



James Watson

Partner

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Jim Watson is a partner in Ice Miller's Litigation Practice Group. Jim has spent more than 20 years working in federal law enforcement in cyber security and data privacy. His experience in information security, data protection, privacy, crisis management, ethics, compliance, cryptocurrency, internal investigations and emerging technologies allows him to ready companies for cyber events through cyber risk assessment, incident response preparedness, and data breach response, to assess the privacy issues with emerging technologies, and to utilize his investigative skills in sensitive matters. Jim is an FBI Certified Cyber Instructor and holds Global Information and Assurance Certifications (GIAC) in the Law of Data Security & Investigation (GLEG) and a GIAC Security Essentials (GSEC). His work has been recognized by the FBI with its Medal of Excellence and by the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association with the National Award for Investigative Excellence. He was also recognized by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children with a Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award.

Prior to joining Ice Miller, Jim served as Chief Division Counsel for the FBI where he advised on cyber and technology matters associated with both criminal and national security investigations. In addition, as general counsel for the Indianapolis Division of the FBI (INFBI), Jim managed all internal investigations within the office.

Previously, Jim served as Associate Division Counsel and cybercrime supervisor for the INFBI. He has also worked as a legal advisor, Special Agent and Supervisory Special Agent in Washington, D.C., Indiana, Florida, Illinois and Missouri. In Washington, D.C., he served in the Cyber National Security Section at the National Cyber Investigative Joint Task Force, which involved managing cyber counterterrorism and global counterintelligence matters, and serving as team leader of a cyber terrorism threat focus cell.

Jim is an Adjunct Professor with Butler University, Anderson University and IUPUI. Jim began his legal career as an associate at a St. Louis, Missouri-based law firm. He earned his juris doctor from Washington University in St. Louis and his Dual Master's in Advanced Cyber Security and Information Security Management from Villanova University.

Services & Industries

- Blockchain
- Compliance Programs
- Data Security & Privacy Services for Higher Education
- Election Security
- Government
- Higher Education
- Information Technology & Software Disputes
- Internet, Technology & Social Media
- Litigation
- Outside General Counsel
- Tech, Privacy & Cyber Risk
- Technology
- White Collar Defense & Investigations

Education

- University of Illinois (B.A., 1994)
- University of Illinois (M.B.A, 1995)
- Washington University in St. Louis School of Law (J.D., 1998)
- Villanova University (2017)
 - Dual Master's Certificate
 - Advanced Cyber Security and Information Security Management

Admissions

- Indiana
- Missouri

Professional Affiliations

- International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP)
- FBI Citizens Academy Alumni Association
- GIAC Advisory Board
- GIAC Law of Data Security & Investigations (GLEG)
- Leadership Professional in Ethics & Compliance (LPEC)
- GIAC Security Essentials Certification (GSEC)
- FBI Certified Cyber Instructor

Awards & Honors

- *The Indiana Lawyer*, Distinguished Barrister Award, 2024
- Medal of Excellence – FBI, August 2019
- Law Enforcement Officers of the Year – National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), May 2013
- National Award for Investigative Excellence – Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA), May 2011

Community Involvement

- Board of Directors, Indiana Legal Help
- Board of Directors, Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis
- Adjunct Professor, Butler University, Anderson University and IUPUI

Thought Leadership

September 29, 2025

University Business | Risk Management Practices to Secure the Future
University Business

December 13, 2023

National Association of Bond Lawyers | Closing Costs: Wire Fraud Perils
NABL Blog

