

DOJ Antitrust Vet Joins Morrison & Foerster in DC

Lisa Phelan prosecuted hundreds of cases over more than two decades at the Justice Department.

BY RYAN LOVELACE

After more than a quarter-century in the Justice Department's Antitrust Division, Lisa Phelan is leaving her post to join Morrison & Foerster as a partner in Washington, D.C.

Phelan spent the last 16 years as chief of the National Criminal Enforcement and Washington Criminal I Sections of the Antitrust Division. At Morrison & Foerster, she will work in the global antitrust law practice and investigations and white-collar group.

Phelan said she was attracted to the firm by its global footprint, citing its Tokyo outpost as one example. She also said she was impressed by the firm's recent efforts to hire lawyers with high-level government enforcement experience and by its commitment to women in white-collar practice.

"Having been at Justice for quite awhile, I didn't want to make a quick decision, so I did take my time," Phelan said. "MoFo has been one [firm] that I always admired."

Phelan declined to identify other firms she considered, but said they were all "big, international law firms." When asked whether any of her colleagues at the DOJ were planning to join her, she said she hoped they would stay put, "because they're terrific at their jobs."

The timing was right for Phelan to leave, she said, because she had just become eligible to retire and her youngest child is headed to college, making her an empty-nester. She said she is ready for a new challenge and has been thinking about and aiming toward this move for several years.



Lisa Phelan

Rony Gerrits, co-chair of the antitrust group and managing partner of Morrison & Foerster's Brussels office, said Phelan's addition alongside other recent hires will allow the firm to better address



Morrison & Foerster offices.

clients in a "holistic way," combining expertise with anti-trust issues and the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

When Morrison & Foerster heard Phelan was leaving government, Gerrits said the firm viewed her potential hire as part of a "transformational moment."

Other former senior government officials added to Morrison & Foerster's D.C. office since the start of 2017 include John Carlin, **former** assistant attorney general for national security, and Bob Litt, former general counsel for the director of national intelligence, who **joined** the firm last year.

Phelan has prosecuted more than 300 federal criminal cases and overseen dozens of jury trials. Her investigations and prosecutions of cartel cases required coordination with partners around the world, including from Australia, the European Union, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.

In addition to defending clients in enforcement matters, Phelan said that in private practice she is also interested in assisting companies' efforts to engage corporate monitors.

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