



## **Department of Veterans Affairs**

### **Senior Executive Biography**

#### **James Byrne**

##### **General Counsel, Performing the Duties of the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs**

The Honorable James Byrne was named General Counsel, Performing the Duties of the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs on Jan. 14, 2019. In this position, he serves as VA's general counsel and performs the delegable duties of the deputy secretary. Prior to his current role, Byrne had served as the Acting Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs since August 28, 2018.

In performing the duties of the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Byrne works closely with the Secretary in leading the operations of the federal government's second-largest Cabinet department, with some 370,000 employees in VA medical centers, clinics, benefits offices, national cemeteries, and other facilities throughout the country.

As General Counsel, Byrne leads a nationwide team of attorneys, paralegals, and staff who support the mission and priorities of the Department of Veterans Affairs by providing sound legal expertise, representation, and as needed, critical problem-solving skills and risk-management advice to the Secretary and other senior VA leaders. As the Department's in-house law office, the Office of General Counsel serves as a full business partner to VA leaders and ensures the just and faithful execution of the laws, regulations, and policies that the Secretary has responsibility for administering, thereby enabling the Department to accomplish its mission of service to our nation's Veterans.

Byrne served as Associate General Counsel and Chief Privacy Officer at Lockheed Martin Corporation where he was also the company's lead cyber and counterintelligence attorney. Prior to joining Lockheed Martin, Byrne served as the career Senior Executive Service Deputy Special Counsel with the Office of the United States Special Counsel, and both General Counsel and Assistant Inspector General for Investigations with the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction. Byrne has over 20 years of experience in the public sector, including service as a deployed Marine infantry officer and a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) international narcotics prosecutor. He volunteered for the past ten years on the executive board of Give an Hour, a non-profit organization that has developed national networks of volunteer professionals capable of providing complimentary and confidential mental health services in response to both acute and chronic conditions that arise within our society, beginning with the mental health needs of post-9/11 veterans, servicemembers and their families.

Byrne is a Distinguished Graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, where he received an engineering degree and ultimately held the top leadership position of brigade commander. He earned his J.D. from Stetson University College of Law, St. Petersburg, Florida and started his legal career as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Malcolm J. Howard, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina.

