

Hundreds in First Department Face Suspension

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The Disciplinary Committee for the First Judicial Department has petitioned the Appellate Division to suspend hundreds of lawyers for failing to comply with the registration requirements of Section 468-a of the Judiciary Law. The petition was returnable on June 23.

Section 468-a imposes two basic requirements upon every lawyer admitted to practice in New York. The first is the requirement that every lawyer file a biennial registration statement with the administrative office of the courts (Office of Court Administration) on a form supplied by the office, and pay a biennial registration fee of \$300.

The second requirement is that an attorney who moves his office or knows of any other change in any information previously submitted, file an amended registration statement within thirty days after the change.

Approximately 55,000 lawyers – more than half of all lawyers in the state – practice in the First Department. When the Disciplinary Committee began to enforce the registration requirements in 1997, approximately 10% of First Department lawyers were delinquent. The total has declined, as lawyers have become aware of the Committee's enforcement measures.

The lawyers on the proposed suspension list returnable on June 23 have last names beginning with I through O. Another list of delinquent lawyers will be the subject of another disciplinary committee petition at a later date.

To avoid suspension, any First Department lawyer listed must comply with the requirements of §468-a of the Judiciary Law.