

N E W S
New York State
Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection

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Lawyers' Fund Increases Maximum Award

(Albany, NY-- 1/29/15) The New York Lawyers' Fund has increased the coverage it provides to law client victims of dishonest conduct in the practice of law.

Since 2000, the Fund's maximum limit on an award of reimbursement has been \$300,000 per client loss. That ceiling has now been raised to \$400,000.

The Lawyers' Fund is financed by New York's legal profession. A small portion of the biennial registration fee paid by all New York attorneys supports all awards and administrative costs of the Lawyers' Fund. No taxpayer money is used for this client protection program. Of every dollar the Fund receives, over 92 cents goes directly to client reimbursement.

The Lawyers' Fund is administered by a seven-member Board of Trustees appointed by the State Court of Appeals, New York's high court. The Trustees serve without compensation. Since 1982, the Fund has restored more than \$175 million to 7,997 eligible law clients. An annual average of 34 former lawyers caused these losses over the past 32 years. There are now 297,000 registered lawyers in New York State.

The Lawyers' Fund is chaired by **Eric A. Seiff**, a Manhattan lawyer with Scoppetta, Seiff, Kretz & Abercrombie. In announcing the increased maximum award, Mr. Seiff said:

"This increase to a \$400,000 maximum award is another step towards our goal of providing full financial protection for law clients in the Empire State. The New York Fund now provides the greatest protection among the Nation's client fund programs. This is made possible by the continued support of the members of New York's legal profession whose contributions finance our Fund."

Losses covered by the Lawyers' Fund include the theft of estate assets, real estate down payments and litigation settlement proceeds. While ordinarily the Fund does not reimburse for investment losses, when a lawyer embezzles his or her clients' money through the vehicle of a phony investment, the Fund will provide compensation. The Fund can not compensate for alleged malpractice or resolve fee disputes.

The Lawyers' Fund is located in Albany. Telephone: 800-442-3863. Website: **www.nylawfund.org**