As the nation gets ready for a new administration, the importance of preparation for vetting and compliance with government ethics requirements has never been more important. Drawing upon years of private and public sector experience, Steptoe’s vetting and government ethics practice provides comprehensive guidance and support for individuals through all stages of the executive branch appointment process. Our team has represented appointees and nominees in both Democratic and Republican administrations, including the current administration, for more than 15 years. We have worked closely with Presidential Transition Teams, the White House Counsel’s Office, the US Office of Government Ethics, and various Senate Committees to help our clients serve the country.

With each administration, the appointments process has become more complicated, with new laws and administrative guidance creating additional hurdles to government service. These hurdles are particularly acute for individuals with complex investment portfolios or customized employee benefit arrangements. Steptoe’s lawyers and professionals have decades of experience in counseling individuals (and their employers) on the tax, financial, executive compensation, national security, and government ethics aspects of the process and are able to assist clients in connection with the areas that could prove to be sensitive for those seeking to serve.

Our team helps negotiate the terms of financial disclosure, divestiture, waivers, and recusals. Over several administrations, we have helped to develop some of the standard arrangements used to minimize the costs imposed by federal conflict of interest requirements. We are familiar with the various forms and questionnaires that must be completed by appointees and nominees and the common – and sometimes not so common – responses required for security clearances and background investigations. We have counseled individuals in preparing for their Senate hearings, including realistic “murder boards,” and helped craft strategies to ensure successful outcomes.

We also provide support following an appointment or confirmation, including advice related to financial disclosure under the STOCK Act, restrictions on activities and investments while in government service, and post-employment (“revolving door”) restrictions.
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