

Morgan Lewis Adds Ex-FTC Mergers Deputy Director In DC

By Jack Rodgers

Law360 (September 18, 2023, 3:32 PM EDT) -- Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP has hired a former deputy assistant director from the mergers division of the Federal Trade Commission to join its firm as a partner in Washington, D.C., the firm announced Monday.

As Morgan Lewis' newest partner, Joshua Goodman will continue his work on merger review, focusing on government investigations, antitrust matters and other counseling.

Goodman's role at the FTC was leading high-profile federal antitrust investigations, and he has played significant roles in the government's federal court merger enforcement matters, according to Morgan Lewis. His official title at the FTC was deputy assistant director of the Mergers II Division, the firm said.

Goodman spent more than a decade with the agency, assisting on antitrust conduct matters, international competition matters — working with various global authorities on competition and antitrust disputes — and enforcement matters, Morgan Lewis said. In a number of those issues, Goodman dealt with multi-jurisdictional aspects of antitrust enforcement, and coordinated with staff of state attorneys general on cases with state and federal court implications, the firm said.

When Goodman first joined the FTC, he worked as a counsel to the director of the agency's Bureau of Competition, the firm said. In that role he helped engage with the Bureau's managers and staff on antitrust matters.

A Harvard Law School graduate, Goodman started his legal career at Shearman & Sterling LLP before clerking in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, according to his LinkedIn profile.

In an interview with Law360 Pulse Monday, Goodman said that after 11 1/2 years with the FTC, he felt it was time for a transition to private practice, which presented new and interesting challenges.

"I had a really rewarding and productive experience there, and had the opportunity to mentor and support a lot of their attorneys," he said. "I just felt that I was ready for a new challenge."

Goodman said he'd known about Morgan Lewis' market-leading reputation for antitrust throughout his career, which he said "spanned the full spectrum of antitrust and competition law."



Joshua Goodman

"That breadth and depth of expertise made it an ideal platform for me to start a private practice," he said. "It was definitely something that was very attractive to me about Morgan Lewis' practice in particular."

Goodman said he had done a little antitrust work while starting his career, but during his clerkship in the D.C. federal court, he worked on a U.S. Department of Justice-brought case related to a merger.

"That was super interesting to me," Goodman said. "It kind of sparked my interest in merger antitrust law in particular and from there I started working at the FTC."

Goodman said it was trying to ferret out some of those antitrust issues and the way his practice made him think analytically about the legal issues at hand that he enjoyed the most about his practice.

"It's a very intellectually stimulating field where you have to really understand how businesses operate in the real world and apply the law to those real-world facts," he said.

After more than a decade in the industry, that aspect of his work is still the driving force behind his practice, Goodman said.

"I also have led a lot of complex investigations and have frequently litigated antitrust cases, and I think the process of litigation is also something that I find interesting and stimulating," he said. "And so part of what I'm looking forward to with joining a full spectrum antitrust practice like Morgan Lewis is the opportunity to work on a broader range of litigation, as well."

Morgan Lewis Chair Jami McKeon also noted Goodman's experience litigating "significant cases involving state-of-the-art products and cutting-edge claims of antitrust harm," which would be an immediate boost to the firm's clients.

"In joining us from one of two federal agencies charged with interpreting and enforcing federal antitrust laws, Josh's knowledge of the FTC's processes and enforcement agendas will be invaluable to our clients that are facing matters involving the FTC or antitrust law," she said in a statement Monday. "His experience will also bolster our industry focus, including in the technology, media, semiconductor, energy, and retail and industrial product sectors."

Steve Reed, the firm's global antitrust and competition law practice leader, also noted the FTC's increased enforcement in a statement, saying in that environment, "it is more important than ever for our clients to be able to turn to trusted counsel" who are adept at navigating merger reviews and other issues.

"Josh's deep familiarity with the FTC and his accomplishments in administrative proceedings and federal court will enable him to provide meaningful strategic advice to our clients," Reed said.

Goodman is the latest government official to join Morgan Lewis this year, with Maarika Kimbrell, the former director of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Office of New Drug Policy, joining Morgan Lewis in June. In April, the firm added former U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission private funds branch chief Christine Ayako Schleppegrell in D.C.

--Additional reporting by Andrea Keckley and Alison Knezevich. Editing by Scott Russell.