David P. Burns

Partner

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David P. Burns is a litigation partner in the Washington, D.C., office of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. He is the co-chair of the firm's National Security Practice Group, and a member of the White Collar and Investigations and Crisis Management practice groups. His practice focuses on white-collar criminal defense, internal investigations, national security, and regulatory enforcement matters. David represents corporations and executives in federal, state, and regulatory investigations involving securities and commodities fraud, sanctions and export controls, theft of trade secrets and economic espionage, the Foreign Agents Registration Act, accounting fraud, the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, international and domestic cartel enforcement, health care fraud, government contracting fraud, and the False Claims Act.

David has most recently been recognized by *The Best Lawyers in America*® for his work on Criminal Defense: White-Collar matters (2024-2026). David has also been recognized by *Legal 500 US* in its 2025 guide for his work in corporate investigations and white-collar criminal defense. The publication further highlights David as a "Recommended Lawyer" in the area of Financial Services Litigation. Additionally, he has been recognized by *Chambers USA – America's Leading Business Lawyers* as a leading White Collar attorney in the District of Columbia for ten consecutive years. Chambers describes David as "spectacular; there's no white-collar matter he cannot handle," and highlights his ability to "think strategically to make important decisions in big-picture matters." *Who's Who Legal* and *Global Investigations Review* (GIR) recognized him as a leading investigations lawyer, deemed "excellent" for his work across "federal, state, and regulatory investigations." *Benchmark Litigation* has also named David a "Litigation Star" for 2025, while *Who's Who Legal* has recognized him as a leading lawyer in Business Crime Defense. David was named to *Lawdragon's 500* "Global Leaders in Crisis Management" (2025-2026), a list that highlights individuals recognized for their roles in "high-profile trials and oversight of major federal agencies."

Prior to re-joining the firm, David served in senior positions in both the Criminal Division and National Security Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. Most recently, he served as Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division, where he led more than 600 federal prosecutors who conducted investigations and prosecutions involving securities fraud, health care fraud, Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations, public corruption, cybercrime, intellectual property theft, money laundering, Bank Secrecy Act violations, child exploitation, international narcotics trafficking, human rights violations, organized and transnational crime, gang violence, and other crimes, as well as matters involving international affairs and sensitive law enforcement techniques. Prior to joining the Criminal Division, David served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General of the National Security Division from September 2018 to December 2020. In that role, he supervised the Division's investigations and prosecutions, including counterterrorism, counterintelligence, economic espionage, cyber hacking, FARA, disclosure of classified information, and sanctions and export controls matters. He also spent five years as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York, Criminal Division, from 2000 to 2005.

Capabilities

White Collar Defense and Investigations
Crisis Management
Higher Education
International Trade Advisory and Enforcement
National Security
Privacy, Cybersecurity, and Data Innovation
Sanctions and Export Enforcement
Tech and Innovation

Credentials

Education

Columbia University - 1995 Juris Doctor
Boston College - 1991 Bachelor of Arts

Admissions

District of Columbia Bar

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A sample of David's representative experience include the following:

- Represented a telecommunications company in sanctions, foreign bribery, and terrorist financing investigations conducted by the Southern District of New York and DOJ's National Security Division.
- Defended a foreign acquiror and U.S. target in CFIUS (Treasury and DOJ) enforcement investigation related to allegations of breach of national security agreement.
- Represented a large U.S. manufacturing company and its European subsidiary in sanctions investigation conducted by a U.S. Attorney's Office and DOJ's Criminal and National Security Divisions.
- Represented a financial institution in CFTC enforcement investigation into trade monitoring controls.
- Conducted an internal investigation as board counsel into allegations of earnings manipulation at publicly traded company.
- Represented a large financial institution in investigations of manipulation of interest rate benchmarks conducted by the Criminal and Antitrust Divisions of the DOJ, the CFTC, the SEC, the UK Financial Services Authority, and numerous other international criminal, competition, and regulatory authorities.
- Defended the former general counsel of a major regional brokerage firm in a three-week securities enforcement trial before the SEC's chief administrative law judge and obtained dismissal of all claims.
- Represented a special committee of the board of directors of a Canadian pharmaceutical company relating to allegations of accounting fraud.
- Defended a government contractor in a multi-year False Claims Act investigation conducted by the DOJ and Department of Defense.
- Defended a marine company executive in a criminal price fixing case prosecuted by the Antitrust Division of the DOJ.
- Represented a large engineering and infrastructure company in an investigation conducted by the Public Integrity Section of the DOJ.
- Represented a United States Congressman in a public corruption investigation conducted by a United States Attorney's Office.
- Represented an investment bank in an investigation conducted by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority involving initial public offering allocations.

David graduated in 1995 from Columbia Law School, where he was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and an Articles Editor of the *Columbia Business Law Review*. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from Boston College in 1991.

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