

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CRIMINAL DIVISION CHIEF JO ANN HARRIS TO LEAVE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Jo Ann Harris, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Department of Justice's Criminal Division, today announced her resignation to return to her family in New York City and Boston.

Harris, age 62, said she was keeping a promise she made to her husband Greg to serve for no more than two years. He remained at their New York home, while she occupied a rented apartment near the Justice Department building. Harris has a step-son and step-daughter and three grandchildren who live in Boston.

Harris said she would leave the Justice Department this summer, as soon as an orderly transition can be arranged. She intends to rejoin the faculty at Pace University School of Law in White Plains, New York.

"Jo Ann Harris enriched the Justice Department every day," said Attorney General Janet Reno, "and that included many Saturdays and Sundays.

"Tireless and dedicated to the rule of law, Jo Ann Harris brought wit and judgment and wisdom to the very difficult work of enforcing the nation's criminal statutes," Reno said.

Harris served previously as Chief of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section in 1979-81. She also had two stints in the U.S. Attorney's Office in New York, 1974-79, and 1981-83.

In her letter of resignation, Harris said she had informed the Attorney General in March of her intention to leave. She praised her colleagues in the Criminal Division's for "their total devotion to "doing the right thing."

The Criminal Division has more than 400 attorneys, and develops, enforces and supervises the application of nearly 1,000 federal criminal laws.

Harris' resignation letter is attached.

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