

Labor-Focused Firms Merge Into 11-Atty Chicago Outfit

By **Clark Mindock**

Law360 (August 30, 2021, 7:02 AM EDT) -- Labor-focused firms Potter Bolaños LLC and The Fish Law Firm PC are joining forces to create a new outfit billed as one of the largest employee-side firms in Illinois, which will continue to help clients with everything from wage disputes to biometric privacy.

The new firm, named Fish Potter Bolaños PC, will officially launch in early September with an 11-lawyer bench located in Chicago and the nearby suburb of Naperville, Illinois, where the two merging firms have operated in tandem for years — and where they've been able to cooperate and build the kind of good will that has now resulted in a merger.

Nieves Bolaños, a partner at Potter Bolaños LLC, told Law360 in an interview that the two firms have worked together for many years and saw an opportunity to expand and better serve clients with a merger between the two teams.

"I think it's going to expand our ability to take a wider array of cases, to take on even larger and more complex cases, and to collaborate on those cases nationwide," Bolaños said. "I think one of the great things, and why we're such a great fit, is that both firms are deeply committed to protecting worker rights."

Between the two of them, the firms are focused on a variety of employment-related issues and have negotiated some big wins for clients.

Among the highest-profile of those wins was a \$14 million settlement that was approved in November 2020 to put away sexual harassment claims made by a group of female public defenders at the Cook County Jail.

Those public defenders said that Cook County had failed to protect them from rampant sexual harassment aimed at them by male inmates, who allegedly masturbated, exposed themselves or threatened people in the jail.

In addition, the firms have also pulled in a \$20 million settlement over whistleblower claims made against a cardiologist, negotiated million-dollar wage settlements and settled claims brought under the Illinois Biometric Information Privacy Act.

Leading the firm are attorneys David J. Fish and Bolaños, who are both founding partners of the firm. Bolaños attended law school at DePaul University College of Law, and Fish received his law degree from Northern Illinois University College of Law.

Both are members of the National Employment Lawyers Association, which Bolaños said helped to cultivate the relationships between the firms that are now merging.

Support staff listed on the new firm's website include nine dogs, eight cats and two reptiles. Over 10 fish are listed as conference room Maitre d's.

--Editing by Philip Shea.

