

MoFo Will Blend Northern Virginia, DC Offices

By Michele Gorman

Law360 (October 3, 2019, 7:18 PM EDT) -- Morrison & Foerster LLP plans to combine its Northern Virginia office with its new digs in Washington, D.C., expecting to house about 160 lawyers in the mid-Atlantic region when the building opens next fall, the law firm said Thursday.

Attorneys and staff in Northern Virginia can move in their current roles to the brand new office, according to the firm. Construction for that site began last year, comprising more than 80,000 square feet of space spread out on four floors at 2100 L St.

"I am excited about our continued growth in D.C.," Morrison & Foerster Chair Darren Nashelsky said in a statement. "Having our attorneys in the region in one D.C. office will enable us to further increase collaboration across teams, provide even better service to our clients and showcase the breadth of our capabilities."

Nashelsky added that the proximity of the two existing offices also played into the firm's decision.

When the San Francisco-based BigLaw firm opened its D.C. office in 1979, it was its third location and first outside California, according to its website. Its current D.C. building is at 2000 Pennsylvania Ave. NW.

Seeking to expand its bench in D.C., Morrison & Foerster in the last five years added more than 20 partners there, the firm said Thursday.

In total, the location has 120 attorneys, the firm said, including a number of big names from government roles. In March 2018, the firm named Joseph Palmore, a former assistant to the U.S. solicitor general, the managing partner in D.C. He was put at the helm of the firm during a period of rapid growth and transition, including the design of and planned move into the new building. A few months later, the firm snagged Lisa Phelan, the longtime chief of national criminal enforcement for the U.S. Department of Justice's antitrust division.

In 2014, Charles Duross joined the firm after heading the DOJ's foreign corruption division, and the next year the firm added James Koukios, deputy chief of the DOJ's anti-fraud section. In 2017, John Carlin, the assistant attorney general for the DOJ's National Security Division, came on board.

The firm said there are currently 38 lawyers at the Northern Virginia office, which is located in the community of McLean.

Much of the work across the two offices focuses on clients' regulatory needs, and key practice areas include investigations, government contracts and national security, according to the firm.

Morrison & Foerster also has a handful of offices in Asia and Europe, including in Beijing, Berlin, Hong Kong and London.

--Additional reporting by Matthew Perlman. Editing by Michael Watanabe.

Correction: An earlier version of the story misstated the year Carlin joined Morrison & Foerster. The error has been corrected.