U.S. Law Firm Foley & Lardner Files Lawsuit Against Legal Recruiter Mark Bruce International in NYC

Foley & Lardner Seeks Refund for Partner's Short-lived Employment

In New York City, U.S. law firm Foley & Lardner has initiated legal proceedings against Mark Bruce International, a legal recruitment agency. The lawsuit, filed on Monday in a Manhattan state court, centers on Foley & Lardner's pursuit of a refund for a placement fee paid to Mark Bruce International after hiring a partner in April, who had left the firm by the end of June.

The Partner's Swift Departure

According to the lawsuit, Foley & Lardner hired an unidentified partner on April 11. However, by June 30, Robert Lehrman, the President of Mark Bruce International, received notification that the partner's employment had been terminated. The lawsuit does not disclose the reasons behind the partner's departure, nor does it specify the exact amount of the placement fee involved.

No Immediate Response

As of the reporting time, neither Lehrman, Mark Rosen (CEO of Mark Bruce International) nor a spokesperson for Foley & Lardner had provided a comment or response regarding the lawsuit.

Historical Conflicts

This legal dispute between Foley & Lardner and Mark Bruce International is not the first of its kind. In 2018, the recruitment agency took legal action against Dechert, a major U.S. law firm, in a New York state court. The dispute revolved around a payment Dechert had allegedly promised to recruit an attorney from Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett.

In that case, Mark Bruce International claimed that Dechert had agreed to pay a fee equivalent to 25% of the newly hired lawyer's compensation, totaling $137,000. This amount contrasted with the recruitment firm's standard fee of 30% of a new attorney's first-year salary.

The Dechert Case

Dechert countered this claim by asserting that they owed no placement fee because the attorney was hired as counsel, not as a partner. In 2021, a New York judge ruled in favor of Dechert, pointing out that the agreement "clearly and unambiguously provided that MBI would only be entitled to a fee for the placement of partners."

Past Legal Battles

This legal battle between law firms and Mark Bruce International has a historical precedent. In March 2009, a New York state appeals court ruled in favor of Blank Rome in a dispute over a $720,000 fee that Mark Bruce International had alleged was owed to them. The lawsuit stemmed from Blank Rome's 2006 merger with the maritime-focused firm Healy & Baillie.

The appeals court's decision was based on the view that "the exchange of emails, which did not set forth the fee for plaintiff's services or an objective standard to determine it, was too indefinite to be enforceable."

Don't be a silent ninja! Let us know your thoughts in the comment section below.