

Michael Best Expands Privacy & Cybersecurity Practice with Addition of Velvet Johnson

Michael Best announced that Velvet Johnson has joined the firm's Privacy & Cybersecurity Practice Group as senior counsel in Washington, D.C.

In a release, the firm said Johnson's arrival comes on the heels of other recent hires to the group, including partners Ryan Sulkin and Elizabeth Rogers in Chicago and Austin, respectively.

Johnson concentrates her practice advising clients on various matters of internet policy, regulatory compliance, privacy and cyber-related issues, in addition to providing counsel on numerous cross-border business issues.

"Velvet has an incredibly strong background on cybersecurity matters from her time working in the government," said Adrienne Ehrhardt, Chair of Michael Best's Privacy & Cybersecurity Practice Group. "Her reputation and breadth of experience in Washington, D.C. will certainly enhance our group's ability to address client's needs, particularly as it relates to policy assessment and legal frameworks. Her addition comes at a key period in time as well with the European Union's enforcement of the General Data Protection Regulation beginning later this month."

Prior to joining Michael Best, Johnson spent nearly a decade in various legal and policy advisory roles both within the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). Much of her time was spent advising on matters related to federal cybersecurity legislation, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure, and national security law guidelines. In her

latter role, she represented the DoD in multiple National Security Council-led Cybersecurity Interagency Committees, Working Groups, and senior-level policy forums. After her time with the government, she spent two years as a cyber strategy consultant with a global management consulting firm where she was responsible for managing and executing security and risk programs on behalf of her clients.

“We’re thrilled that Velvet has decided to join us here in Washington, D.C.,” said Kevin Barner, Michael Best’s Washington, D.C. Office Managing Partner. “Her addition will help our clients navigate the complex regulatory and compliance challenges they will inevitably face.”

Johnson received her J.D. from the University of Maryland School of Law and her B.S. from the University of Richmond. In addition to her university degrees, Johnson also earned a cybersecurity certification from Georgetown University and the Certified Information Privacy Professional/United States (CIPP/US) credential through the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP).