



STAFF PROFILE

United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas

Leigha Simonton



Leigha Simonton was sworn into office as United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas on Dec. 10, 2022. Ms. Simonton was [nominated](#) by President Joseph R. Biden on Nov. 14, 2022 and [confirmed](#) by the U.S. Senate on Dec. 6, 2022.

Ms. Simonton is the top-ranking federal law enforcement official in the Northern District of Texas, overseeing a staff more than 200, including 100 attorneys and more than 100 support personnel.

Ms. Simonton is a career federal prosecutor who worked in the U.S. Attorney's Office for almost 18 years before taking on the top role.

She is a 1994 graduate of L.V. Berkner High School in Richardson, Texas. In 1997, she graduated early from the University of Texas at Austin with highest honors. After briefly working in the Chicago Public Schools system, she attended Yale Law School, where she served as Managing Editor of the Yale Law Journal and received the John Fletcher Caskey Prize for best advocate in the law school's mock trial finals.

Ms. Simonton graduated law school in 2001 and returned to the Northern District of Texas, where she served as a law clerk for U.S. District Judge Barbara M.G. Lynn and, later, for Judge Patrick E. Higginbotham on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

From 2003 to 2005, Ms. Simonton practiced in the Specialized Litigation and Appellate Sections at the Dallas office of Haynes & Boone, LLP, working on complex commercial litigation, white-collar, appellate, and antitrust matters.

In 2005, Ms. Simonton began her career as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas, practicing in the office's Appellate Division. As an appellate prosecutor, she primarily defended convictions and sentences against defendants' appeals in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, arguing more than 20 times before that court and acting as sole counsel in almost 400 criminal appeals. She also prosecuted cases at the trial-court level and provided extensive appellate advisory support to numerous trial teams throughout the district.

In 2014, Ms. Simonton won the Director's Award from the Department of Justice's Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys for her multi-year trial and appellate work on the Dallas City Hall corruption [case](#) involving former Mayor Pro Tem Don Hill, his wife Sheila Farrington, former City Plan & Zoning Commissioner D'Angelo Lee, and several other defendants. Most recently, she led her office in successfully overturning a three-judge panel decision in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals that had suppressed key evidence in a child exploitation case. After successfully petitioning for the full Court of Appeals to review the three-judge decision, the full Court disagreed with the three-judge ruling and allowed the government use of that evidence.

In addition to her substantive legal work, Ms. Simonton has served in several leadership roles within the office. Most recently, Ms. Simonton served as the Chief of the Appellate Division and, before that, Deputy Chief of that Division. As Chief, she served as the office's lead appellate attorney and as a member of the office's senior management team, advising the United States Attorney on legal, strategic, and administrative matters. She also managed a team of several Assistant U.S. Attorneys and support staff and coordinated with various Main Justice components including the Appellate Section of the Criminal Division and the Office of the U.S. Solicitor General.

Dates of Service

2005-2025

Updated January 21, 2025



Northern District of Texas

1100 Commerce Street, Third Floor

