

BOSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

Law firm Burns & Levinson moving Boston headquarters

CATHERINE CARLOCK AND GREG RYAN
Boston Business Journal

Burns & Levinson LLP is moving its Financial District headquarters to 125 High St., marking the first time the Boston-based law firm has moved in nearly three decades.

Some 250 lawyers and staff will occupy about 100,000 square feet at the downtown tower next July. Burns & Levinson will move from a similarly-sized office at 125 Summer St., bucking the recent legal industry trend to downsize office space at the end of long-term leases. Goodwin Procter, for instance, shrunk from 450,000 to 375,000 square feet when it moved to the Seaport in 2016. Nixon Peabody LLP is going from 167,000 to 105,000 square feet next year.

Some Burns & Levinson lawyers will have smaller individual offices at 125 High, but the firm is adding more collaborative spaces than it currently has at 125 Summer, according to Burns managing partner David Rosenblatt. That's why the total square footage will remain about the same, he said.

"The present space has a 1980s or 1990s feel to it," Rosenblatt said. "This is going to be much more open. That will be the major difference."

Burns & Levinson selected 125 High St. after more than a year of hunting for new headquarters space, a search that was led by brokerage CBRE. The firm looked at multiple buildings in the Seaport District, Rosenblatt said, but



Boston-based law firm Burns & Levinson LLP will move its headquarters to 125 High St. next July.

ultimately decided it preferred to stay in the Financial District.

"We're bordering the Greenway and the Seaport, without all of the construction and havoc of the Seaport," he said. "It's sort of the best of both worlds."

The firm considered staying at the Summer Street building, but a redesign or refresh of its current offices likely would have proven a "daunting challenge," Rosenblatt said. Burns may have had to occupy temporary space for a lengthy period of time while the redesign was ongoing, he added. "That ultimately didn't become a practical

option for us," Rosenblatt said.

The new office will feature a grand staircase connecting two floors, multiple common areas and plentiful natural light. (Not all of Burns' five floors on Summer Street are connected by an interior staircase, Rosenblatt said.) Architecture firm Gensler will design the interior.

New York-based real estate investment firm Tishman Speyer owns 125 High St., which was developed in the early 1990s.

"The decision to call 125 High St., strategically located in the heart of the Financial District, home for the next 15 years makes perfect sense," said Jessica Hughes, managing director of Tishman Speyer in Boston, in a statement. "We're looking forward to building a great working relationship."

Burns' website lists approximately 110 lawyers in its Boston office. Its headcount has remained stable over the past decade or so. Rosenblatt said the new space will leave room for "moderate growth."

Burns' move will give 125 Summer St. landlord Oxford Properties a five-floor chunk of space, a rarity in an increasingly crowded downtown office market. Half of the tower's fifth floor is currently occupied by fantasy sports betting company DraftKings, which will vacate by next year to move into its new Back Bay headquarters at 500 Boylston St./222 Berkeley St. Burns currently occupies the balance of the fifth floor, as well as floors six through nine, but aims to move by next July.