

THE AMERICAN LAWYER

Thompson Hine Adds Immigration Team in Cleveland, Mid-Market Deals Partner in Chicago

By Brenda Sapino Jeffreys

October 15, 2025

What You Need to Know

- Thompson Hine expanded its growing immigration practice by adding a team in Cleveland from UB Greensfelder, led by partner David Leopold.
- The firm also grew its middle-market deals team by adding Robyn Axberg as a partner in Chicago, coming from Polsinelli.
- Immigration law is getting harder and more complex, Leopold said.

An immigration team led by David Leopold, chair of the immigration practice group at UB Greensfelder, has joined Thompson Hine in Cleveland, as the firm continues recent growth in the hot practice area.

Also, in Chicago, Polsinelli partner Robyn Axberg joined Am Law 200 firm Thompson Hine on Monday as a partner in the corporate transactions and securities practice, an addition that strengthens the firm's middle-market transactional team. Axberg advises privately held and founder-led companies on M&A, joint ventures and general corporate matters, with a focus in the insurance, fintech and financial services, technology, manufacturing, hospitality and consumer products industries.

Leopold, a past president and past general counsel of the American Immigration Lawyers



Courtesy photos

Robyn Axberg (L) and David Leopold (R) of Thompson Hine.

Association, joined Thompson Hine on Wednesday in the firm's labor and employment and immigration practices, along with associates Allison Hall and Amanda Vo, and a team of four paralegals and an immigration assistant. Their arrival comes after the firm added two immigration lawyers from Dinsmore & Shohl — Kelli Hayes in Columbus and Dwight Myfelt in Cincinnati — in 2024.

Nancy Barnes, leader of Thompson Hine's labor and employment practice, wrote in a press release that Leopold is a "national thought leader whose sophisticated practice and deep health care experience strategically enhance our platform." The team's experience in handling business immigration, compliance and litigation is an "immediate

asset” for employers, health systems and institutions nationwide and internationally,” particularly as demand is rising for advice on workforce planning, talent mobility and enforcement defense.

Leopold represents employers, health systems, research institutions and individuals in complex matters including employment-and family-based immigration, consular practice, I-9 compliance and internal audits, waivers of inadmissibility, agency investigatoinis, removal defense and federal court litigation.

Leopold said he decided to move to Thompson Hine, because its innovation sets it apart and can provide clients with better efficiency, predictability and transparency, along with value-based pricing.

“The opportunity with Thompson Hine arose and I had to grab it once I understood what Thompson Hine had to offer to my clients. The innovation, it’s very impressive,” he said.

“Being at the cutting edge of technology is critical not only for client service, but for ... growth,” he said.

The immigration practice has changed rapidly over the last several months — under the Trump administration — and new challenges come up every day, he said.

“Every immigration lawyer’s job is harder and much more complex,” he said.

Asked to comment on the departures, Kevin McLaughlin, a co-managing partner of Am Law 200 firm UB Greensfelder, provided this comment: “We thank David for his many contributions to the firm and wish him all the best. We recently finalized our firm-wide strategic plan, which reinforces our focus on the integrated, cross-disciplinary practices that serve our clients’ complex business needs.”

Axberg, the new Chicago partner, was not immediately available for comment on her move. However, in a press release, she wrote, “The

firm’s focus on the middle market, commitment to innovation, and cross-disciplinary depth align perfectly with my clients’ needs.”

She came from Polsinelli, where she was a shareholder in the corporate and transactional group, and before that, practiced for nearly 15 years at Holland & Knight. She also previously served as adjunct faculty adviser to the Business Enterprise Law Clinic at The John Marshall Law School.

“Robyn is a proven deal lawyer and trusted advisor to privately held companies, and her arrival only enhances our ability to serve middle-market clients across our national footprint,” Jonathon Vinocur, the Chicago office partner-in-charge and a leader of the firm’s new ventures practice, wrote in the release.]

A spokesperson for Polsinelli said the firm would not comment on Axberg’s departure.

Thompson Hine has been hiring lately, and earlier this month brought on real estate partner Matt Alshouse, who joined in Chicago from DLA Piper.

About Thompson Hine LLP. Thompson Hine LLP, a full-service business law firm with over 400 lawyers in 10 offices, was ranked number 1 in the category “Most innovative North American law firms: New working models” by the *Financial Times* and was 1 of 7 firms shortlisted for *The American Lawyer’s* inaugural Legal Services Innovation Award. The firm has been recognized by the *National Law Journal* as a Legal Technology Trailblazer and featured by *Bloomberg* for its innovative service delivery models, which drive accuracy and predictability. The firm’s commitment to innovation is embodied in Thompson Hine SmartPaTH™ – a smarter way to work – predictable, efficient and aligned with client goals. For more information, please visit ThompsonHine.com and ThompsonHine.com/Innovation/SmartPaTH.