January 17, 2024

Day Pitney Names New Chairs of Cannabis Practice Group

Day Pitney LLP announced that the firm has named James M. Leva and Amanda M. Curley as chair and vice-chair of the firm's Cannabis practice group. In these leadership roles, Leva and Curley will direct and oversee strategic initiatives and legal work for cannabis industry clients and corporate clients seeking legal advice on various cannabis-related matters.

"The combination of Jimmy and Amanda's skillsets is the perfect blend of the key areas that any stakeholder looking to navigate through the regulatory framework around medicinal and recreational cannabis sale and cultivation will need to consider – key among them employment issues and zoning," commented Stan Twardy, immediate past chair of the firm's Cannabis practice group and litigator in Day Pitney's Government Enforcement and White Collar Criminal Defense practice.

Leva and Curley will draw on the experience of approximately ten attorneys from a range of practices and disciplines across the firm to collectively advise a diverse group of clients nationwide to implement innovative solutions into this complex regulatory landscape. With extensive knowledge of the regulatory environment from multiple angles, the firm's multidisciplinary cannabis team handles issues related to corporate formation, real estate leases, land use, employment, banking and finance, government regulation and enforcement, healthcare and life sciences, intellectual property, and energy and utilities. The team provides comprehensive legal advice and counsel to clients throughout the value chain, from formation to divestiture. The firm also works with clients to ensure they comply with the complex federal and state regulatory scheme governing cannabis-related business activities.

Leva, a labor and employment partner, regularly defends employers against all types of employment-related claims, including discrimination, harassment, whistleblower, and retaliation claims. He represents clients before state and federal courts and government agencies. His cannabis practice includes advising employers regarding federal and state medicinal and recreational cannabis laws impacting the workplace, including policy considerations, drafting, and implementation. "Our team has been working with clients on cannabis-related matters for several years," said Leva. "We are looking forward to continuing to serve our client's legal needs related to cannabis, in particular as regulations on controlled substances continue to evolve."

In addition to handling complex employment litigation, Leva routinely counsels employers on day-to-day compliance with the spectrum of laws governing the employer-employee relationship. Leva received his B.A. from George Washington University and his J.D. from the University of Connecticut School of Law. He is admitted to practice in Connecticut and New Jersey.

Curley, a real estate and land use attorney, advises property owners, developers, and institutional investors on all aspects of land use and real estate redevelopment. She advises them on complex land use, development, redevelopment, and permitting matters for residential, commercial, and industrial development projects. "Cannabis dispensaries, growth facilities, and distribution facilities confront all the traditional zoning issues, with the added complication of being a fairly new industry that faces unique challenges," noted Curley.

Curley assists clients in obtaining site plan, subdivision, variance and related approvals, and she regularly appears before municipal boards across New Jersey. She is knowledgeable about the state's affordable housing laws and assists developers in affordable housing matters. Curley also handles cannabis site plan approvals. She received her B.A., *cum laude*, from Lafayette College and her J.D. from Rutgers School of Law-Newark. Curley is admitted to practice in New Jersey and is the director of the Land Use Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

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