

Hi-Riser



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Law firm's condo seminars to focus on new legislation

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The recently ended legislative session brought changes to condo and community association laws and regulations. To help residents understand how they will be affected, the law firm Kaye & Bender P.L. will host a series of free seminars around Broward and Palm Beach counties during the next six months.

This is the fourth year Kaye & Bender has hosted the seminar series.

"The last few years have brought about more substantial changes to community association laws," said Robert Kaye, a partner and lawyer in the firm. "Our goal is to give residents a better understanding of their community and how the changes

affect them while using layman's terms. They don't have to figure it out themselves."

Kaye added that the primary focus will be on House Bill 1195, which became law on July 1 and gives associations more power in dealing with delinquent owners. The legislation also clarifies language used in major reforms enacted the previous year.

"A lot of the provisions in this bill clarify and further define some of the changes that were added [the year before]," said Lisa Magill, an attorney with Becker & Poliakoff P.A., which specializes in condo and community association law. "It's referred to as a 'glitch bill,' because it's intended to

fix whatever problems or issues have arisen since last year's bill became law."

Changes include a measure permitting any association member to inspect financial records, including management payroll and other salaries. Additionally, felons are prevented from serving on HOA boards, and HOAs are prohibited from shutting off cable or Internet service to delinquent owners.

The legislation also allows condo boards to meet in private without notifying unit owners to discuss personnel issues, such as salary, discipline of employees and finances. Previously,

continues on 9

condo boards were allowed to meet privately only when the topic was litigation.

Additionally, the new laws clarify questions about rent collection. If the community association is collecting rent from a tenant, the full rent can now be applied to the unit owner's oldest delinquency payment, and owners cannot penalize tenants who pay rent to the association to cover delinquencies.

"This clears up any confusion as to whether the association is allowed to collect the full rent from delinquent

owners," Magill said.

Seminars take place from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Upcoming dates include Oct. 12 at the Nob Hill Clubhouse, 10200 Sunset Strip in Sunrise; Nov. 8 at the Emma Lou Olson Civic Center, 1801 NE Sixth St. in Pompano Beach; and Dec. 7 at Art-Serve, 1350 E. Sunrise Blvd. in Fort Lauderdale. Seminars in 2012 will take place in Hallandale, Coral Springs, Weston and Delray Beach.

Along with discussions of various changes, the seminars will feature a question-and-answer session about any community association topic and will offer advice on

how communities can incorporate the new laws into their governing practices.

Time will also be devoted to clearing up misconceptions about how boards operate and the powers they wield.

"It's always a transition to incorporate the new laws," Kaye said. "We want to make that transition easier and less intimidating."

For information, visit www.KayeBenderLaw.com. Reservations can be made for specific seminars by emailing KayeBenderSeminar@piersongrant.com or calling 954-776-1999, ext. 230.