

# Nationally Recognized Government Contracts Attorney Eric W. Leonard Strengthens Cozen O'Connor's Government Contracts Practice

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – February 5, 2024 – With government contractors large and small faced with increasingly complex compliance obligations and risks, Cozen O'Connor today announced Eric W. Leonard, one of the country's foremost government contracts compliance attorneys, has joined the firm and will co-chair its fast-growing Government Contracts Practice, composed of interdisciplinary counseling, litigation, and white collar attorneys. Leonard, who comes to Cozen O'Connor from Wiley Rein LLP, joins as a shareholder and will work out of the firm's Washington, D.C., office.

Leonard's background includes advising and representing corporate entities from virtually every major industry on an ever-widening range of federal, state, and local procurement matters — including compliance issues related to government contracts; federal labor initiatives like the Service Contract Act and the Davis-Bacon Act; Equal Employment Opportunity obligations; and Office of Federal Procurement Programs issues. As such, he regularly represents clients before numerous federal agencies, including the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Department of Labor, Boards of Contract Appeals, federal district courts and the U.S. Court of Federal Claims.

"We opened the Washington D.C. office in 2001 with the goal of building a full service platform staffed by experienced and talented attorneys capable of helping business clients grow and prosper — which includes mitigating their government compliance risks," said Barry Boss, co-chair of the firm's Commercial Litigation Department. "Considering the impact compliance is having on our clients, we are thrilled that Eric chose to join us and we're all very much looking forward to working with him."

"Eric's deep experience assisting the full range of government contractor clients — from sophisticated government contractors managing multibillion contracts to commercially successfully businesses looking to enter the government contracting space — aligns perfectly with our full-service government contracts approach," said Jeff Vogel, who will co-chair the firm's Government Contracts Practice with Leonard. "He is a preeminent authority on the myriad labor requirements applicable to government contractors, and will be an invaluable resource for our federal, state, and local government contractor clients."

Leonard will continue to lead clients in bid protests, contract disputes and termination litigation, government investigations, suspension and debarment matters, False Claims Act actions, and compliance issues related to mergers and acquisitions. He will also assist with employment and labor issues, such as compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, federal or state sick leave requirements, and matters involving noncompete agreements and/or employee termination.

"Contracting with the government presents clients with a unique set of complexities, and our practice is populated by immensely talented and motivated attorneys experienced in the full life cycle of a government contract," Leonard said. "It's a pleasure to be joining such a talented group of lawyers and I'm looking forward to helping Barry, Jeff, and the interdisciplinary government contracts team further expand our government contracts compliance capabilities and grow the Washington, D.C., office."

Most recently, he successfully resolved multiple investigations by the U.S. Department of Labor Wage & Hour Division related to compliance with the SCA for several large, multi-billion dollar federal service contractors; successfully represented clients on bid protests involving large, high-stakes

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procurement matters before the GAO; and litigated a contract payment dispute at the Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals involving a complex, innovative energy savings procurement program.

Clients new to the federal procurement space also engage Leonard to help develop and execute detailed government contracts compliance plans and manuals; while others rely on him to conduct regular internal audits to ensure they remain in full compliance with applicable federal statutory and regulatory requirements.

Named to the Law360s Government Contracts Employment Authority Wage & Hour Editorial Advisory Board in 2022 and 2023, Leonard is also a member of the American Bar Association's Section of Public Contract Law (1997-Present), former co-chair of the Employment Safety and Labor Committee and a long-standing member of the Bid Protest Committee (1997-Present); as well as the National Contract Management Association (1997-Present) and the Professional Services Council (2003-Present).

Leonard earned his J.D. at the George Washington University Law School, and a B.A. at Johns Hopkins University.

## About Cozen O'Connor

Established in 1970, Cozen O'Connor has over 925 attorneys who help clients manage risk and make better business decisions. The firm counsels clients on their most sophisticated legal matters in all areas of the law, including litigation, corporate, and regulatory law. Representing a broad array of leading global corporations and middle market companies, Cozen O'Connor serves its clients' needs through 33 offices across two continents.

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