

The new antitrust frontier

Manhattan task force raises the tide of state and local enforcement

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On October 14, 2026, Manhattan District Attorney (DA) Alvin L. Bragg, Jr., announced the formation of a new corporate crime and antitrust task force (Task Force) to investigate and prosecute corporate crime.

The Task Force will target complex crimes involving criminal antitrust violations, healthcare fraud and consumer fraud. The creation of this task force demonstrates the increased assertiveness of state and local governments in regulating antitrust violations, including through the passage of tougher antitrust laws and launching of criminal investigations and civil litigation. In light of this growing tide, companies and corporate executives should review their corporate compliance programs to ensure their antitrust policies, procedures and training account for the varying patchwork of state and local antitrust laws.

The Task Force

Manhattan's new Task Force will target fraud and misconduct by corporations and corporate executives, focusing on identifying and eliminating the systems and structures that foster corporate crime. Companies or corporate executives conducting business in New York City should consider the Task Force's jurisdiction.

The Task Force will be led by Matthew Bogdanos, a veteran attorney at the Manhattan DA's Office, and supported by approximately five assistant DAs and two investigative analysts. The announcement also indicates that the Task Force will partner with New York state level officials, potentially to pass new laws and increase criminal penalties for misconduct.

The rise of local and state enforcement

The Task Force exemplifies a broader effort by state and local governments to target antitrust violations impacting their jurisdictions, in part to compensate for a perceived lack of federal enforcement. These activities range from passing legislation to expand the state's antitrust enforcement mechanisms, state-level premerger notification requirements and state-level merger challenges. In particular, some states have increased criminal penalties for violating their antitrust laws in recent years, including Colorado and California. For more information on recent, new state laws, see the Firm's recent client alerts on the [Pennsylvania-led merger challenge](#) and [California's new COMPETE Act](#).

Other state attorneys general – like California, Oregon, New York, Nevada and Washington – have sought to boost resources from their respective states for focused antitrust enforcement. For example, in June 2026, Oregon Attorney General (AG) Dan Rayfield [secured approval](#) for 16 new antitrust enforcement positions within the Oregon Department of Justice. While many state AG offices do have antitrust units, the Task Force is the first local entity dedicated to enforcement of antitrust issues. It remains to be seen whether other local entities will follow suit, or if state attorneys general will be the primary antitrust enforcer for local- and state-level issues.

States have also filed more antitrust enforcement actions than in previous years. According to the [National Association of Attorneys General](#), state AGs initiated 15 antitrust enforcement actions in 2026 alone, surpassing the filings of each of the past five years. The industries impacted have ranged from healthcare to energy to food. In addition, states have increasingly formed multistate coalitions to target antitrust misconduct in certain industries, including artificial intelligence (AI), consumer financial services, healthcare, privacy and marketing. For example, in June 2026, 17 states and the Department of Justice resolved an enforcement action against egg producers alleging price-fixing. For more about state and local enforcement priorities, listen to our antitrust podcast, [Antitrust Amplified](#).

Key takeaways

- **Local Enforcement is on the rise** – While the federal government has historically driven antitrust enforcement, state and local agencies have become more assertive, including by passing new antitrust laws, increasing penalties and filing more enforcement actions.
- **Compliance must account for state and local laws** – Companies should review their compliance programs to ensure that they account for the disparate patchwork of antitrust laws at the federal, state and local effort. Training should also cover the industries and conduct most impacted by enforcement actions, including healthcare, AI and pocketbook issues such as the increased cost of food.
- **Antitrust violations can be prosecuted criminally, even by the states** – Companies and executives should be reminded that antitrust violations in the form of price-fixing, bid-rigging and market allocation schemes by competitor companies are crimes under the Sherman Act (15 U.S.C. § 1), as well as under state law. Companies and executives should be cognizant that certain antitrust violations could result in significant corporate fines and jail time for individuals.

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