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**LONG ISLAND MALPRACTICE LAWYERS CHARGED**  
**WITH STEALING MILLIONS FROM CLIENTS**

*Defendants Allegedly Paid Off Clients With Settlements Meant For Other Clients  
And Also Used Funds For Law Firm Expenses and Personal Use;  
More Than \$7 Million Allegedly Pilfered From 29 Victims*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that two recently disbarred lawyers of the now-shuttered Law Firm of Kaye & Lenchner, Attorneys and Counselors at Law, in Mineola, Long Island, have been charged with multiple counts of grand larceny and scheme to defraud for allegedly stealing more than \$7 million from the settlements of 29 clients between January 2010 and May 2018.

District Attorney Brown said, “The defendants in this case are accused of not only breaching their fiduciary duty and unjustly enriching themselves at the expense of their clients, but also allegedly collected settlements on behalf of their clients then disbursed funds to other clients whose escrow accounts had already been depleted by the pair. Such alleged actions cannot go unpunished.”

District Attorney Brown – who was appointed as special prosecutor in the case at the request of Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas – identified the defendants as Mitchell Lenchner, 60, of Great Neck, Long Island, and Corey Kaye, 60, of Seaford, Long Island. The defendants were arraigned late yesterday before Nassau County District Court Judge Maxine S. Broderick. Two criminal complaints charge the defendants with one-count of first-degree grand larceny, 19-counts of second-degree grand larceny, eight-counts of third-degree grand larceny, one-count of fourth-degree grand larceny and one-count of first-degree scheme to defraud. Bail was set at \$150,000 bond/\$75,000 cash and the defendants were ordered to return to court on Friday, September 14, 2018. If convicted, the former lawyers face a minimum of one to three years to a maximum of 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison.

District Attorney Brown asks that anyone who believes that he or she may have been a victim, or knows someone who may have been a victim of the defendant’s alleged scheme, are encouraged to contact his Integrity Bureau at 1-718-286-6560.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the complaints, an investigation included interviews with former clients, employees and detailed review of bank records allegedly showed that the two defendants deposited settlement checks for sums between \$5,400 and \$2.275 million between

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April 2010 and May 2018. In one specific instance, the law partners on or about September 13, 2011, deposited a settlement check for \$2.275 million on behalf of a client, who was the executrix of a family member's estate. The woman never received the funds owed to her and on June 29, 2012, bank records allegedly showed the escrow account had a balance well under the \$1 million that should have been distributed to the victim.

Continuing, said District Attorney Brown, according to the complaints on or about May 15, 2014, the law firm received checks totaling \$575,000 on behalf of a client, who was the executor of a family member's estate. The client did not receive the funds owed to him and within two months the escrow account had a balance of less than \$50,000.

In addition, the investigation revealed, according to the charges, that the defendants between January 2010 and April 2018, received numerous instances of settlement money on behalf of their clients, but instead of distributing cash to those clients, money was allegedly spent on business expenses, payroll, personal expenditures and at times payments to previous clients whose escrow funds were depleted by the lawyers.

The District Attorney noted that the Office of Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas requested the appointment of a special prosecutor to handle the matter in order to avoid any resulting appearance of impropriety due to a conflict of interest.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Kevin J. Kehoe, of the District Attorney's Detective Bureau, under the supervision of Deputy Chief Investigator Robert J. Burke and under the overall supervision of Chief Investigator Franco Russo. Also assisting in the investigation were Accountant Investigator Joseph D. Plonski and Financial Analyst Andrew Risi, under the supervision of Supervising Accountant Investigator James Dever. Also assisting with the case were Interns Dylan P. Bishop and Christine Tong.

Supervisor Assistant District Attorney Yvonne Francis, of District Attorney Brown's Integrity Bureau, is prosecuting the case with Deputy Bureau Chief Khadijah Muhammad-Starling, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys James M. Liander, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Wilbert J. LeMelle.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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