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Former Arnold & Porter Partner Disbarred In D.C.

Former Arnold & Porter partner Peter Cinquegrani was disbarred yesterday by the D.C. Court of Appeals.

Cinquegrani, 48, had previously filed an affidavit with the court, consenting to disbarment. As a result of his consent, the details of the charges lodged against him by the D.C. Office of Bar Counsel remain under seal.

But according to a news release sent out by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York (available [here](#)), on Sept. 11, Conquegrani pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit tax fraud, aiding and abetting tax evasion, and aiding in the submission of false and fraudulent documents to the Internal Revenue Service.

Cinquegrani, who lived in Baltimore at the time of his plea, worked at Arnold & Porter from 1986 to 1993, when he left to serve as an attorney at the IRS. He returned to Arnold & Porter as a special counsel in 1997 and made partner at the firm in 2002. He was with the firm until April 2007.

According to the release, Cinquegrani admitted to helping to set up an illegal tax shelter for about 150 wealthy Ernst & Young clients and for drafting legal opinion letters that would be used to support the shelter's activities. The fee for those letters ranged from \$50,000 and \$100,000, depending on the size of the transaction. Cinquegrani helped put together at least 96 separate transactions for about 150 people.

He also admitted to helping clients create a false story to explain to the IRS how they had entered the tax shelter so they wouldn't have to admit that the shelter's primary purpose was to avoid paying taxes.

In exchange for his plea, Cinquegrani will receive a maximum prison sentence of five years. Cinquegrani's lawyer, Paul Rauser, of the Aegis Law Group, says his client has not been sentenced yet.

Arnold & Porter was slapped with a civil tax shelter promoter penalty that required them to make a payment to the IRS for an undisclosed amount. The penalty stems from the firm's failing to comply with the tax shelter's registration requirements. The firm declined to comment.

The investigation into tax shelter schemes has also ensnared several other firms, including Proskauer Rose, Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell, Sidley Austin, and the now-closed Jenkins & Gilchrist, [The AmLaw Daily](#) previously reported.

Posted by Jeff Jeffrey on April 16, 2009 at 02:27 PM in [Crime and Punishment](#), [Lawyers Who Do Bad Things](#), [Legal Business](#) | [Permalink](#)
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