

New York Law Firm Expands to Washington D.C. with White-Collar Legal Experts



Harris St. Laurent & Wechsler, a New York-based law firm specializing in commercial litigation and white-collar enforcement, has expanded its operations to Washington, D.C. The 24-lawyer firm has hired two well-known white-collar lawyers, Barry Pollack and Addy Schmitt, to run its new D.C. office. Schmitt, who will serve as the office's managing partner, was previously a partner at Miller & Chevalier, while Pollack joins the firm from Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel.

This is the first time the firm has expanded outside of New York. Its leaders believe Washington, D.C. is a natural fit due to the presence of major regulatory agencies, the U.S. Justice Department, and Congress in the area. "From a white-collar and regulatory enforcement perspective, D.C. has a lot of action," said Schmitt.

The firm's managing partner, Jonathan Harris, stated that they see themselves as a more attractive option for clients looking for a boutique firm and for lawyers who want to work for a boutique firm. He added that D.C. has seen a lot of boutique firms being absorbed by larger firms, but Harris St. Laurent & Wechsler wants to maintain its boutique identity.

The new D.C. office was launched on Monday, and the firm aims to eventually have 8 to 10 lawyers in the city. Pollack, a prominent trial lawyer with a notable client list that includes Julian Assange and former Virginia Lieutenant Governor Justin Fairfax, said that his practice is more suited to a smaller boutique firm than a large corporate defense firm.

Pollack mentioned that smaller law firms provide lawyers with more opportunities to court and try cases, and there are fewer conflict of interest issues than larger firms. His former firm, Robbins, Russell, Englert, Orseck & Untereiner, merged with Kramer Levin, a large New York-based firm, last year.

Pollack previously represented Assange as part of his solo law practice, which was unaffiliated with his former firms. Still, he said Harris St. Laurent & Wechsler is willing to take on the case if the opportunity arises. "We have no problem representing Julian Assange," said Harris. "We think it's a major 1st Amendment case."

Harris St. Laurent & Wechsler's expansion to Washington, D.C. is a significant move for the firm. It brings together two well-known white-collar lawyers to lead its new operation in the city. The firm sees Washington, D.C. as a natural fit due to the presence of important regulatory agencies and the U.S. government. It aims to provide a boutique option for clients and lawyers in the area.

REFERENCES:

N.Y. law firm launches in D.C. with white-collar duo