§ 547. Duties

Except as otherwise provided by law, each United States attorney, within his district, shall—

(1) prosecute for all offenses against the United States;
(2) prosecute or defend, for the Government, all civil actions, suits or proceedings in which the United States is concerned;
(3) appear in behalf of the defendants in all civil actions, suits or proceedings pending in his district against collectors, or other officers of the revenue or customs for any act done by them or for the recovery of any money exacted by or paid to these officers, and by them paid into the Treasury;
(4) institute and prosecute proceedings for the collection of fines, penalties, and forfeitures incurred for violation of any revenue law, unless satisfied on investigation that justice does not require the proceedings; and
(5) make such reports as the Attorney General may direct.

(Added Pub. L. 89–554, § 4(c), Sept. 6, 1966, 80 Stat. 618.)

Historical and Revision Notes

1966 Act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Derivation</th>
<th>U.S. Code</th>
<th>Revised Statutes and Statutes at Large</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The word “shall” is substituted for “it shall be the duty of”.

1948 Act


This section consolidates provisions of the sections enumerated above.

Other provisions of section 312 of title 5, U.S.C., 1940 ed., are incorporated in sections 503 [now 543] and 508 [now 548] of this title.

All requirements in said sections for reports to officers other than the Attorney General are omitted as unnecessary and are simplified in subsection (a)(5) of this section. The Attorney General directs the course of litigation in government cases and makes appropriate rules for furnishing information promptly to the Departments interested.

Specific duties fixed by sections 485—489 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., and the second paragraph of section 305e of title 25, U.S.C., 1940 ed., to prosecute and defend both civil and criminal proceedings, are covered in subsections (a)(1)—(4) of this section.

Use of “revenue law” in subsection (a)(4) in this section, which is based on section 486 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., obviates repetition of provisions relating to customs and revenue laws as both are covered by the
term. For discussion of this point, see reviser’s note under section 3283 in House Report 152, to accompany H.R. 1600 Eightieth Congress, for revision of the Criminal Code.

The following sections of said title 5, U.S.C., 1940 ed., are superseded by, covered by, or inconsistent with subsection (a)(2)(5) of this section, subsection (b) of this section [now section 519 of this title], and section 5 of Executive Order No. 6166 of June 10, 1933, transferring to the Department of Justice the function of supervising the work of United States attorneys in connection with suits by or against the United States exercised by any agency or officer:

Section 323 requiring the General Counsel of the Treasury to make entries of bonds delivered to United States attorneys by collectors for suit until the amounts have been paid or judgments secured;

Section 324 requiring said General Counsel to examine and compare the reports made by collectors of bonds delivered by them to United States attorneys for suit, and of the returns of such bonds;

Section 329 authorizing said General Counsel to instruct United States attorneys, marshals and clerks in all matters relating to suits, except for taxes, forfeitures and penalties, and to require them to make such reports to him as he may direct. The first provision of section 329 of title 5, U.S.C., 1940 ed., is covered by the last paragraph of this section [now section 519 of this title], under which the Attorney General exercises supervision of the duties of United States attorneys. The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts supervises the duties of clerks under chapter 41 of this title. The provision for authority of said General Counsel over marshals, also contained in section 329, is incorporated in section 547 [see Prior Provisions note below] of this title in which such authority is vested in the Attorney General.

Section 327 of title 5, U.S.C., 1940 ed., authorized said General Counsel to establish regulations, subject to approval by the Attorney General, to be observed by United States attorneys and marshals in which the United States is a party. The provision as to United States attorneys is also covered by the last paragraph of this section [now section 519 of this title], and that as to marshals is covered by section 547 [see Prior Provisions note below] of this title.

Provisions of section 327 of title 5, U.S.C., 1940 ed., relating to establishment of regulations for the observance of collectors of the customs, by the General Counsel for the Department of the Treasury, with the approbation of the Secretary of the Treasury, was omitted and recommended for repeal as covered by section 66 of title 19, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Customs Duties.

The last paragraph of this section [now section 519 of this title], is based on the first clause of section 317 of title 5, U.S.C., 1940 ed.; see also section 309 of title 5. The second clause of said section 317 is covered by subsection (a)(5) of this section. The authority of the Attorney General over marshals and the requirement that they shall report to him the conduct and state of their offices, contained also in said section 317, is incorporated in section 547 [see Prior Provisions note below] of this title.

Section 330 of title 5, U.S.C., 1940 ed., which required that United States attorneys should conduct, under direction of the General Counsel of the Treasury, all suits and proceedings involving the United States under the laws governing national banking associations is covered by subsection (a)(2) of this section.

Section 331 of title 5, U.S.C., 1940 ed., requiring United States attorneys to obey directions of the Department of Justice in suits for money due the Post Office Department, is covered also by subsection (a)(2) of this section.

Changes in arrangement and phraseology were made.

Prior Provisions