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PERSPECTIVE

Assistant US Attorney to join LA litigation boutique

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An eight-year member of the U.S. attorney's office in the Central District is joining a downtown Los Angeles litigation boutique started by two long-time federal public defenders and a civil litigator.

Assistant U.S. attorney Jennifer Williams will be the first new partner to join Dordi Williams Cohen LLP since it was launched in 2014 by former federal public defenders Firdaus F. Dordi and Reuven L. Cohen, and civil litigator Marc S. Williams.

The firm, which focuses on complex civil litigation and white collar and general criminal defense, will have seven attorneys when Williams starts June 1.

While Williams' past as a prosecutor may be a slight stray from the firm's roots, the group also recently hired former Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP associate Anya Goldstein, who, like Marc Williams and Cohen, clerked for Circuit Judge Kim

M. Wardlaw of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Goldstein, who joins as an associate, will focus on both civil and criminal work in her new role.

"As colleagues, Jenn and Anya embody every quality we hoped to find when we started the firm," Cohen said in an email. "They're brilliant and tenacious. They're also compassionate and ethical people with terrific judgment. Jenn is already a rock star in the district for exactly these reasons, and Anya's ceiling is limitless."

Williams, who relocated from Ohio in 2008 to work in the U.S. attorney's office, became a deputy chief at the office in 2014 and spent her last six months in its civil rights section.

Williams said she wanted to be part of Dordi Williams Cohen LLP because of its focus on the client connection and for the flexibility that comes with a smaller practice.

"One of the reasons I went into the government was to practice law first.

Business would be second.

"I poured my soul into every case I had [at the U.S. attorney's office]," she said. "Sometimes that can be emotionally taxing ... That sort of passion and emotion is very much celebrated at the firm. They want to make sure that's part of the practice and not some sort of collateral consequence that you deal with on your own."

Judge Wardlaw said she is glad that Goldstein took the opportunity to get in on the ground floor of the practice and that her former clerks have "reunited to get this really special firm."

"They're very dedicated to the profession and to their families," Wardlaw said. "They each have an understanding of what it means to be a good lawyer — how to have integrity and work hard but not to forget about your family and community."

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