with high honors, Editor-in-Chief, *University of Chicago Law Review*; Order of the Coif, 2008
- Harvard University, AB, *cum laude*, 2002

Clerkships

- Hon. William A. Fletcher, US Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

Service / Recognition

Awards

- Criminal Division Assistant Attorney General's Exceptional Service Award, 2022
- Bob Ward Award, US Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California, 2019
- Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service, US Department of Justice, 2014
- Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service, US Department of Justice, 2013