

News

FORMER SEATTLE MAYOR AND U.S. ATTORNEY JENNY DURKAN JOINS BCLP

Oct 30, 2024

International law firm BCLP announced today that Jenny A. Durkan, former Mayor of Seattle and U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington, has joined the firm as a Partner in the firm's Financial Services Disputes and Investigations Practice. She will have offices in Seattle and Washington DC and will lead the firm's U.S. White Collar practice.

As Mayor of Seattle from 2017 to 2021, Jenny led the city through unprecedented times, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite being one of the first areas in the U.S. to experience diagnosed cases and deaths, Seattle's strong and balanced response under Jenny's direction resulted in one of the nation's lowest incidences of disease, hospitalization, and death among major cities.

Her work during the pandemic earned her recognition from Fortune Magazine, naming her one of the "World's 25 Greatest Leaders: Heroes of the Pandemic" in 2020. In June 2024, she was also recognized as a "Lamplighter" for her work by the American Democracy and Health Security Initiative, a collaboration that includes Brown University School of Public Health Pandemic Center and the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Alongside her efforts in public health, Jenny championed educational opportunities through the Seattle Promise, a program providing two years of free college to public high school graduates. Her leadership continued to expand outside of Seattle, as she played a significant role on the international Steering Committee of C40 Cities, a global coalition of cities committed to addressing climate change. She also served on the C40 Mayors' COVID-19 Recovery Task Force, collaborating with mayors from diverse regions to shape recovery efforts with a focus on climate, health, and economic resilience.

Jenny's addition to the Seattle team deepens the growing bench of highly skilled litigators in BCLP's Seattle office. Since the office's opening in 2023, it has continued to grow including the combination with Seattle firm Harrigan Leyh Farmer & Thomsen which tripled the office size.

"I am excited to join the great lawyers at BCLP," Jenny said. "Legal challenges often cross borders, are increasingly complex and BCLP provides one place where Northwest clients can get top-flight legal work for their local, national and international issues."

A nationally recognized lawyer with over 35 years of experience, Jenny is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers. She has a proven track record of successfully addressing some of the nation's most complex domestic and international matters. Known for her deep understanding of cybercrime and national security, Jenny's practice spans cyber law, crisis management, and high-stakes litigation, where she represents both public and private clients in navigating cybersecurity, national security, and regulatory challenges. She has consistently worked at the intersection of the law and technology, and currently chairs the Washington State Bar Association task force on emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and the practice of law.

As U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington from 2009 to 2014, Jenny served as the Chief Federal Law Enforcement Officer for the region, overseeing all federal prosecutions and representing the United States in civil matters. During her tenure, she chaired the Department of Justice's Subcommittee on Cybercrime, where she played a key role in revamping national strategies to detect and disrupt criminal and national security cyber threats. Her office investigated and prosecuted some of the first international cybercrime cases, setting the standard for how these cases would be handled thereafter. Jenny served on the US Attorney General's Advisory Committee and was also a member of the DOJ's National Security Subcommittee, holding the highest national security clearances and was regularly briefed on classified matters related to cyber and national security threats.

"Jenny's decades of experience as a successful trial lawyer, lead federal prosecutor and mayor of a major city is invaluable," said Lee Marshall, Global Department Leader of Litigation & Investigations. "Her experience handling high-stakes investigations and litigations, along with her adept leadership and judgment gives her a unique edge, and we are thrilled to have her on board in our growing Seattle office."

Beyond traditional law enforcement, Jenny's tenure as U.S. Attorney saw her lead groundbreaking enforcement programs focused on cybercrime, civil rights, violent crime, and white-collar crime. Notably, she spearheaded the investigation into the Seattle Police Department, which resulted in a landmark consent decree aimed at addressing civil rights violations. In addition to her civil rights work, she launched key initiatives targeting cartel drug organizations and environmental crimes, further enhancing her reputation for managing critical and sensitive legal matters.

Jenny has helped clients navigate a range of critical challenges, from existential litigation to government investigations to core business decisions and crisis management. Her approach to legal challenges has always been marked by her sharp intellect, directness, and a wicked sense of humor – qualities that continue to define her as she pushes the boundaries of the future. Equally important to her, however, is staying deeply connected to her roots, including her alma mater, University of Washington School of Law, where she taught trial practice skill for years as an Adjunct and as a speaker at the Washington Leadership Institute, supporting the development of future leaders in the legal profession. Jenny remains active in the legal community, frequently mentoring young lawyers and speaking at national conferences.

“Many of us in Seattle know Jenny well,” said Co-Office Managing Partners Jennifer Campbell and Tyler Farmer.” She brings a comprehensive depth of experience to the team that will benefit the firm and our clients. We look forward to her joining.”

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MEET THE TEAM



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