

ATTORNEY GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

1 GRANITE PLACE SOUTH
CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03301

JOHN M. FORMELLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL



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JAN 28 2026

JAMES T. BOFFETTI
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

January 8, 2026

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Your Excellency and Members of the Council:

REQUESTED ACTION

That approval be and hereby is given to the Attorney General to appoint John A. Drennan, Position #9U631 (Appropriation #02-20-20-200510-2610-013-500132), as an Assistant Attorney General, at a salary level of \$116,420, effective upon Governor and Executive Council approval or February 7, 2026, whichever is later, for a term ending July 1, 2029. 100% General Funds.

EXPLANATION

Mr. Drennan, a Portsmouth resident, earned his Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, *Phi Beta Kappa*, from Reed College in 1985, a Master of Arts in Philosophy from the University of Michigan in 1987, and a Master of Arts in Philosophy from Yale University in 1997. He earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Michigan Law School in 1995, where he served on the *Michigan Law Review*. After clerking for Hon. David Nelson at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit (1996-1997), he began his legal practice as an Associate at O'Melveny and Myers, LLP, in Los Angeles, California. He joined the U.S. Department of Justice in 1999 and spent two years in its Civil Division, where he was recognized with Civil Division Merit Awards in 2000 and 2001. He was assigned to the U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division from 2001 to 2008, during which he litigated criminal cases in federal appellate courts, served on the Enron Task Force, and worked on the team prosecuting Jose Padilla on terrorism conspiracy charges. While serving in the Criminal Division, he received an Attorney General Award (2006), John Marshall Award (2004), Exceptional Service Award (2007-2008), and Criminal Division Merit Awards (2002-2006). He was Deputy Chief Counsel at Transportation Security Administration from 2008 to 2010. From 2010 to 2012, he was Counsel for Law and Policy at the U.S. Department of Justice, National Security Division, where he was a founding member of the National Security Division Appellate Unit and recipient of the Director of National

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Intelligence Medal of Distinction (2011) and National Security Outstanding Performance Awards (2010 and 2011). While Assistant General Counsel for Litigation – Chief of Significant Litigation at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2012-2013), he helped draft the department’s report on northern border security status. In addition to his distinguished federal service, Mr. Drennan’s private sector experience includes his work as Senior Counsel in the Appellate Section at King & Spalding, LLP, in Washington, D.C. (2013-2016), and Senior Counsel in the Data, Privacy and Security Group at Baker Donelson Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, also in Washington, D.C. (2016-2017). Most recently, he was Senior Counsel, Head of International Litigation, for the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (2017-2024). In that role, he oversaw all litigation in courts and tribunals outside Saudi Arabia or involving multiple jurisdictions. Mr. Drennan is admitted to practice law in New Hampshire, California, Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Supreme Court. Mr. Drennan joined the Department in 2025 and was assigned to the Criminal Justice Bureau’s Appeals Unit. I plan to continue his current assignment. His salary will increase by \$3,000 from \$113,420 to \$116,420. A copy of his resume is attached.

RSA 21-M:3 and RSA 94:1-a(I)(c)(3) provide that the designation of positions, salary levels, and salary increases for attorneys at the Department of Justice shall be determined by the Attorney General, subject to approval of the Governor and Council, within appropriations made to the Department of Justice.

I am very pleased to offer Mr. Drennan’s appointment as an Assistant Attorney General at the above-referenced salary for your approval and respectfully urge your favorable consideration. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,



John M. Formella
Attorney General

JOHN A. DRENNAN

New Hampshire Department of Justice, Office of the Solicitor General, Attorney, February 2025-Present

Coordinate federal habeas corpus/post-conviction collateral litigation practice. Draft briefs and provide strategy counsel in criminal cases before State Supreme Court and in significant federal civil litigation.

Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco), Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, Senior Counsel, Head of Global Litigation, December 2017–May 2024

Oversee all company litigation in courts and tribunals outside Saudi Arabia or involving trans-national issues. Brief senior management on litigation issues, including antitrust, consumer protection, enforcement of foreign arbitral awards, sovereign immunity, international criminal law, intellectual property, and product liability.

Baker Donelson Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, Washington, DC, Senior Counsel, Data, Privacy & Security Group, October 2016-January 2017

Advise clients on wide variety of issues concerning privacy and cybersecurity law, including export regulation of cloud-based services, data assets in bankruptcy, and release of information to government during investigations.

King & Spalding LLP, Washington, DC, Senior Counsel, Appellate Section, June 2013-October 2016

Represent companies and individuals in federal and state courts of appeals in civil and criminal matters. Serve as lead attorney for motions and jury instructions in trials before federal and state courts.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC, Assistant General Counsel for Litigation—Chief of Significant Litigation, May 2012-June 2013. TS Clearance

Lead office advising DHS General Counsel on significant legal issues facing DHS and its sub-agencies. Advise on trial and appellate briefs and strategy in federal and state litigation, subpoenas, warrants, and legislative initiatives.

U.S. Department of Justice, National Security Division, Washington, DC, Counsel for Law and Policy, January 2010-May 2012. TS/SCI Clearance

Founding member of National Security Division Appellate Unit. Draft briefs and argue before federal courts of appeals; provide appeal recommendations; draft and review U.S. Supreme Court briefs involving national security issues; draft successful opposition to motion to suppress statements of defendant Abdulmutallab (“Underwear Bomber”).

Serve as DOJ liaison to National Security Staff committee on Information Sharing and Access. Serve as DOJ representative to interagency committee on international travel watchlist program. Advise interagency bodies on information sharing.

Recognition: Director of National Intelligence Medal of Distinction, 2011; National Security Outstanding Performance Award, 2011 and 2010.

Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Arlington, VA, Deputy Chief Counsel, June 2008-January 2010.

Lead division of 18 attorneys in five offices, Civil Enforcement, Criminal Enforcement, International Law, Threat Assessment and Licensing, and Federal Air Marshals Service.

U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division, Washington, DC, Criminal Appellate Section, 2001-2008. TS/SCI Clearance

Litigate criminal cases in US courts of appeals. Member of Enron Task Force (prosecution of J. Skilling and K. Lay). Serve as DOJ appellate liaison to U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California. Member of prosecution team for Jose Padilla ("Dirty Bomber"). Represent U.S. before the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

Recognition: Attorney General Award, 2006; John Marshall Award, 2004; Exceptional Service Award, 2007-2008; Associate Attorney General, Criminal Division, 2007; Criminal Division Merit Awards, 2002-2006; Distinguished Service Award, 2002.

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Division, Washington DC, Trial Attorney, Washington, D.C., 1999-2001

Represent U.S. before federal district courts in challenges to the constitutionality of federal statutes, policies, and programs. Defend executive agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Education, and Housing and HUD. Advise Health and Human Services Administration (HHS) on the constitutionality of then-draft regulations for privacy of health information, now the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Recognition: Civil Division Merit Award, 2000 and 2001.

O'Melveny & Myers, LLP, Los Angeles, CA & Washington, DC, Litigation Associate, 1997-1999.

Hon. David Nelson, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, Cincinnati, OH, Judicial Clerk, 1996-1997.

EDUCATION

University of Michigan Law School, J.D., 1995

Michigan Law Review

Yale University, M.A., Philosophy, 1988

Franke Merit Fellowship (awarded to seven top-ranked humanities graduate students)

University of Michigan, M.A., Philosophy, 1987

Rackham Doctoral Fellowship (awarded to each department's top-ranked graduate student)

Reed College, B.A., Philosophy, 1985

Phi Beta Kappa

BAR ADMISSIONS

District of Columbia; California; New Hampshire; United States Supreme Court