

# Cuomo shuts immigration aid firms he accuses of fraud

August 20, 2009 by ROBERT E. KESSLER AND BY SUMATHI REDDY /

New York State Attorney General [Andrew Cuomo](#) announced yesterday he halted the operation of three firms - two on [Long Island](#) and one in New York City - that he said defrauded clients who were seeking help with their immigration status.

Cuomo also announced civil suits against three other firms in the city that are also involved in what he said were similar scams. Cuomo said the businesses cheated thousands of people by falsely claiming they were qualified to provide legal assistance and filing worthless paperwork with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service.

The actions against the six firms were part of the attorney general's ongoing investigation into immigration assistance firms that he said have defrauded people by falsely representing that they can provide help with immigration problems.

"The consequences of bad legal advice can be absolutely devastating," thwarting people's attempts to change residency status and costing people money who can ill-afford it, Cuomo said in a telephone news conference.

Cuomo said the two Long Island firms were All Immigration Services of Great Neck, run by Ruth and Isaac Shalom, at 15 Cornell Dr., and Alisandra Multiservices, operated by Sandra Peguero, at 769 Commack Rd., Brentwood. The third firm that Cuomo said would cease operation was Immigration Solutions and Systems, run by Mary DiSerio, at 304 Park Ave. South in [Manhattan](#).

Thomas Toscano, the attorney for the Great Neck firm, said only, "The attorney general wields a lot of power and we made a business decision to settle this matter."

Peguero's attorney, Cynthia S. Vargas, said in an e-mailed statement, "Alisandra Multiservices Inc. maintains that they did not defraud anyone in the community and that their violations were technical in nature."

Mary DiSerio, the head of Immigration Solutions and Systems, said, "I entered into an agreement with the attorney general because I could not afford the cost of litigation."

One of the three immigration-advisory businesses that Cuomo filed civil suit against to halt operations was Professional Solutions Consultants which, he said, is operated by Clover Perez at 193-10 and 180-23 Linden Blvd., in St. Albans, Queens.

An unidentified woman on Cuomo's phone call said she was a victim of the firm, spending

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\$17,000 to get green cards for her three adult children, but getting nothing. "I thought I was playing by the rules," the woman said.

Bernard Udell, the attorney for the St. Albans' firm, said Perez is "an honest woman who did her best to provide" services, and denied that his client had cheated the woman.

With Sumathi Reddy

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