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David Kim, left, and Allison Kapner, right, senior associates at Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas. Courtesy photos

## New York-Based Midsize Firm Adds Community Association Group in Florida as Condo Needs Continue Rising

Leaders at Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas recognize that new regulations are driving work in the hot sector as they contemplate further growth in Florida.

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Law Firm Hiring



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### What You Need to Know

- New York-based Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas is adding two lawyers as it eyes continued growth in Florida.
- The firm opened in Florida in 2022 with appellate, real estate and trusts and estates practices.
- It's now adding a community association practice into the mix with one of the new hires as regulations in that sector continue providing work.

New York-based Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas is adding two lawyers in Florida and opening a new practice centered around community association work.

On July 1, Florida's latest reforms aimed to tighten safety regulations as a response to the Champlain Towers collapse in 2021. Past measures were already putting pressure on condominiums facing high costs for inspections to meet those requirements. The latest round of laws puts even more pressure, heightening expectations for more legal needs across the state.

The firm is bringing in David Kim, who previously worked in-house for steel manufacturer Steel Commander, as an associate to help start the community association practice. It's also bringing in Allison Kapner, who

previously worked at the Florida Department of Children and Families, also as a senior associate to expand its family law practice.

The firm already had a family law practice set up in Boca Raton along with an appellate group and an estate planning practice, which have all seen upticks recently, according to Boca Raton managing partner Robin Bresky.

But with regulations constantly heating up in the community association space in Florida for years now, that practice has been a target for growth at many local firms. Schwartz Sladkus is no exception, as it sees an immediate opportunity to seize on the trend.

“A lot of the work initially will be to obviously advise the boards of the condo associations and homeowners associations as to how to interpret the statutory regulations,” Kim said of the volume he’s expecting. “There are some ambiguities. ... And I know that the Legislature in Tallahassee will reconvene because a lot of the actual unit owners are having trouble with special assessments that have been enacted by associations.”

Those issues have been driving many associations to terminate and sell to developers looking to prop up luxury condos, especially in areas near the coast. The trend is also adding to the area’s unaffordability.

Even with any legislative changes coming up soon, lawyers in the field are generally staying busy and expecting it to continue that way. That’s one of the reasons the community association practice was attractive to open up, on top of all the construction going up across the state, Bresky said.

Schwartz Sladkus has two physical offices in Manhattan and Boca Raton in addition to some lawyers based in Georgia. The firm is now considering further expanding its physical presence in other Florida markets as well, according to Bresky.

The firm first opened in Florida in 2022 by merging with two local boutiques, one of which was Bresky's old appellate boutique. The merger provided the firm with 11 Florida-based lawyers.

Since then, two partners and a few other lawyers have left, bringing the head count down. But Bresky says the firm is looking to continue expanding as more opportunities to do so pop up.

"We're continuing to grow. But we're doing it slowly and deliberately," Bresky said. "We're not just gobbling up practices or people, we're really taking our time to make sure that we have quality people that fit with our mission and our environment."