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Norton Rose Fulbright Acquires 18 Sidley Public Finance Lawyers

By [Jack Casey](#)

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WASHINGTON – Norton Rose Fulbright announced today that 18 members of Sidley Austin's public finance practice will be transferring to the firm as part of a change that includes opening a new San Francisco office.

The transition will include all of Sidley's public finance lawyers. Eight of the transitioning lawyers will join Norton Rose Fulbright's office in New York, two will go to the office here, and eight to the new San Francisco office.

The new lawyers will increase Norton Rose Fulbright's public finance practice by 50% to a total of about 50 attorneys.

The former Sidley lawyers represent many participants in the municipal market, including major issuers, underwriters, bondholders, lenders, and bond insurers. They have experience as bond counsel, underwriter's counsel, and disclosure counsel for clients throughout the U.S. and its territories, according to Norton Rose Fulbright.

Both Sidley and Norton Rose Fulbright are consistently ranked as tier one firms nationally for public finance by the US News & World Report and Best Lawyers annual "Best Law Firms" survey. Their public finance practices have also consistently been among Thomson Reuters' top 10 based on dollars raised.

"To put it in perspective, the collective work of these teams would have totaled a second-place ranking in both the bond counsel and underwriter's counsel tables for the first quarter of this year," said Larry Bauer, a Sidley partner who will be joining Norton Rose Fulbright's New York office.

Norton Rose Fulbright ranked fourth among bond counsel in 2015, with \$13.4 billion of volume and roughly 3.6% of the market share, while Sidley ranked eighth with about \$8.54 billion of volume and 2.3% of the market share, according to Thomson Reuters, which gave equal credit to firms.

The Norton firm ranked fourth among underwriters' counsel for 2015, with \$11.5 billion of volume and 4.4% of the market share. It was ranked eighth among disclosure counsel for that year, with \$4.1 billion in volume and 3.1% of the market share, Thomson Reuters found. Linda

Addison, Norton Rose Fulbright's U.S. managing partner, said the firm is "delighted to strengthen [its] robust public finance practice with such a talented and respected group of lawyers, whose healthcare and financial institutions experience aligns closely with [its] industry-focused approach."

Bob Dransfield, Norton Rose Fulbright's U.S. head of finance, said his firm's clients will benefit greatly from the new additions.

The transferring lawyers will make the firm "even better positioned to give coast-to-coast coverage across the U.S," he said.

The new San Francisco office, staffed by the former Sidley attorneys, will be Norton Rose Fulbright's 12th in the U.S. and 53rd worldwide. The firm has an existing office in Los Angeles. "We have wanted to expand our firm's west coast presence for some time, and San Francisco is the ideal location for our strategic growth," Addison said.

Eric Tashman, who served as head of Sidley's west coast public finance practice and will be joining the new office, said the former Sidley lawyers are "thrilled" to open the San Francisco office with Norton Rose Fulbright.

"Our San Francisco public finance team has deep roots in the community," he said. "In addition, our securitization, municipal restructuring, and public finance relationships and experience should complement and expand Norton Rose Fulbright's capabilities both locally and nationally."

The new office will also allow for expansion in other areas of the law, according to Rick Robinson, co-head of Norton Rose Fulbright's life sciences and healthcare practice.

"The new office will immediately distinguish itself with a remarkable national healthcare finance practice that will provide a strong base for the expansion of our healthcare practice in Northern California," he said. "In addition, we have many other practices — from intellectual property to [mergers and acquisitions] to financial institutions litigation — that will be logical areas of growth for us in San Francisco."

Six of the 18 lawyers making the transition are partners, including Bauer and Matt Hughey who will work in New York, Peter Canzano who will work here, and Tashman, Jerry McGovern, and Cliff Gerber who will work in San Francisco.

McGovern said the former Sidley lawyers look forward to collaborating with their new colleagues while expanding the scope and reach of their practice.

"Our goal is to continue to provide our clients with the highest level of service to assist them in achieving their goals," he said.

The other lawyers who will be transitioning to Norton Rose Fulbright's New York office include: senior counsels Michael Burke, Patti Wu, and Mark Norell; of counsels Homer Schaaf and Frank Robinson; and counsel Jinelle Craig.

Senior counsel Dave Sanchez, senior counsel Michele Dulik, senior associate Mary Kimura, as well as associate Preston Swapp and counsel Kim Westberry will also be joining the San Francisco office.

Senior counsel Eric Hebert will be joining the firm's office based here.

