

Betsy Henthorne

Partner

bhenthorne@jenner.com

She / Her

Office

Washington, DC

Phone

+1 202 637 6367

Areas of Focus

Specialized Litigation and Arbitration

Education

Government Controversies and Public Policy Litigation

Appellate and Supreme Court

Native American Law



Overview

A distinguished litigator and strategic advisor with extensive experience in both government and private practice, Betsy Henthorne guides clients through their most challenging legal and regulatory issues, with particular depth in representing higher education institutions facing complex federal litigation and regulatory matters. Recognized for her crisis management skills and deep understanding of high-stakes litigation, Betsy excels at navigating complex cases, including those involving government investigations and public policy shifts. She brings extensive experience to bear for clients across a broad spectrum of legal issues and subject matters, including administrative law, antitrust, bankruptcy, consumer protection, and Native American law.

Before joining Jenner & Block, Betsy was Chief of Staff and Deputy Associate Attorney General at the US Department of Justice (DOJ), serving as a key advisor to the third-ranking Justice Department official, Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta. In that role, Betsy managed complex, high-stakes litigation, ran significant policymaking and implementation processes across the government, and helped supervise 13 Justice Department offices, including all the Department's civil litigating divisions and grantmaking offices. She worked closely with Associate Attorney General Gupta to manage numerous crises, including the Justice Department's response to and report on the mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas. Other notable work during her tenure includes litigation and policymaking related to immigration, reproductive rights, the opioid crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic response, student loans, and Native American rights.

Prior to her time at the Justice Department, Betsy was an associate at one of the nation's premier trial boutiques. Her trial experience includes serving as a key member of the team that won a complete defense verdict in a multi-state consumer fraud class-action trial. Betsy was also the team lead for a criminal price-fixing case brought by the DOJ's Antitrust Division.

Betsy has clerked at every level of the federal judiciary and served as Special Counsel to the US Senate Judiciary Committee during a Supreme Court nomination.

Areas of Focus

- Specialized Litigation and Arbitration
- Education
- Government Controversies and Public Policy Litigation
- Appellate and Supreme Court
- Native American Law
- Global Crisis Management and Strategic Risk
- Congressional Investigations
- Antitrust and Competition Law
- Reproductive Health Task Force
- Technology
- Real Estate and Hospitality

Representative Matters

- Led multiple Justice Department efforts related to the opioid crisis, including helping launch and manage a task force to coordinate civil litigation related to the opioid crisis, working across the Justice Department and with US Attorney's Offices on litigation and policy issues related to overdose prevention, and managing litigation strategy on high-profile cases.
- Played an instrumental role in drafting and implementing the landmark Executive Order 14074 on police accountability.
- Led the effort to revamp the Justice Department's approach to handling student-loan debt in bankruptcy cases, including issuing first-of-its kind guidance for all Justice Department attorneys litigating student-loan bankruptcy cases.
- Represented a multinational pharmaceutical company in a criminal price-fixing case brought by DOJ's Antitrust Division.
- Represented a federally recognized Native American tribe in federal district court and on appeal to the Fourth Circuit, handling novel sovereign immunity issues.

- Negotiated a landmark settlement with the State of Missouri and a private healthcare company to ensure adequate Hepatitis C treatment for incarcerated individuals in the state.

Credentials

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- New York

Education

- Georgetown University Law Center, JD
- Brown University, BA

Court Admissions

- US Court of Appeals, First Circuit
- US Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit
- US District Court, District of Colorado
- US District Court, District of Columbia

Clerkships

- Hon. Elena Kagan, US Supreme Court
- Hon. Sri Srinivasan, US Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit
- Hon. Gregory H. Woods, US District Court, Southern District of New York

Service / Recognition

Awards

- *The American Lawyer*, Litigator of the Week, Runner-Up, 2025
- Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll, 2024; High Honor Roll, 2019-2020, 2025