

## Contact

[www.linkedin.com/in/brenda-abdelall-53088624](https://www.linkedin.com/in/brenda-abdelall-53088624) (LinkedIn)

## Top Skills

Government Experience  
Federal Government  
Stakeholder Engagement

## Languages

English (Native or Bilingual)  
Arabic (Limited Working)

## Publications

Not Enough of a Minority? Arab Americans and the Language Assistance Provisions (Section 203) of the Voting Rights Act  
Forging Ahead: A Contemporary Review of Egyptian Press and Media Laws

# Brenda Abdelall

DHS Assistant Secretary for Partnership and Engagement  
Washington DC-Baltimore Area

## Summary

Brenda F. Abdelall brings nearly 20 years of experience in public policy, national security, civil rights, and global social responsibility to her role as Assistant Secretary at DHS. A widely respected and recognized lawyer and public policy professional, she has expertise on domestic policy and civil rights, with a special emphasis on communities of color and minority faiths. Her experience spans a wide range of issues, including issues of First Amendment, domestic terrorism, impact of white supremacist violence, national security, profiling and surveillance, migrant labor rights, hate crimes, and healthcare policy.

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## Experience

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2 years 8 months

Assistant Secretary for Partnership and Engagement (Appointee)  
August 2022 - Present (1 year 1 month)  
Washington, District of Columbia, United States

Oversee the Department of Homeland Security's external and public engagements. Manage a 45 person office and the Department's relationships with governors, mayors, CEOs, academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and tribal governments. Our office also manages the Department's Councils, including four entities that provide recommendations to the Secretary of Homeland Security.

Also serve as cochair for the DHS Council to Combat Gender Based Violence, Chair of the Strategic Engagement Coordination Council, and as the DHS Faith Based Security Coordinator.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Partnership and Engagement (Appointee)  
March 2022 - July 2022 (5 months)

Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (Appointee)  
January 2021 - March 2022 (1 year 3 months)  
Washington, District of Columbia, United States

Bridge Strategies LLC  
President  
2017 - January 2021 (4 years)  
Washington D.C. Metro Area

Headquartered in Northern Virginia just outside of the nation's capital, Bridge Strategies LLC represents clients nationwide. Our firm specializes in strategic philanthropy and public policy counseling.

Bridge Strategies LLC opened its doors in 2017. Since inception, the firm has facilitated over two million in strategic grant making through private foundations to grassroots organizations, and set up rapid response funding mechanisms.

University of Michigan Law School  
Instructor  
2020 - 2021 (1 year)  
Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States

Created a course entitled, "Islamophobia and the Law," exploring different facets of anti-Muslim discrimination, its genesis and the continued impact on American Muslim communities.

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights  
Virginia State Advisory Committee  
2019 - 2021 (2 years)

University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law (UDC Law)  
Adjunct Instructor  
2019 - 2020 (1 year)  
Washington D.C. Metro Area

Muslim Advocates  
Director, Program to Strengthen Charities  
November 2015 - April 2017 (1 year 6 months)  
Washington D.C. Metro Area

A national legal advocacy and educational organization that works on the frontlines of civil rights to guarantee freedom and justice for Americans of all faiths.

- Created educational materials for American Muslim nonprofits and leaders on a variety of topics, including nonprofit governance, national security, financial best practices, compliance with election law, and federal anti-discrimination and hate crimes laws.
- Served as an Executive Branch advocate on behalf of the American Muslim community on public policy issues, which included liaising with the White House, the Department of Education, Department of Justice, and Department of Transportation.
- Managed legal filings, amicus briefs, legal memoranda, and other deliverables with pro bono law firms.

### Jeffrey J. Kimbell & Associates

Senior Director, Health Policy

April 2014 - November 2015 (1 year 8 months)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

- Executive branch advocacy for pharmaceutical and device manufacturers
- Developing short- and long-term tactical objectives for clients; drafting comments on federal rulemakings; and presenting critical health policy issues for corporate executives and cross-functional teams.
- Representing pharmaceutical, medical device, and durable medical equipment suppliers before the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Manage and advise Political Action Committees for large pharmaceutical companies.

### New York University Abu Dhabi

3 years

Resident Assistant Instructor

2011 - 2014 (3 years)

Abu Dhabi

Assistant Instructor to President John Sexton; course entitled, "Relationship between Government and Religion" viewed through the lens of First Amendment U.S. Supreme Court cases; taught to both NYUAD undergraduates and to the Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Scholars Program (SMSP), a highly selective scholarship program for Emirati college students.

Deputy Chief Compliance Officer

2011 - 2013 (2 years)

## Abu Dhabi

Primarily responsible for the development of a compliance program to monitor the international human rights of subcontract employees (migrant laborers). Monitored, enforced, and audited the existing contractual and compliance framework on vendors and suppliers with regard to the human rights of subcontract employees.

Responsible for a number of general compliance investigations, routine compliance matters, and general compliance oversight in the following subject matters: labor, internal policies and procedures, export controls, and general commercial contracts.

## Sidley Austin LLP

Associate

2006 - 2011 (5 years)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

Significant experience representing pharmaceutical, biological and medical device manufacturers in legislative, regulatory, and policy-related matters. Responsible for drafting and implementation of compliance programs as well as handling internal investigations for large pharmaceutical manufacturers.

## ACLU

Legal Fellow

2006 - 2006 (less than a year)

- Prepared legal memoranda for Congressional members on complex Constitutional matters
- Researched and drafted position papers for distribution to Congressional offices on various First Amendment issues

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## Education

University of Michigan Law School

Juris Doctor · (2003 - 2005)

University of Michigan

B.A. with distinction, Political Science and Arabic/Islamic Studies · (1999 - 2002)