



# Loretta Lynch

For other uses, see [Loretta Lynch \(disambiguation\)](#).

**Loretta Elizabeth Lynch**<sup>[1]</sup> (born May 21, 1959) is the 83rd and current Attorney General of the United States, having recently served as United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York. Her tenure as U.S. Attorney began in 2010, and she previously held the position from 1999 to 2001. As U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Lynch oversaw federal prosecutions in Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and Long Island.

On November 8, 2014, President Barack Obama nominated her to succeed Eric Holder as Attorney General.<sup>[2]</sup> On February 26, 2015, the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate confirmed her appointment by a 12–8 vote, with all Democrats of the committee and three Republicans in favor. On April 23, 2015, Lynch was confirmed by the Senate by a 56–43 vote, making her the first African-American woman, and only the second woman, to be confirmed for the position. She was sworn in as Attorney General on April 27, 2015 by Vice President Joe Biden.

## 1 Early life and education

Lynch was born on May 21, 1959 in Greensboro, North Carolina. Growing up, her mother was a school librarian and her father was a Baptist minister.<sup>[3][4][5]</sup> As a child, she spent hours with her father, watching court proceedings in the courthouse of Durham, North Carolina. Her early interest in court proceedings was compounded by stories of her grandfather, a sharecropper and pastor, who in the 1930s helped people move to the north to escape prosecutions under the racist Jim Crow laws of the time.<sup>[6][3]</sup> Lynch earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and American literature from Harvard College in 1981 and a Juris Doctor from Harvard Law School in 1984.<sup>[7][8]</sup> She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a chartering member of the Xi Tau chapter of the sorority while at Harvard.<sup>[9][10]</sup>

## 2 Career

### 2.1 Early career

Lynch's first legal job was as a litigation associate for Cahill Gordon & Reindel. She joined the Eastern Dis-

trict as a drug and violent-crime prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's office in 1990. From 1994 to 1998, she served as the chief of the Long Island office and worked on several political corruption cases involving the government of Brookhaven, New York. From 1998 to 1999, she was the chief assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District and headed the Brooklyn office.

In 1999, she was nominated by President Bill Clinton to serve as the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York.<sup>[11]</sup> During her term as U.S. Attorney, Lynch oversaw prosecution of New York City police officers in the Abner Louima case.

In 2001, Lynch left the U.S. Attorney's office to become a partner at Hogan & Hartson (later Hogan Lovells). She remained there until January 20, 2010, when President Barack Obama nominated Lynch to again serve as United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York.<sup>[8][12]</sup> From 2003 to 2005, she was a member of the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.<sup>[13]</sup>

Following the July 2014 death of Eric Garner, an unarmed man who died after being held in a department-prohibited chokehold by a New York City police officer, Lynch agreed to meet with Garner's family to discuss possible federal prosecution of the officer believed to be responsible in his death.<sup>[14][15]</sup>

Lynch's office prosecuted Republican congressman Michael Grimm; prosecuted Democratic politicians Pedro Espada Jr. and William Boyland, Jr.; investigated Citigroup over mortgage securities sold by the bank, resulting in a US\$7 billion settlement; and was involved in the US\$1.2 billion settlement with HSBC over violations of the Bank Secrecy Act.<sup>[3][16][17]</sup>

### 2.2 Nomination as Attorney General

On November 8, 2014, President Barack Obama nominated Lynch for the position of U.S. Attorney General, to succeed Eric Holder, who had previously announced his resignation, pending confirmation of his replacement. She was confirmed by the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 26, 2015, and approved by the Senate in a 56 Yea and 43 Nay vote on April 23,<sup>[18]</sup> thereby becoming the first African-American woman; the second African American, after Holder; and the second woman, after Janet Reno; to hold this office.<sup>[21][19]</sup>

Eight Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee, including the chairman, Chuck Grassley, had opposed

Lynch's confirmation after what Democrats criticized as a record-long delay. Grassley defended delays in holding the vote, saying it was important to gather more information on Lynch's role in settling an \$1.9 billion money-laundering deal with HSBC when she served as US attorney in New York. Republican Senator David Vitter criticized recent admissions by Lynch that she had failed to find out about separate documents revealing HSBC's role in helping clients hide money offshore before agreeing not to prosecute the bank.<sup>[20]</sup> On April 23, 2015, cloture was invoked on her nomination by a vote of 66 to 34.<sup>[21]</sup> Her appointment was confirmed the same day by a 56 to 43 vote.<sup>[18][22][23]</sup> Her nomination process was one of the longest in the history of the United States, taking 166 days after she was first nominated for the post.<sup>[24]</sup>

### 3 Personal

Lynch and her husband, Stephen Hargrove, married in 2007. In her personal life she uses her married name, Loretta Lynch Hargrove. Her husband has two children from a previous marriage.<sup>[3][25]</sup>

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### 5 External links

- United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York biography

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