



The Honorable Kimberly C. Priest Johnson (Ret.) Joins Shook, Hardy & Bacon

HOUSTON, TX (March 25, 2025) - Shook, Hardy & Bacon is pleased to announce that after nearly a decade on the federal bench, the Honorable Kimberly C. Priest Johnson (Ret.), a distinguished United States Magistrate Judge for the Eastern District of Texas, has joined the firm as a partner in its Complex Litigation Strategic Counseling Practice. Her addition boosts the firm’s national platform, increasing its strategic leadership for class/mass actions, governmental investigations, and intellectual property matters. Judge Johnson will remain in Dallas, Texas, but will be affiliated with the firm’s Houston office.

With a career spanning work in the public sector, private practice, and academia, Judge Johnson brings a wealth of experience to the firm. Since her appointment to the bench in 2016, she has presided over a significant portion of criminal and civil dockets in the Eastern District of Texas’ Sherman Division, issuing over 1,300 substantive civil opinions in a broad array of civil litigation spanning from patent and other intellectual property cases to class actions. Her judicial responsibilities included presiding over civil cases from initial filing through trial and post-trial, where she developed a national reputation in the areas of data privacy and electronic discovery. Judge Johnson also presided over federal criminal cases from the investigative stages, overseeing investigations by the FBI, SEC, DEA, and other federal law enforcement and regulatory agencies and up through trial.

“We are thrilled to welcome Judge Johnson to Shook,” said firm Chair Madeleine McDonough. “She has served the legal community as a judge, a litigator, and an educator, and her strategic insight and practical leadership will benefit our clients in Texas and beyond.”

Before her judicial appointment, Judge Johnson was in private practice, where she founded a boutique law firm focused on federal criminal defense and civil litigation. She also served as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the White-Collar Section of the Northern District of Texas' Dallas Division, where she focused on health care fraud. Before her service as a federal prosecutor, Judge Johnson worked for the Dallas offices of several global law firms practicing in complex civil litigation and intellectual property. She also previously clerked for the Honorable Barbara M.G. Lynn, former Chief Judge for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas.

“I am excited to begin my next chapter at Shook,” said Judge Johnson. “I have long admired the firm’s stellar reputation in complex litigation, its dedication to client service, and its long-standing commitment to the next generation of lawyers. I look forward to serving our clients here in Texas and across the nation.”

Judge Johnson is also a legal educator. She serves as an adjunct professor in pretrial advocacy at Southern Methodist University’s Dedman School of Law in Dallas and as a trial advocacy instructor at the Notre Dame School of Law in South Bend, Indiana. She has also served as faculty and instructor for the Sedona Conference Institute’s annual eDiscovery Negotiation Training Program for New Lawyers, and as faculty and speaker for and member of Sedona Conference working groups on electronic document retention and production and international electronic information management discovery and disclosure. In addition to the Sedona Conference Institute, Judge Johnson is actively involved with various legal and judicial organizations, including the Federal Magistrate Judge Association and the Federal Judicial Center. She has received numerous awards for her contributions, including the Serjeant of the Paul Brown American Inn of Court Award and the Electronic Discovery Institute’s Judicial Leadership Award.

Prior to taking the bench, Judge Johnson was a sought-after legal commentator for national television news programs. She was a frequent guest on network shows for CNN, Fox News, ABC and CBS discussing current legal cases and controversies.

“Shook’s virtual law firm model serves as the nexus for coordinating pretrial, trial and appellate strategies across mass tort and MDL litigation,” said Practice Chair and Partner Patrick Oot. “With her experience as a former federal judge and Assistant U.S. Attorney, Judge Johnson is a natural fit for expanding our national litigation platform in service to our health, science and technology clients.”

Judge Johnson's commitment to the community is evident through her service on the boards of several organizations, including Reclaim 611, Broadway Dallas, The Family Place, Court Appointed Special Advocates, and Children's Medical Center Auxiliary Board, as well as her service with both the Young Men's Service League and the National Charity League.

To speak with Judge Johnson, contact Alison Talbott, Chief Client Development & Marketing Officer, atalbott@shb.com.

About Shook, Hardy & Bacon

Founded in 1889, Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P. has 18 offices in the United States with attorneys and professional staff serving clients in the health, science and technology sectors in areas ranging from product liability defense and business litigation to intellectual property prosecution and litigation, environmental and toxic tort, privacy and data security and regulatory counseling.