

NEWS RELEASES

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Industry

Financial Services &
Capital Markets

Husch Blackwell Adds to Farm Credit, Ag Finance Teams

FIRM'S VIRTUAL OFFICE HELPS GARNER NEW ATTORNEY

Husch Blackwell is pleased to announce the arrival of Elizabeth Benefield, a long-time veteran of Farm Credit with substantial lender-side and regulatory experience, who will be joining the firm as senior counsel.

Benefield joins the firm from Carolina Farm Credit, ACA, where she served as the general counsel and standards of conduct official. As general counsel, Benefield was responsible for all legal matters for the institution, including loan documentation, form development, regulatory counsel on Farm Credit, consumer lending, and other banking matters, corporate governance, litigation management, labor and employment matters, criminal referrals, internal investigations, and data privacy. She also advised on and handled all standards of conduct matters for the association.

“Experience with the Farm Credit System, including its funding banks, associations, and the regulator, is not easy to find. You either have it or you don’t, so we are excited to add that skill set to our team,” said Eric Lenzen, the head of Husch Blackwell’s Financial Services & Capital Markets industry group. “Together with Stephanie E. Kaiser in our Austin office, Elizabeth can provide comprehensive legal advice to the System’s funding banks and associations and further contribute to our already deep financial services bench and Farm Credit expertise.”

Benefield also becomes Husch Blackwell’s first new-attorney hire to join The Link, the firm’s virtual office, launched in July 2020. Benefield currently lives in North Carolina, outside of the current footprint for some of her practice groups, making the existence of the Link a welcome amenity.

“I was sold on Husch Blackwell and the firm’s commitment to my practice area well before learning about The Link, but it was comforting to know the firm has put a great deal of thought and resources toward integrating remote lawyers,” said Benefield. “My practice is nationwide and extremely scalable; while geography is becoming less important to some, having the advantages of Husch Blackwell’s nationwide footprint and being able to work from North Carolina really are the best of both worlds.”

“Bringing Elizabeth on board validates our approach with The Link,” said Paul Eberle, Husch Blackwell’s Chief Executive. “There’s a scarcity in the market for lawyers who have deep knowledge of and experience with Farm Credit and agricultural lending, and much of that talent is found far and wide across the country, not necessarily in the traditional centers of finance. The Link enables us to pitch a compelling value add to attorneys who might be interested in Husch Blackwell but have concerns about living and practicing outside the footprint of some of our physical offices. The Link will only grow in importance as a recruiting tool across diverse practice areas.”