



Mary Jo White **Partner**

Mary Jo White, who has previously served as the Chair of the United States Securities and Exchange Commission and United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, is Senior Chair of the firm, a litigation partner in the New York office of Debevoise, and leader of the firm’s Strategic Crisis Response and Solutions Group.

Ms. White’s practice focuses on representing clients on significant and sensitive matters, including companies facing crises involving multi-faceted government investigations and cases as well as counseling boards of directors. She has decades of experience prosecuting and defending a wide range of white collar criminal and civil cases, having served as Chair of the United States Securities and Exchange Commission, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and as a well-known private practitioner in high-profile matters. Ms. White is recognized as an Eminent Practitioner in Securities Enforcement and White Collar-Crime and Government Investigations by *Chambers USA* (2023), where she is said to be “a leading light in the securities practice.” She has also been described as “a heavy hitter in the white-collar space whose reputation precedes her” and is said to bring “gravitas and experience to any situation.” According to clients, she is “an analytical wizard” who is “in a category all on her own in terms of what she has accomplished.” She has

received praise for her “credibility, depth and gravitas,” and the guide also recognizes her for her “well-honed” experience in crisis management matters. She is described by one peer as “the single best white-collar lawyer I’ve worked with, bar none.” The guide has also described her as a doyenne of the white collar bar and “a towering figure” in the litigation market. Sources note “she is a force of nature,” who “stands out above the rest of the crowd,” while fellow practitioners say “she’s incredibly smart and she works very hard. She can do anything, she’s just remarkable - there’s nobody like Mary Jo.” Ms. White is also recognized by *The Legal 500 US* (2023) in its Hall of Fame and *Securities Docket’s* 2020 “Enforcement 40” includes her in its list of the 40 best securities enforcement defense lawyers in the business.

Prior to rejoining the firm in 2017, Ms. White served for nearly four years as Chair of the SEC. She was nominated by President Obama to lead the SEC and was one of the Commission’s longest-serving Chairs. Under Ms. White’s leadership, the Commission strengthened protections for investors and the markets through transformative rulemakings that addressed major issues raised by the financial crisis, and created the framework for the future regulation of the asset management industry, enhancement of equity market structure and disclosure effectiveness. The Commission also instituted changes to enforcement that resulted in greater accountability and record levels of actions and monetary remedies ordered.

Prior to joining the SEC in 2013, Ms. White was the Chair of Debevoise’s Litigation Department. During that time, her practice concentrated on internal investigations and defense of companies and individuals accused by the government of involvement in white collar corporate crime or SEC and civil securities law violations, and on other major business litigation disputes and crises.

Ms. White served as the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York from 1993 to 2002. She is the only woman to hold the top position in the more than 200-year history of that office, which has the responsibility of enforcing the federal criminal and civil laws of the nation. Ms. White also served as the first Chairperson of Attorney General Janet Reno’s Advisory Committee of U.S. Attorneys from all over the country. Prior to becoming the U.S. Attorney in the Southern District of New York, Ms. White served as the First Assistant U.S. Attorney and Acting U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of New York from 1990 to 1993.

From 1983 to 1990, Ms. White was a litigation partner at Debevoise, where she focused on white collar defense work, SEC enforcement matters and commercial and professional civil litigation. From 1978 to 1981, she served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Southern District of New York, where she

became Chief Appellate Attorney of the Criminal Division. Prior to that, she worked as an associate at Debevoise from 1976 to 1978. Ms. White also served as a law clerk to the Hon. Marvin E. Frankel, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Ms. White is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers and the International College of Trial Lawyers. She is the recipient of numerous awards and is regularly ranked as a leading lawyer by directories that evaluate law firms. In addition, Ms. White has served as Director of The Nasdaq Stock Exchange, and on its Executive, Audit and Policy Committees. She is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Ms. White graduated from William & Mary, Phi Beta Kappa with a B.A., The New School for Social Research with an M.A. in Psychology, and Columbia Law School with a J.D., where she was an officer of the Law Review.