

Cooley recruits new head white-collar practice in London

Emily Casswell

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Tom Epps joins Cooley's London practice

White-collar defence lawyer Tom Epps has joined West Coast firm Cooley in London on 2 September after six years at Brown Rudnick.

Speaking to GIR ahead of his move, Epps said that he's delighted to join the firm's London white-collar practice. "Cooley is a hugely exciting firm; it has been growing significantly and over the last five years its client base has expanded rapidly," he said.

Cooley's London white-collar practice was established in 2015. Epps said that he hopes that his near two decades of experience will supplement the firm's global team of 30 white-collar lawyers, based across offices in Boston, London, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. Epps is best known for representing individuals in SFO investigations: in the past he has acted for clients in the SFO's investigation into British American Tobacco's alleged involvement in bribery and corruption in Africa, the SFO's investigation into fraud at Barclays during 2008 capital raising efforts in Qatar, and the authority's investigation into allegations of bribery at Sweett Group in the United Arab Emirates and Morocco.

He has also acted for the managing director of a family office set up for a Nigerian ultra-high net worth family involved in an investigation by the UK's National Crime Agency.

Epps had been with Brown Rudnick since 2013, after a two-year stint at Hickman & Rose in London between 2011 and 2013. He's also spent one year as international counsel at Debevoise & Plimpton in London, after 11 years as a partner at Russell Jones & Walker.

Mike Attanasio, Cooley's global litigation head, said: "Adding Tom to our bench of strong characters in London is a perfect next step – he is a true white-collar specialist with a great reputation that is complementary to what we have."

The London white-collar investigations practice also includes asset recovery and anti-corruption specialists James Maton and Laurence Harris. Harris is the vice chair of Cooley's litigation department and Maton heads the firm's disputes practice.

Epps joins London white-collar and investigations practice after the departure of Louise Delahunty in January.

Epps is the latest in a series of high-profile names to have joined the firm. Former federal prosecutor Andrew Goldstein joined the firm's New York practice on 24 June fresh from Robert Mueller's team investigating alleged Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential election. Goldstein had previously served as the chief of the public corruption unit at the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York under former US Attorney Preet Bharara until June 2017.

Goldstein was a prosecutor on the team that investigated and secured the conviction of BNP Paribas for sanctions violations, which resulted in a record \$8.9 billion criminal forfeiture. The case marked the first time a global bank pleaded guilty to violations of US economic sanctions, according to the DOJ's press release at the time.

Goldstein had initially joined the Southern District of New York in 2010 as an assistant US attorney. Prior to that he'd been with Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison in New York, after working as a clerk for Judge Sidney Stein at the US District Court for the Southern District of New York and for Judge Chester Straub and the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Cooley also recently hired Daniel Grooms, a former prosecutor at the US Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia, to its Washington, DC, office. Grooms, who joined in May, had previously worked on the Justice Department's 2018 non-prosecution agreement with Brazil's state-controlled oil company Petrobras to settle bribery allegations linked to Operation Car Wash.