# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# assistant attorney general (criminal division), Department of justice

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Judiciary |
| Agency Mission | To enforce the law and defend the interests of the United States according to the law, ensure public safety against foreign and domestic threats, provide federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime, seek just punishment for those guilty of unlawful behavior and ensure fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans. |
| Position Overview | The assistant attorney general for the criminal division supervises the enforcement of federal criminal laws and policy for the Department of Justice (DOJ) and criminal prosecutions by the division’s hundreds of attorneys on a broad range of matters. The Criminal Division is one of the two largest litigating divisions in DOJ headquarters. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | The Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | The Criminal Division had a 2015 enacted budget of $178 million, 750 positions and 439 attorneys.[[2]](#endnote-2) The division’s assistant attorney general manages a widespread organization, working with and advising the 93 U.S. attorneys across the country to help them pursue the cases they are working on. |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Enforces and supervises the application of federal criminal laws, including the laws targeting financial fraud, health care fraud, public corruption, drug trafficking, computer crime, child sexual exploitation, and organized crime and gang
* Designs and implements targeted enforcement programs, such as the Enron Task Force, to respond to criminal activity of national significance,
* Provides expert guidance and legal advice to prosecutors and other federal attorneys concerned with issues of criminal law
* Supervises the use of various federal law enforcement tools, including Title III electronic surveillance and requests for assistance to other countries[[3]](#endnote-3)
* Supervises a wide range of criminal investigations and prosecutions, including those targeting individuals and organizations that commit or attempt to commit terrorist acts either in the U.S. or against U.S. persons or interests abroad; individuals or organizations that assist with financing or otherwise support those criminal acts; international and national drug trafficking and money laundering organizations; international organized crime groups; and corrupt public officials
* Approves and oversees the use of the most sophisticated investigative tools in the federal arsenal, including reviewing all the federal electronic surveillance requests in criminal cases and authorizing participation in the Witness Protection Program
* Advises the attorney general, Congress, the Office of Management and Budget and the White House on matters of criminal law
* Coordinates with foreign countries to secure the return of fugitives and obtain evidence and other assistance from those foreign countries, and assures that the U.S. meets its reciprocal obligations to those foreign countries
* Formulates and implements criminal enforcement policy and provides advice and assistance to all levels of the law enforcement community
* Provides training and development assistance to federal, state and local prosecutors and investigative agencies, and occasionally to foreign criminal justice systems[[4]](#endnote-4)
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Experienced and prominent lawyer with both private and public sector (DOJ) experience, especially in criminal matters and with litigation
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| Competencies | * Ability to work cooperatively with the attorney general, the deputy attorney general and the U.S. attorneys to meet the goals of the department (critical)[[5]](#endnote-5)
* Ability to deal with sensitive matters and handle high-profile cases given that the major cases with national impact typically rise to the level of the assistant attorney general
* Good organizational, communication and coordination skills given that the assistant attorney general works closely with U.S. attorneys across the country and with law enforcement organizations such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Drug Enforcement Administration
* Ability to bring details of law to a case
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Leslie R. Caldwell (2014 to 2016): Co-Chair, Corporate Investigations and White Collar Practice Group, Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP; Partner, Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP; Director, Enron Task Force, Justice Department[[6]](#endnote-6) |
| Lanny A. Breur (2009 to 2013): Co-Chair, White Collar Defense and Investigations Practice Group, Covington & Burling; Special Counsel to President Clinton, Office of the White House Counsel; Prosecutor, Assistant District Attorney, Manhattan District Attorney’s Office[[7]](#endnote-7) |
| Alice S. Fisher (2005 to 2008): Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, Department of Justice; Litigation Partner, Latham & Watkins[[8]](#endnote-8) |

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/jmd/pages/attachments/2015/01/30/12\_bs\_section\_ii\_chapter\_-\_crm.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Romney Readiness Project position description [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. OPM [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Romney Readiness Project position description [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. https://www.justice.gov/archives/criminal/staff-profile/former-assistant-attorney-general-leslie-r-caldwell [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. https://www.cov.com/en/professionals/b/lanny-breuer [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. https://www.lw.com/people/alice-fisher [↑](#endnote-ref-8)