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## **New York Insurance Law Firm Expands in Fort Lauderdale to Meet Coverage, Malpractice Demand**

Mound Cotton Wollan & Greengrass recently hired commercial litigator Wendy Stein Fulton from Kiernan Trebach.

By Dan Roe | October 14, 2021



**(L-R)William Wilson and Wendy Stein Fulton, partners of Mound Cotton Wollan & Greengrass. Courtesy photos**

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The New York-based, insurance-oriented law firm Mound Cotton Wollan & Greengrass added its fifth South Florida attorney with the recent hiring of Wendy Stein Fulton, a commercial litigator who formerly managed the Fort Lauderdale office of Kiernan Trebach.

Fulton arrived with a clientele that includes lawyers facing disciplinary actions from the Florida Bar, other professionals being sued for malpractice, and insurance companies involved in coverage and bad faith disputes.

In an interview, Fulton said her malpractice work and insurance work have both seen heightened demand in recent years, causing her to look for a law firm that can handle such matters locally.

"My old firm is a great firm but it has very little Florida presence," she said. "It's nice to move to a firm with a larger Florida practice that would be easier to integrate."

The 100-lawyer firm, with offices in the Northeast, Houston and the Bay Area, opened its Fort Lauderdale office in the late 1990s. Since then, it has seen its commercial insurance practice grow significantly, said partner William Wilson, who oversees Mound Cotton's Fort Lauderdale and Florham Park, New Jersey, offices.

"The practice is growing, so we're in need of more attorneys," said Wilson, who splits his time between the Florida and New Jersey offices but sees the majority of his work coming from Florida.

"Wendy brings the firm extensive knowledge of the Florida civil trial practice," he added. "She also has significant experience in a wide range of insurance practice areas, so she's a perfect fit for the firm."

In addition to an uptick in insurance coverage litigation, Fulton said she's seen an increase in professionals being sued, particularly contractors in construction defect litigation. She attributes the increase to the rise of boutique firms specializing in bringing litigation on behalf of homeowners associations shortly after the sale of a building, and an increasing willingness of HOA's to hire those firms.

"I don't know how, but it happened a few years ago," she said. "You didn't see the same kind of boutique construction defect firms. HOAs are getting more sophisticated: As soon as the developer turns over the project, the HOA hires an attorney and an engineer to see if anything is wrong with the building, and they sue the developer and general contractor."

Wilson said Mound Cotton plans to continue hiring in Fort Lauderdale to meet demand for insurance coverage litigation, with the goal of staffing those matters entirely with Florida attorneys.

"We want to get to a point where we can handle 100% of the Florida work in Florida," Wilson said. "We're on our way to that point now, so I do expect to hire more attorneys in the near future."