

White House Unveils Landmark Initiative: New DOJ Fraud Division to Be Directly Overseen by Administration

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In a move that would mark a significant departure from longstanding practice separating Department of Justice operations from direct White House control, the White House announced on January 8, 2026, a plan to create and directly supervise a new Department of Justice (DOJ) division for national fraud enforcement. The division would be led by a Senate-confirmed assistant attorney general (AAG). According to Vice President Vance, the new AAG will have “nationwide jurisdiction over the issue of fraud” and will be supervised by President Trump and Vice President Vance, rather than by DOJ leadership.

The White House [fact sheet](#) accompanying the announcement frames the new division as a nationwide criminal and civil fraud enforcement body with authority over fraud schemes affecting federal programs, federally funded benefits, businesses, nonprofits, and private citizens. The fact sheet claims the AAG will develop national enforcement priorities and recommend legislative and regulatory reforms to address systemic vulnerabilities.

KEY FEATURES OF THE PROPOSAL

- The new AAG will oversee multi-district and multi-agency criminal and civil fraud investigations across the country and provide advice, assistance, and direction to U.S. Attorney’s Offices on fraud-related issues.
- The new AAG will also advise the U.S. Attorney General and the Deputy U.S. Attorney General on “issues involving significant, high-impact fraud investigations and prosecutions.”
- Vice President Vance has indicated that the official will be supervised by the White House, rather than the Justice Department.
- The appointee is expected to serve for at least the remainder of the current administration.

Neither Vice President Vance nor the accompanying White House fact sheet made reference to the DOJ’s established criminal and civil fraud offices, which have traditionally handled fraud-related matters, and it is unclear how the new DOJ division will interact with, supplement, or supplant these offices. The announcement and fact sheet do not provide an express rationale for creating a new fraud division; however, the announcement comes amid the administration’s focus on social services fraud schemes in Minnesota. More than half the fact sheet is dedicated to listing “the actions the administration has already taken to end Minnesota’s fraud epidemic.”

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR COMPANIES, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, AND PUBLIC ENTITIES

- **Shifting enforcement priorities.** A new, White-House-directed fraud office may change national priorities, potentially increasing scrutiny on certain sectors tied to federal funds or social services.
- **Expanded parallel proceedings.** A multi-agency focus may lead to tighter coordination between regulators and prosecutors.
- **Direct White House involvement.** Direct White House supervision may prompt legal challenges or congressional oversight, which could impact case timelines and outcomes. In addition, matters of special interest to the administration may receive extra scrutiny.

Whether the proposal succeeds will likely depend initially on a successful confirmation process. The White House is expected to announce the new AAG nominee soon, and Vice President Vance stated that Senate leaders support a quick confirmation.

If you have any questions about this subject or related subjects, or if you need assistance, please contact Jack Knight (Partner, White Collar & Government Investigations Practice), Patrick Doerr (Partner, White Collar & Government Investigations Practice), or your Winston & Strawn relationship attorney. Winston & Strawn Associate Sydney Hartman contributed to this alert. You can visit our [White Collar and Government Investigations Group](#) page for more information.

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