



## Steven N. Levine

### PARTNER

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### OVERVIEW

## The leader of Husch Blackwell's Food Systems industry unit, Steve co-leads the firm's national cannabis practice.

As head of the firm's Food Systems industry unit, Steve leads more than 50 professionals from numerous practice areas focused on the various food and agriculture industries. He excels in bringing innovative, cost-effective answers to the various challenges that our clients face, and he is especially passionate about working with new industries or industry disruptors.

Steve's gift for developing creative solutions to new problems makes him a perfect fit for fresh and rapidly growing industries. Since 2009, his major focus has been on the burgeoning cannabis industry, where he guides clients through the tangle of shifting

*"Husch Blackwell has been our corporate counsel at Medicine Man for many years. Steve Levine is now a good friend and trusted adviser to the leaders within our organization. Their firm has a wide range of legal expertise within their ranks and has been phenomenal in helping with our many and varied needs. Their cannabis industry knowledge is unparalleled by other law firms. We highly recommend Husch Blackwell to anyone in the cannabis industry."*

— Andy Williams, Founder,  
Medicine Man

### Industry

Food Systems

### Services

Alcohol Beverage

Alternative Farming & Sustainability

Cannabis

Corporate

Corporate Transparency Act (CTA)

Functional Foods & Beverages

Government Solutions

Hospitality

Labor & Employment

Mergers & Acquisitions

Private Equity

Retail Real Estate

Securities & Corporate Governance

Special Purpose Acquisition Companies (SPACs)

Startups

regulations governing the sale and use of cannabis in both the marijuana and industrial hemp sectors across the nation.

Steve has earned multiple national rankings in this practice area, working closely with the top MSOs in North America, as well as entrepreneurs, on all matters of marijuana and industrial hemp regulatory compliance, mergers and acquisitions, corporate structuring, debt and equity financing, governance, and securities compliance. The Cannabis team he co-leads is one of the country's largest and most experienced, having grown with our clients to provide full-service representation to many of the largest cannabis operators in the U.S. and Canada.

More recently, Steve has expanded his practice to include alternative protein, cultivated meat and other clients pursuing new, sustainable answers to traditional agriculture—companies at the forefront of the food systems revolution. Steve supports new market entrants into the alternative farming space, assisting with a multitude of legal issues. Many of these clients are startups and early stage companies, and Steve offers guidance on matters such as capital formation, labor and employment, corporate structure and governance, and regulatory issues. He leads the firm's Alternative Farming & Sustainability team.

Both the Cannabis and Alternative Farming & Sustainability practices are part of Husch Blackwell's Food Systems business unit, applying the insights and experiences gained from representing some of the world's largest commercial seed, food production and alcohol and beverage companies to these newer and rapidly growing industries.

## Featured Experience

### Client Merger Results in Expanded Business

Founded in 2009, LivWell Holdings Inc. grew over its first 10 years into one of the most prominent marijuana businesses in Colorado and Michigan, with operations spanning cultivation, manufacturing, research and development, and retail. By 2021, they were ready for a closed sale to PharmaCann Inc., the largest privately held, vertically integrated cannabis company in the United States.

Prior to closing the merger, Steve advised LivWell on a variety of corporate and regulatory matters for several years. For the merger, Steve acted as lead deal counsel for LivWell, which resulted in a combined business that operates approximately 60 dispensaries and 11 cultivation and production facilities across eight states.

