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Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 | customerservice@law360.com

Benesch Starts Task Force To Deal With Aftermath Of Dobbs

By **Emma Cueto**

Law360 (August 11, 2022, 4:27 PM EDT) -- Benesch Friedlander Coplan & Aronoff LLP has launched a "post-Dobbs task force" to help clients navigate legal issues that stem from the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization ending the constitutional protection for abortion, the firm announced Thursday.

The new group, helmed by the firm's labor and employment co-chair Margo Wolf O'Donnell, also includes attorneys in the firm's employee benefits, white collar, government affairs and data security and privacy groups, among others.

"As always, we have highly skilled attorneys in all of these practice areas ... but it's nice to have them all in one place," O'Donnell said. "We're passionate about serving our clients, and we really think this isn't political; this is about serving our clients across the country."

O'Donnell told Law360 Pulse that the firm decided to launch a dedicated task force in response to the many questions that attorneys across practice groups were getting from clients. The group will allow attorneys at the firm to better respond to everything from compliance with leave and benefits requirements in different states to issues surrounding employee privacy to potential criminal matters.

The group also includes members of its crisis communications practice who can assist clients in the event of situations that require public relations assistance, according to O'Donnell.

O'Donnell said that the firm sees the situation as somewhat analogous to the situation in early 2020 when clients had questions stemming from COVID-19, noting that both situations involved newly arising legal questions touching on multiple areas of law as well as rapidly evolving federal and state laws and regulations. Having a task force, she said, will allow attorneys at the firm to better coordinate efforts going forward.

"As always, we think about ways we can collaborate with one another," O'Donnell said. "Benesch is a very collaborative firm."

Benesch is the latest of several firms that have **launched groups in response to the decision in Dobbs**. Reed Smith LLP, Foley Hoag LLP and many other firms' environmental, social and governance practices are **also grappling** with the issue of how best to advise clients.

Firms have also launched their own policies, with **a growing number** offering to cover employee costs for out-of-state abortion care.

Some law firms have also responded with pro bono efforts, such as **working to protect abortion providers from legal jeopardy or staffing a New York hotline** to provide advice to anyone seeking an abortion in the state of New York, which has broadly permissive abortion laws.

--Editing by Vaqas Asghar.