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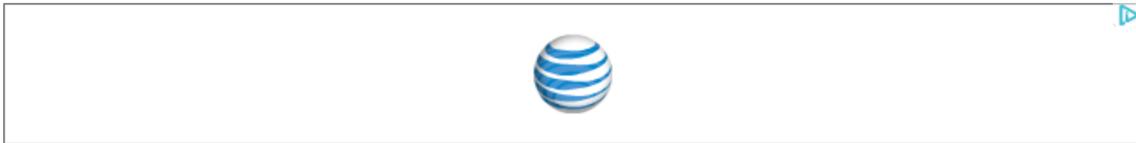
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KEL law firm banned from U.S. bankruptcy court

May 18, 2011 | By Bianca Prieto, Orlando Sentinel

A series of "missteps" and "lack of diligence" by a lawyer practicing with Kaufman, Englett and Lynd has prompted a United States Bankruptcy judge to bar the firm and the lawyer from practicing in Bankruptcy Court in the Middle District of Florida until further notice.

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Arthur Briskman signed the three-page order today after Attorney William J. Sanchez, who is representing an Orlando couple in a bankruptcy case, failed to appear in court today despite a court order he attend the hearing.

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Instead, Andrea G. Dwyer, another lawyer with KEL, attended the hearing. Dwyer said Sanchez did not attend the hearing "because he was attending to other matters," the order stated. It's not immediately clear what those matters were.

The order barring the firm from practicing in the court means KEL will not be allowed to file paperwork in any case until the issue with Sanchez is resolved. It's unclear how many cases will be affected.

The firm is allowed to interact with the bankruptcy court to sort out the current issue, which was not specified in the order.

A statement issued by KEL said in part that the firm is working to "make amends with the Court."

The law firm recently bought the advertising space at the top of a downtown Orlando high rise on Washington Street at Magnolia Avenue. The firm has offices in several states across the U.S.

In late August, Sanchez filed Chapter 7 bankruptcy on behalf of the Orlando couple. On Nov. 18th, Sanchez filed a motion for sanctions against Andreu & Palma PL, the law firm representing one of creditors the couple owed, for an alleged violation of federal bankruptcy laws.

According to the motion, Andreu & Palma garnished the couple's bank account, despite having been notified the couple had filed bankruptcy.

In most cases when Chapter 7 bankruptcy is filed, it can prohibit creditors from calling, continuing or initiating lawsuits or garnishing wages, according to the United States Court website on Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

Florida Bar records show Sanchez has not had any disciplinary action in the last decade.

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