## Experience

- Served as Colorado regulatory counsel for Columbia Care in connection with the acquisition of The Green Solution in Colorado. We assisted with transactional documents as well as obtaining regulatory approval at state and local jurisdictions. At close, Columbia Care became the largest cannabis operator in Colorado, the second largest cannabis market in the world.
- Advised Medicine Man on the sale of the business to Columbia Care.
- Represents startup clients and new market entrants in the alternative farming space, assisting with corporate structuring and capital formation.
- Represented cannabis cultivator Los Sueños Farms as seller's counsel in its recent \$67 million sale to Curaleaf, one of the world's largest cannabis companies. The transaction involved a combination of stock and cash consideration.
- Advised LivWell Holdings Inc., in its sale to PharmaCann Inc., the largest privately held, vertically integrated cannabis company in the United States.
- Assisted The Health Center in the sale of the company to a publicly traded special purpose acquisition company (SPAC).
- Representing Nutritional High International in a \$10 million acquisition of a dispensary and cultivation facility in California.
- Assisting a family office in entering the state-regulated marijuana space with their initial investment into the space with additional investments to follow.
- Helped three separate entities navigate and negotiate a settlement with the Marijuana Enforcement Division related to regulatory issues in 2019.
- Represented Green Thumb Industries in the closing of its acquisition of Fiorello Pharmaceuticals, as well as providing counsel on New York medical cannabis license regulatory issues.

## Experience

- Serves as outside general counsel to large cannabis company on a variety of matters including cannabis regulatory as well as corporate and securities, vendor contracts, employment law, corporate governance, real estate, intellectual property, customs, sweepstakes, litigation and tax.
- Negotiated successful purchase of various recreational and medical establishment licenses and businesses in Colorado since 2010.
- Represented clients in development of commercial greenhouses used by cannabis tenants in Colorado and California.
- Negotiated warehouse leases for numerous landlords and tenants in Colorado and California since 2010.
- Developed and licensed proprietary technology and trademarks for technology and intellectual property holding companies in the marijuana and industrial hemp industries operating in the United States.
- Represented Canadian public companies with cannabis operations in the United States.
- Represented clients expanding cannabis operations into Canada.
- Handled corporate formation, financings and commercial contracts for emerging growth cannabis technology and business solution companies.
- Worldwide market leader and expert in providing data-driven solutions for recall services for durable goods - Assisted large recreational center in obtaining one of the first retail licenses in Aurora, Colorado, in 2014.
- Obtained medical infused-products license for an infused-products manufacturer in Colorado in 2015.
- Advised medical and adult-use stores, marijuana-infused-products manufacturers and marijuana testing facilities on licensing issues at local and state levels in Colorado and California.

## Experience

- Represented cannabis operators in Colorado in administrative show cause orders, negotiation of remediation plans and stipulated settlement agreements with state and local agencies.
- Advised one of the largest cannabis testing facilities on its reverse merger into a publicly reporting company in 2014.
- Represented one of the largest cannabis security companies in its reverse merger into a publicly reporting company in 2015.
- Assisted Lightshade Labs in the acquisition of Frosted Leaf, a dispensary in Denver, out of receivership for \$3.5 million.
- Represented Nutritional Elements in the sale of the company to a publicly trade special purpose acquisition company (SPAC).
- Helped keep the Colorado cannabis industry open during the COVID-19 pandemic by writing and reviewing proposed legislation regarding essential business status for cannabis companies.

## Recognition

- *Chambers USA*, Cannabis Law: Western United States, Nationwide, 2019-2024
- Colorado Super Lawyers, Securities & Corporate Finance, 2021
- *The Legal 500 United States*
  - Cannabis, Leading partner, 2021-2024
- *5280 Magazine*, Denver Top Lawyer, Marijuana Law, 2016-2023; Cannabis Law, 2017
- *National Law Journal Trailblazers: Cannabis Law*, 2018
- BL Rankings' *The Best Lawyers in America*®
  - Corporate Law, 2016-2025

## Education

- J.D., University of Denver Sturm College of Law
- B.A., University of Oregon

## Admissions

- Colorado
- New York
- California

## Community Leadership

- National Jewish Health, Development Board Member, 2016-present
- Legal Aid Foundation of Colorado, Board Member 2015-present
- Heroes Like Us, Board Member, 2013-2014

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\*Steve works remotely and is licensed in Colorado, practicing in Aspen, CO. Contact Steve via email or phone for in-person/virtual meetings. Use the Denver office address for mail/deliveries only



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