



JJ Minioza of Tyson & Mendes. Courtesy photo.

NEWS

## 5-Lawyer Team Joins Tyson & Mendes From Ericksen Arbuthnot

Joseph "JJ" Minioza, the former president of Ericksen Arbuthnot, and four additional attorneys joined the national insurance defense firm in Northern California.

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Law Firm Hiring



Jessie Yount [↗](#)

### What You Need to Know

- Tyson & Mendes hired JJ Minioza and four additional attorneys from Ericksen Arbuthnot in Northern California.
- The group arrives two months after Ericksen Arbuthnot's six-attorney Central California team joined Tyson & Mendes.
- Ericksen Arbuthnot, a 70-year-old firm, has seen its headcount dip from 38 attorneys to about 15 in recent months.

Insurance defense firm Tyson & Mendes has welcomed another team of lawyers from Northern California midsize firm Ericksen Arbuthnot.

Tyson & Mendes has hired Joseph "JJ" Minioza, the former president and Oakland office managing partner of Ericksen Arbuthnot, as well as two senior counsel, two associates and some staff members.

The group arrived at the end of November, two months after Ericksen Arbuthnot's Fresno and Bakersfield offices managing partner Dave Frankenberger [departed](#) for Tyson & Mendes with the entire office, including five lawyers and eight staff members. In all, Ericksen Arbuthnot's attorney headcount has dipped from about 38 in mid-2022 to about 15, according to the firm's website.

Sharon Hightower, a shareholder and a member of the board of directors at Ericksen Arbuthnot, confirmed her new role as president of the firm but declined to comment on the departures or further for this story.

As for Tyson & Mendes, the new arrivals were drawn to the firm's multi-state platform, the potential for growth in new geographies, and the high level of resources, support and training provided by the firm, Minioza said.

Minioza practiced at Ericksen Arbuthnot for over two decades and has tried 38 trials to verdict with a 98% success rate in cases. In recent years, his practice has focused on habitability lawsuits, he said.

There were some disagreements about the direction of the firm and the practice, Minioza said of Ericksen Arbuthnot, which he previously managed as a member of the board of directors, along with four office managing partners and two other shareholders. "I wanted partners with the same vision of where the firm wanted to be," he said.

"The legal field has become more sophisticated and so have carriers, and they expect their law firms to match that level of sophistication," Minioza added. "That is what I like about Tyson & Mendes, that it's matched their growth with the carriers' expectations."

That includes business resources such as data analytics and metrics, Minioza said.

Remote work was also an important consideration, he said.

"We stayed productive during the pandemic and we think [remote work] is important for work-life balance," Minioza said. "Tyson honors that and has systems that can help us continue to be productive in that environment. That is particularly important because so much of our practice these days, other than trials, is done remotely. It's more the default now."

<https://www.law.com/therecorder/2022/12/12/5-lawyer-team-joins-tyson-mendes-from-ericksen-arbuthnot/>