

# LAW OFFICE OF WILLIAM WALDNER

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NY STATE AND FEDERAL COURTS

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You are hereby requesting the opportunity to consult with and obtain information and advice from the Law Office of William Waldner (“Law Firm”) regarding relief from debts, including possible relief from debts by filing bankruptcy under the United States Bankruptcy Code.

***Please Note: The following documents and disclosures are required by legislation adopted by Congress in 2005. Please rest assured that as long as you are honest and meet the requirements set out under the law, you are entitled to debt relief. We can guide you through all the requirements of filing for bankruptcy, as long as you provide us accurate and complete information.***

## **Disclosure required by 11 U.S.C. 527(a) and 11 USC 506**

1– If you decide to file a bankruptcy case, the information you give to an attorney, a staff member of the law firm, the Bankruptcy Trustee, or the Bankruptcy Court that is provided with your petition and during the case must be complete, accurate, and truthful.

2 – If you decide to file bankruptcy, everything you own and every debt you owe must be completely and accurately disclosed in the documents filed to commence this case. Bankruptcy is not a “pick and choose” proceeding. You cannot put some debts in and leave some debts out. Same thing with your assets. Everything must be included. You must value each item you own at the rate it would cost you to replace the item with one of the same condition, age, and usefulness.

3 – You will be required to complete a current monthly budget. This will be performed with your attorney. This budget will be based on your Current Monthly Income and your regular monthly expenses. This Current Monthly Income is more than just that paid to you by your employer and will include any income received in the past 6 months commencing with the first full month before your bankruptcy filing. This could include government assistance, social security, unemployment, or side jobs or any other sources. The regular expenses should be as close as possible and should be based on a reasonable inquiry.

4 – Information that you provide during your case may be audited pursuant to the provision of the Bankruptcy Code. Failure to provide such information may result in dismissal of your bankruptcy case or other sanctions, including jail time and other criminal sanctions.

5.-- You understand the replacement value of each asset listed in your petition must be stated when requested in the “documents filed to commence the case” after reasonable inquiry to establish the value. However, the document filed to commence the case is the petition, which requires no property valuation. Even if the provision is read to mean the schedules, those documents do not “request” replacement value and it is not relevant to at least some purposes of the schedules.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BANKRUPTCY ASSISTANCE SERVICES FROM AN ATTORNEY OR BANKRUPTCY PETITION PREPARER (required by Section 527(b))**

If you decide to seek bankruptcy relief, you can represent yourself, you can hire an attorney to represent you, or you can get help in some localities from a bankruptcy petition preparer who is not an attorney. **THE LAW REQUIRES AN ATTORNEY OR BANKRUPTCY PETITION PREPARER TO GIVE YOU A WRITTEN CONTRACT SPECIFYING WHAT THE ATTORNEY OR BANKRUPTCY PETITION PREPARER WILL DO FOR YOU AND HOW MUCH IT WILL COST.** Ask to see the contract before you hire anyone.

The following information helps you understand what must be done in a routine bankruptcy case to help you evaluate how much service you need. Although bankruptcy can be complex, many cases are routine.

Before filing a bankruptcy case, either you or your attorney should analyze your eligibility for different forms of debt relief available under the Bankruptcy Code and which form of relief is most likely to be beneficial for you. Be sure you understand the relief you can obtain and its limitations. To file a bankruptcy case, documents called a Petition, Schedules and Statement of Financial Affairs, as well as in some cases a Statement of Intention need to be prepared correctly and filed with the bankruptcy court.

You will have to pay a filing fee to the bankruptcy court. Once your case starts, you will have to attend the required first meeting of creditors where you may be questioned by a court official called a 'trustee' and by creditors. If you retain Michael Jones, he will thoroughly explain all of this to you.

If you choose to file a chapter 7 case, you may be asked by a creditor to reaffirm a debt. You may want help deciding whether to do so. A creditor is not permitted to coerce you into reaffirming your debts. A bankruptcy petition preparer is prohibited by law from helping you in any way to resolve this problem.

