

BUSINESS

New San Antonio insurance firm acquires 33-year-old employee benefits business

Laura Garcia_Nov. 7, 2019



Buddy Morris, a healthcare expert hired by the city, speaks during a presentation as collective bargaining teams for city officials and the fire union meet at Dykema Law Firm, on Monday, March 18, 2019.

Photo: Bob Owen, Staff / San Antonio Express-News

A new insurance firm called Spire Risk Management has acquired Employee Benefits Services, which had operated in San Antonio since 1986.

Spire Risk Management founder L.P. “Buddy” Morris declined to disclose the purchase price, but said he is keeping on the staff of 12 from EBS.

EBS provided employee benefit consulting, brokerage and administration services for private companies and was started by Art and Billie Villemain. Their son, Pete Villemain,

had served as president of the firm since 2004 and will head up employee benefits for the new company, according to an emailed statement.

Morris founded Summit Insurance Group in 1998 and, after 10 years, sold the company to Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., a global insurance brokerage and risk management services firm headquartered in Illinois.

He worked for Gallagher as area president for a decade and has consulted for the city of San Antonio, McCombs Enterprises, Beldon Roofing, Carenet and Northside Ford. He was most recently hired by the city as a health care expert as officials negotiated terms with the fire union.

The new company is a privately-held insurance consulting firm specializing in employee benefits, property, and casualty and retirement planning. The company is looking for space for a new headquarters near Loop 410 and Interstate 10. Morris hopes to move into the new office in early 2020.

Morris said San Antonio is ready for an insurance practice with “the horsepower of a national firm but the high-touch service model of a small boutique firm.”

Laura Garcia covers the health care industry in the San Antonio and Bexar County area. Read her stories and more local coverage on our [free site](#), [mySA.com](#), and on our [subscriber site](#), [ExpressNews.com](#). | laura.garcia@express-news.net | Twitter: [@Reporter Laura](#)