

Press Release

# Akerman Bolsters Fraud and Recovery Practice with Former Assistant U.S. Attorney Gera Peoples

September 11, 2018

Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, bolstered its national Fraud and Recovery Practice Group with the addition of Gera Peoples. Formerly an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, he served as Special Counsel to the U.S. Attorney, the fourth highest ranking position in one of the largest and busiest United States Attorney offices in America. Peoples joins as a partner in the Fort Lauderdale office and he will spend significant time working in the West Palm Beach office.

Sandra Heller, chair of the Fraud & Recovery Practice Group said, “Gera’s work to recover fraudulent losses on behalf of Akerman clients is a natural extension of his lifetime commitment to public service. He brings years of experience handling some of the region’s most sizable economic crimes, including organized fraud and Ponzi schemes.”

Peoples will focus his practice on representing a number of the largest U.S. insurance companies in investigating and litigating complex fraud schemes. He has experience representing insurance companies in nationwide subrogation actions, plaintiffs in consumer fraud litigation against multi-level marketing companies, and defending a Fortune 500 corporation against antitrust claims in a class

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## Related People

Eduardo S. Espinosa  
Michael D. Napoli

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## Related Work

Fraud and Recovery

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## Related Offices

Dallas  
Fort Lauderdale  
West Palm Beach

action. Peoples also has significant experience in complex commercial litigations and arbitrations, including class actions, contract litigation, insurance, product liability, and antitrust disputes.

Over the course of his career as a federal prosecutor, his criminal cases have included wire and mail fraud, bank fraud, identity theft, public corruption, various tax crimes, computer and data crimes, healthcare fraud, and civil rights. While at the U.S. Attorney's Office, Peoples tried over twenty federal criminal cases and argued two cases before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. He also oversaw an identity theft task force and a government benefit fraud task force. He developed a strong relationship with the United States Secret Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, IRS Criminal Investigation, and other agencies to investigate financial, data and tax crimes. As Special Counsel to U.S. Attorney, Peoples was part of the senior management team with responsibility for the Criminal, Civil, Appellate, Asset Forfeiture and Administrative Divisions.

Peoples is also heavily involved in the community. He is the Community Representative Team Member for the United States Southern District of Florida, Court Assisted Re-Entry (CARE) Program. He is actively involved in efforts to help returning citizens successfully reintegrate into their families and communities after time spent incarcerated. Peoples is a member of the American Bar Association and various local bars. He is also a former member of the Florida Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions--Contract & Business Cases.

Akerman is one of the first U.S. law firms with a national focus on fraud and recovery. In addition to Gera, the team recently attracted Eduardo Espinosa and Michael Napoli in Dallas.

### **About Akerman LLP**

Akerman LLP is a top 100 U.S. law firm recognized by *Financial Times* as among the most forward

thinking firms in the industry. 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. Akerman is known for its results in middle market M&A and complex disputes, and for helping clients achieve their most important business objectives in the financial services, real estate, and other dynamic sectors across the United States and Latin America.

Akerman's Fraud and Recovery Practice Group provides comprehensive fraud management services to clients throughout the United States with a focus on investigation and litigation of complex fraud schemes and unfair and deceptive practices. The team advises clients in the insurance, healthcare, and retail sectors on strategic prevention, proactive detection and investigation, affirmative litigation, and exhaustive recovery.