

# Becker Makes Return To Kline & Specter

## The Legal Intelligencer

by Stephanie Lovett  
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When Kline & Specter's newest attorney starts on May 21, he will be a familiar face to the firm.

Charles L. Becker, a partner at Reed Smith, is rejoining Kline & Specter - the firm he had left in 1999. Becker will head Kline & Specter's newly formed appellate practice department.

Founding partner Shanin Specter said Kline & Specter was consistently asked by other law firms to help with appeals, and the firm thought it should have a dedicated appellate department.

"[Becker] has become such a highly regarded appellate lawyer and we have so many needs for an appellate specialist, which frankly no one in the firm is," Specter said.

Specter said a number of the firm's attorneys were able to handle cases at the appellate level, but that Becker would provide guidance and strategy throughout the life of their lawsuits.

Specter said it made sense to bring in an appellate specialist like Becker before a lawsuit was filed to help structure the complaint from the beginning and continue throughout the process.

"[Becker] is a skilled appellate lawyer who can help in every stage in the process," Specter said.

Becker will be an associate at Kline & Specter, according to Specter. He was a partner at Reed Smith.

Specter said the firm, which has about 30 attorneys, has only four partners.

Becker was traveling and could not be reached for this article.

According to founding partner Tom Kline, Becker was with the firm as an associate from October 1998 to May 1999. Specter said Becker had left the firm to move to North Carolina because of his wife's job.

Specter said Becker had kept in close touch with Kline & Specter's attorneys since leaving.

"Chip is someone who made a lot of good friends when he was working here, including Tom [Kline] and I," Specter said, adding later, "We really considered it to be a leave of absence more than anything else."

Howard J. Bashman, an appellate practitioner who operates a solo boutique, said Kline & Specter - as a firm with many large verdicts at stake in appeals - would provide Becker with plenty of work.

"It could turn out to be both a job that keeps him busy and one that proves to be quite lucrative - in getting judgments affirmed while bringing in other work that is contingency fee-related," Bashman said.

Bashman said there weren't many attorneys in the plaintiffs bar that focused on appellate litigation.

Bashman said Becker was not known specifically for appellate work in the plaintiffs area, but said Becker had a good reputation in appellate practice generally.

"He does have a reputation of being a good appellate attorney, and I think that's something the plaintiffs bar would benefit from," Bashman said.

Claudia Z. Springer, managing partner of Reed Smith's Philadelphia office, said the firm was sorry to see Becker leave but understood his reasoning.

"We think his opportunity is a terrific opportunity. It's not every day that a young lawyer gets tapped to start a practice group in a firm," Springer said. "We're happy for him. We are not happy that he's leaving us, but we completely understand."

Springer said Becker had been a valuable part of Reed Smith's appellate group, but that the firm still had many well-established appellate attorneys.

The Legal named Becker a "Lawyer on the Fast Track" in 2006. He is the son of former 3rd Circuit Chief Judge Edward R. Becker, who died in May 2006.