



FACT SHEET: Complaint Concerning Allegations of Repeated Ethical Misconduct by Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche

Democracy Defenders Fund (DDF), Lawyers Defending American Democracy, and a bipartisan group of former federal and state judges [have filed a comprehensive bar complaint](#) requesting a professional responsibility investigation into Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche.

The complaint calls for an investigation into whether Blanche violated his legal ethical responsibilities by:

- Orchestrating a settlement agreement between Trump as a private citizen and the Trump administration that would have allocated \$1.776 billion in taxpayer dollars towards a fund that would make payouts to the president's allies. The terms of this settlement also provide President Trump and his family with an extraordinary release of tax liability and liability for other legal claims by the United States;
- Abusing the investigative and prosecutorial powers of the DOJ to attack President Trump's political opponents, like James Comey, the SPLC, and others; and
- Supervising DOJ's flawed response to the Epstein Files Transparency Act, including the disclosure of thousands of records containing sensitive victim information.

The complaint alleges that Blanche's actions as acting Attorney General violated the N.Y. Rules of Professional Conduct dealing with, among other things:

- Failing to provide competent and diligent representation of the United States' interests;
- Participating in matters in which he had conflicts of interest arising from his personal and professional relationship with President Trump;
- Taking acts and making statements that are dishonest, deceitful, and misleading;
- Undertaking a course of actions that were prejudicial to the administration of justice and reflected adversely on his fitness as a lawyer.

Why this matters

Blanche has shown that he is unfit to lead the nation's highest law enforcement office. The American public must trust that government officials are acting in an ethical way, but Blanche's actions undermine the legal expectations of government attorneys or his own personal professional obligations under N.Y. State Bar rules. Justice Department employees must adhere to bar rules pursuant to the McDade Amendment (28 USC 530B). Blanche's apparent repeated violations of these rules suggest that he cannot serve his country honorably by putting our nation's interests first.



Additional background

The Department of Justice has recently proposed a rule that would deter state bars from investigating and disciplining current and former DOJ attorneys by giving the Attorney General a “right of first refusal.” This rule would give Blanche the authority to intervene in his own investigations.

The DOJ is also aggressively attempting to prevent oversight of their attorneys through litigation, including filing a complaint against the DC disciplinary authorities for their recommendation that a former DOJ lawyer be disbarred for actions taken in his official capacity.

The N.Y. Bar previously disbarred several prominent former government officials, including President Nixon and former Attorney General John Mitchell for misconduct in office.

Press contact

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[Democracy Defenders Fund](#) brings together a nonpartisan team to work with national, state and local allies across the country to defend in real-time the foundations of our democracy.

[Lawyers Defending American Democracy](#) is a coalition of lawyers united in the defense of our democracy and committed to galvanizing the legal profession – and the public – to protect the rule of law.