

Attorney General Abbott Charges Austin Group with Providing Unauthorized Legal Services

State's enforcement action cites Gabriella Paneque and other defendants for offering unlawful immigration services

July 25, 2012

AUSTIN – Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott made the following statement after a Travis County district court granted the State's request for an asset freeze and temporary restraining order against Austin-based Just for People, Inc., and its directors and affiliates:

“Texas law is quite clear about who is authorized to provide immigration consulting services – and Just for People does not pass the test. Tuesday's court order prohibits Just for People from unlawfully offering or providing unauthorized immigration consulting services. The order also prohibits the defendants from continuing to threaten clients or charge customers for services that are never actually rendered.”

Media links

[Attorney General's lawsuit against Gabriella Paneque and other defendants](#)

[Temporary restraining order against Gabriella Paneque and other defendants](#)

According to the State's enforcement action, Elizabeth Gabriella “Gabby” Paneque – director of Just for People, Inc. – and her affiliates defrauded their clients by providing unauthorized legal advice, document preparation and other services in violation of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act (DTPA). State investigators found that none of the defendants are attorneys or accredited by the federal Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) as required by law. Furthermore, neither Just for People, Inc., nor its affiliate, Lead God, is a registered nonprofit organization permitted to provide immigration services or representation.

The State's enforcement action further asserts that Paneque and her affiliates primarily targeted Spanish-speaking customers in the Austin area and charged thousands of dollars for immigration services that were never actually provided. In one case, a customer paid more than \$10,000 after Paneque promised “work visas” for several of the customer's family members. In an affidavit, the customer swore that each time he inquired about the status of his family's immigration cases, Paneque “...became very insulting and aggressive, and threatened me.” The customer testified that despite his payments to Paneque, he never obtained a visa or work permit for anyone in his family.

The State's enforcement action seeks civil penalties of up to \$20,000 for each DTPA violation as well as a permanent injunction against the defendants.

Defendants named in the State's enforcement action:

- Just for People, Inc.

- Elizabeth Gabriella “Gabby” Paneque, also known as Nilda Odalys Paneque, also known as Gabriella Gatjnes, individually and doing business as Lead God
- Frank Alarcon Marimon, also known as Frank Alarcon, individually and doing business as Lead God
- Ayan Mohamed Ismail, doing business as Lead God
- Luz L. Guerrero

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