

Press Release

# Seven Akerman Lawyers Recognized as *Franchise Times* 2023 Legal Eagles

April 3, 2023

Akerman LLP is pleased to announce that seven members of its leading Franchise and Licensing Sector Team have been selected by *Franchise Times* as part of its 2023 class of Legal Eagles. The list of honorees includes Co-Chairs [Kevin Hein](#) in Denver and [Warren Lewis](#) in Washington, D.C., Corporate Partner [Dale Cohen](#) in New York, Litigation Partner [William Sentell](#) in Houston, Corporate Partner [Robert Smith](#) in Washington, D.C., as well as Corporate Special Counsels [Trish MacAskill](#) in Denver and [Jill Klein](#) in West Palm Beach.

According to *Franchise Times*, “these lawyers live and breathe franchising and truly understand the nuances of the unique business model.” *Franchise Times* has compiled a nationwide list of lawyers based on nominations and recommendations from clients, peers, and other legal professionals.

For more than two decades, Hein has focused his practice on counseling companies that rely on franchising as part of their distribution models. He has advised on a wide range of legal issues, including state and federal disclosure requirements, compliance with state relationship laws, franchise sales compliance, restaurant and retail development, franchising in the health and wellness industries, mergers and acquisitions, corporate counseling,

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## Related People

Dale Alexandra Cohen  
Kevin Hein  
Jill K. Klein  
Warren Lee Lewis  
Trish Barrett MacAskill  
William W. Sentell  
Robert A. Smith

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## Related Work

Corporate  
Franchise and  
Licensing

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## Related Offices

Denver  
Houston  
Madison  
New York  
Washington, D.C.  
West Palm Beach

bankruptcy and reorganization, and dispute resolution.

In the field of franchising, Lewis has authored books, studies, articles and regulatory comments, frequently speaks at U.S. and international franchise conferences, and has testified before Congress. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission and the Committee on Small Business of the U.S. House of Representatives have cited his studies and regulatory comments.

Cohen focuses her practice on domestic and international franchising, distribution, and licensing law. Cohen advises new emerging brands as well as widely recognized mature brands with respect to structuring and implementing their franchise, distribution, and licensing programs and advises public and private companies and private equity firms in connection with franchise-related mergers and acquisitions and whole business securitizations. Cohen also routinely drafts and negotiates brand sponsorship agreements as well as commercial manufacturing, distribution, and supply contracts.

Sentell focuses his practice on franchise dispute resolution and related corporate, regulatory, and compliance matters. He has over 15 years of experience leading litigation cases from inception to trial. Sentell is a co-editor of *Covenants Against Competition in Franchise Agreements* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.), published by the American Bar Association.

Smith focuses his practice on representing U.S. franchisors expanding internationally and serving as franchise counsel in complex financial transactions, including whole business securitization transactions. His international franchise experience spans more than 80 countries and encompasses counseling franchisors on a continuous stream of projects, including new master franchise, development and area representative agreements, joint ventures and franchise terminations. As part of his day-to-day counseling, Smith works with clients

to create, manage, and revise franchise programs. He also provides advice related to ongoing regulatory compliance, workouts, dispute resolution, refranchising, and captive market development.

MacAskill focuses her practice on franchise and business transactions. MacAskill applies her in-house experience when counseling clients on business, franchising, and licensing issues. She has experience counseling clients on franchise regulatory compliance and negotiating commercial leases and contracts in a broad range of industries, products, and services.

A former chief legal officer of multi-brand, multi-national franchising chains, Klein focuses her practice on U.S. and international franchise laws, including all aspects of risk management, contract negotiations, mergers and acquisitions, litigation, rebranding, and regulatory compliance. She has experience representing start-ups and existing franchisors and franchisees with general business advice, franchise legal advice, and litigation strategy. She is also well-versed in business formation and development issues and collateral matters.

## **About Akerman**

Akerman LLP is a top 100 U.S. law firm recognized among the most forward-thinking firms in the industry by Financial Times. Its more than 700 lawyers and business professionals collaborate with the world's most successful enterprises and entrepreneurs to navigate change, seize opportunities, and help drive innovation and growth.

## **About Akerman's Franchise and Licensing Sector Team**

Akerman's Franchise and Licensing Sector Team is a highly experienced group handling U.S. and international franchising, licensing, dealership and trademark counseling, registration and litigation matters for franchisors, licensors, subfranchisors,

dealers, and other business clients. Click [here](#) to learn more about Akerman's Franchise and Licensing Sector Team.