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## Akerman Cannabis Atty Jumps To Saul Ewing In Fla.

By **Emily Johnson**

Law360 (March 7, 2024, 3:51 PM EST) -- Saul Ewing LLP has added a former Akerman LLP partner with experience as general counsel for a cannabis operator, strengthening its Fort Lauderdale, Florida, office, the firm announced Thursday.

Zachary Kobrin has joined Saul Ewing as a partner, bringing experience with transactional and regulatory matters related to cannabis, antitrust and corporate law, according to the firm.

Kobrin has also represented a financial institution in its \$35 million financing of a multistate cannabis operator, according to the firm. He also served as lead regulatory counsel to an operator that acquired Pennsylvania license holders.



Zachary Kobrin

Kobrin told Law360 Pulse on Thursday that his in-house experience helps him understand his clients' business goals. Clients, including chief executive officers and general counsel and chief executive officers, want a partner, not a rigid answer, he said.

"Our jobs as outside counsel has to be, 'How do you make a client's life easier?'" Kobrin said.

Kobrin, who has more than 10 years of experience in cannabis law, was drawn to the firm's culture and "second to none" talent, he said.

"My previous firm helped me build a strong platform, but I was looking for a bigger platform across all markets and more talent within the firm," Kobrin said.

The move will benefit existing clients and will help Kobrin grow his practice, he said.

"The ability to bring in new clients with more resources was exponential," Kobrin said.

Kobrin said the cannabis industry is an emerging and growing business. "Given the regulatory and legal environment, companies are operating in an ever-changing landscape, whether it's banking and financing issues to operating issues to insurance — you name it," Kobrin said. "The landscape can change state by state, location by location, market by market, so that makes it extremely interesting, because it's always evolving."

Kobrin advises clients on business matters, corporate organization and structuring, contract negotiations and banking compliance protocols, according to the firm. He also guides clients on applying for cannabis licenses and registrations.

His practice also includes antitrust matters, such as matters involving the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976.

Jonathan Havens, co-chair of Saul Ewing's cannabis law practice and Baltimore office managing partner, said in a statement that Kobrin is a great addition to the firm.

"[Kobrin] has a great reputation in and beyond the cannabis industry as both a leader of legal teams capable of negotiating high-profile, company-changing deals and navigating complex statutory and regulatory regimes," Havens said. "Zack is not only a known name in the Florida cannabis space, but

is also well-versed on issues involving several states' medical and adult-use cannabis programs. He also handles financing-related work for the industry that has applications to the needs of many of the firm's clients across a variety of business types."

Between two stints where he practiced law at Akerman, Kobrin served as vice president and general counsel for Trulieve Cannabis Corp., according to his LinkedIn profile. Before joining Akerman for the first time, he served as general counsel and chief compliance officer for Fluent Cannabis Care and Consortium Holdings. He also served as an attorney for Lydecker Diaz.

Kobrin guided Trulieve's in-house and outside legal team through a \$2.1 billion acquisition that made the company one of the largest U.S. cannabis operators, according to the firm.

"I'm very excited for this next chapter of my life," he said. "And looking forward to continuing to grow and provide the best service to my clients."

Kobrin received his bachelor's degree from Florida State University and his law degree from Florida State University College of Law.

The firm has more than 400 attorneys. It was the 130th largest U.S. firm in 2022, according to the Law360 400.

—Additional reporting by Sam Bell and Pamela Wilkinson. Editing by Abbie Sarfo.

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