Nationwide Class Action Filed Against American Psychological Association
Over Special Fees

Wexler Wallace LLP files nationwide class action on behalf of APA members who paid non-mandatory “special” or “practice” assessment fees.

Sacramento, CA (PRWEB) December 8, 2010 -- The law firm of Wexler Wallace LLP, with co-counsel, recently filed a class action lawsuit against the American Psychological Association and the American Psychological Association Practice Organization (collectively, “APA”), alleging that the APA deceptively billed its members by the millions during the last decade. The lawsuit challenges the APA’s collection of “special” or “practice” assessment fees that were presented, according to the suit, as a mandatory part of APA annual dues. The fee billed to members is generally more than half of the annual dues. According to the suit, the APA has collected reportedly between $4.5 to 5 million per year over the last ten years. The case, entitled Engum v. American Psychological Association, Inc., et al., Case No. 10-cv-01898 is pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

The complaint alleges that most APA members believed that the special fee was a mandatory part of their annual dues, by the manner it appeared on a pre-printed annual membership dues statement. It further alleges that the APA had typically referred to the fee as mandatory and had explicitly described it on the APA website as a fee that licensed or certified members “must” pay. The lawsuit seeks to recover tens of millions of dollars on behalf of all APA members nationwide who paid a special or practice assessment fees as part of their annual dues.

According to Wexler Wallace LLP partner, Mark J. Tamblyn, “these fees were never required for American Psychological Association membership. But for nearly a decade the APA received tens of millions of dollars it would not have otherwise collected.” Mr. Tamblyn also observed as significant the lawsuit’s contention that the “APA Board has now admitted to the deceptive nature of the fee,” quoting an APA newsletter stating “the manner in which the APA, APAPO, and Division dues have been combined on past dues statements does not make clear that the mandatory practice assessment payment is required for APAPO membership but not for APA membership” and that the “2011 dues statement instructions will be modified to clarify this point.” Division 44 Newsletter, Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues, A Division of the American Psychological Association, volume 26, Number 2 (Summer 2010).

Wexler Wallace LLP (http://www.wexlerwallace.com) is a national leader in prosecuting class actions and other complex litigation on behalf of individual and business clients in state and federal courts throughout the United States. The firm is based in Chicago, Illinois, and maintains its west coast office in Sacramento, California. Contact: Mark J. Tamblyn (916) 492-1106.

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