


Tyson & Mendes Adds 3 More Wicker Smith Attys In Florida

By *Emma Cueto* | 2023-08-17 15:46:16 -0400 ·  Listen to article

Insurance defense boutique Tyson & Mendes LLP has added a partner and two associates from Wicker Smith in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, just a few months after the firm launched a Jacksonville office with seven Wicker Smith attorneys.

The firm has brought on Robert M. O'Malley as a partner and Amaia Sanz de Acedo and Alexandra Bendayan as associates, it said Wednesday, touting the arrivals as part of its expansion plans in Florida amid the increase in cases following the tort reform laws passed earlier this year.



Robert M. O'Malley

"Our firm continues to advance strategic efforts to grow in ways that meet our clients' needs by bringing the best trial attorneys to our team," strategic managing partner Robert Tyson said in a statement. "Rob's impressive trial experience, along with the support from two talented associates, deepens and broadens our already strong bench of trial attorneys in Fort Lauderdale, and we are thrilled to welcome them to the firm to serve the growing needs of our clients in the region."

O'Malley joins after eight years at Wicker Smith, according to his online resume. His practice is primarily focused on automotive, trucking and transportation-related cases, but also includes other types of litigation, such as premises liability and personal injury, according to the firm.

He and Sanz de Acedo are graduates of the Florida International University College of Law, while Bendayan is a graduate of St. Thomas University School of Law.

The trio's arrival **comes on the heels** of seven Wicker Smith attorneys, including four partners, who launched Tyson & Mendes' Jacksonville office in April, which the firm also said was inspired in part by the state's new laws.

Gov. Ron de Santis in March **signed into law** a sweeping tort reform bill that passed the state legislature with mostly Republican support, with proponents touting it as a way to cut down on frivolous lawsuits. Among other things, the law did away with Florida's comparative negligence rule, which allowed plaintiffs to recover damages even if they were primarily at fault. The new law states that "any party found to be greater than 50% at fault for his or her own harm may not recover any damages."

Ahead of the passage, plaintiffs attorneys **rushed to file cases**, resulting in a large upsurge in lawsuits in early 2023.

Tyson & Mendes is a national firm focused on insurance defense litigation with 197 attorneys, according to **the most recent Law360 400**.

--Additional reporting by Adrian Cruz. Editing by Marygrace Anderson.