

As Dechert Withdraws From Chicago, Shook Hardy Scoops Up White-Collar Leader

By Andrew Maloney

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What You Need to Know

- Shook, Hardy & Bacon has added Andrew Boutros, a former white-collar leader for Dechert.
- The move comes roughly two months after Dechert announced it was closing its office in the Windy City
- Boutros pointed to Shook's investment in white-collar work, as well as its client relationships, as draws to move.

Two months after Dechert confirmed it was shuttering its Chicago outpost, Andrew Boutros, who was regional chair of its white-collar practice, is leaving for Shook Hardy & Bacon. At the litigation and trial-focused firm, Boutros will co-chair its government investigations and white-collar defense practice out of its Windy City office.

Shook leaders called him a "go-to" trial lawyer who will add strength to the firm's bench and even more variety to its roster of clients. Boutros, in turn, pointed to the firm's emphasis on taking cases to court and leading

them from the first chair position.

He also said the firm is investing in the area. Though it has long been known for its product liability practice, Shook launched its government-focused litigation group this year, with the hope of recruiting "all-star" laterals and more forcefully messaging that capability to clients.

"I think Shook is a fantastic firm, a very storied firm, with an excellent tradition and renowned trial lawyers," Boutros said in an interview. "They tried 23 cases to verdict last year alone, 21 as first chair. ... They're investing in white collar and were looking for someone who has a track record of building a white collar practice. So there were a lot of synergies there."



Andrew Boutros, partner and co-chair of government investigations and white collar at Shook, Hardy & Bacon.

Courtesy photo

Law.com reported in July that Dechert planned to close its Chicago office “around the end of 2024,” alongside closures in Beijing and Hong Kong. Dechert’s Chicago office was primarily sustained by work with clients based in other regions and had few relationships with local clients, according to a firm statement at the time.

Boutros said the fact Dechert was closing its Chicago office was “definitely” part of the calculus of moving to Shook. After five years at the firm, it gave him an opportunity to reflect and start a new chapter. He also said he’s leaving on good terms with Dechert. “I leave looking back at those years with fondness and wish the firm all the best and know they’ll continue to be immensely successful,” he said.

A representative for Dechert said in a statement Wednesday that firm appreciates Boutros’s contributions and wishes him “the best in the future.”

But Boutros, who previously served as an assistant U.S. attorney in Chicago in the financial crimes and special prosecutions section, said another draw of Shook’s platform is the client base. That includes a large swatch of

Fortune 500 companies and ones in highly regulated industries, like pharmaceuticals.

“Not only does it have the good fortune of representing all these fantastic public companies, but also doing bet-the-company work. So [the firm is] handling massive products liability cases, with exposure in the billions, and matters that have the attention of the C-suite of publicly traded clients and boards,” Boutros said.

His own list includes such clients, too. Boutros said the companies he has long-standing relationships with include ones in the telecommunications, food and beverage, engineering and government contracting industries.

He said he anticipates those kinds of relationships will endure as he changes platforms.

In a statement, Shook chair Madeleine McDonough said Boutros’ experience as a federal prosecutor and in leading high-stakes litigation made him a good match for Shook. “He is a distinguished, ‘go-to’ lawyer in this area,” she said. “His joining Shook enhances our deep trial bench and our capabilities for the benefit of a wide range of clients.”