If you choose to file a chapter 13 case in which you repay your creditors what you can afford over 3 to 5 years, you may also want help with preparing your chapter 13 plan and with the confirmation hearing on your plan which will be before a bankruptcy judge. Again, a bankruptcy petition preparer is prohibited by law from assisting you in any way to do this; only an attorney may help you prepare and confirm your plan.

If you select another type of relief under the Bankruptcy Code other than chapter 7 or chapter 13, you will want to find out what should be done from someone familiar with that type of relief. The only other type of relief available to you under the Bankruptcy Code is under Chapter 11, and only an attorney may assist or represent you in these matters; it is recommended that you retain an attorney specifically qualified to deal in Chapter 11 matters if you choose to file under this chapter.

Your bankruptcy case may also involve litigation. You are generally permitted to represent yourself in litigation in bankruptcy court, but only attorneys, not bankruptcy petition preparers, can give you legal advice, as noted above.

**WARNING: Effective December 1, 2009, the 15-day deadline to file schedules and certain other documents under Bankruptcy Rule 1007(c) is shortened to 14 days. For further information, see note at bottom of page 2**

## **UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT NOTICE TO CONSUMER DEBTOR(S) UNDER §342(b) OF THE BANKRUPTCY CODE**

In accordance with § 342(b) of the Bankruptcy Code, this notice to individuals with primarily consumer debts: (1) Describes briefly the services available from credit counseling services; (2) Describes briefly the purposes, benefits and costs of the four types of bankruptcy proceedings you may commence; and (3) Informs you about bankruptcy crimes and notifies you that the Attorney General may examine all information you supply in connection with a bankruptcy case.

You are cautioned that bankruptcy law is complicated and not easily described. Thus, you may wish to seek the advice of an attorney to learn of your rights and responsibilities should you decide to file a petition. Court employees cannot give you legal advice. Notices from the bankruptcy court are sent to the mailing address you list on your bankruptcy petition. In order to ensure that you receive information about events concerning your case, Bankruptcy Rule 4002 requires that you notify the court of any changes in your address. If you are filing a **joint case** (a single bankruptcy case for two individuals married to each other), and each spouse lists the same mailing address on the bankruptcy petition, you and your spouse will generally receive a single copy of each notice mailed from the bankruptcy court in a jointly- addressed envelope, unless you file a statement with the court requesting that each spouse receive a separate copy of all notices.

### **1. Services Available from Credit Counseling Agencies**

**With limited exceptions, § 109(h) of the Bankruptcy Code requires that all individual debtors who file for bankruptcy relief on or after October 17, 2005, receive a briefing that outlines the available opportunities for credit counseling and provides assistance in performing a budget analysis.** The briefing must be given within 180 days **before** the bankruptcy filing. The briefing may be provided individually or in a group (including briefings conducted by telephone or on the Internet) and must be provided by a nonprofit budget and credit counseling agency approved by the United States trustee or bankruptcy administrator. The clerk of the bankruptcy court has a list that you may consult of the

approved budget and credit counseling agencies. Each debtor in a joint case must complete the briefing.

**In addition, after filing a bankruptcy case, an individual debtor generally must complete a financial management instructional course before he or she can receive a discharge.** The clerk also has a list of approved financial management instructional courses. Each debtor in a joint case must complete the course.

## **2. The Four Chapters of the Bankruptcy Code Available to Individual Consumer Debtors**

### **Chapter 7: Liquidation (\$245 filing fee, \$39 administrative fee, \$15 trustee surcharge: Total fee \$299)**

Chapter 7 is designed for debtors in financial difficulty who do not have the ability to pay their existing debts. Debtors whose debts are primarily consumer debts are subject to a “means test” designed to determine whether the case should be permitted to proceed under chapter 7. If your income is greater than the median income for your state of residence and family size, in some cases, the United States trustee (or bankruptcy administrator), the trustee, or creditors have the right to file a motion requesting that the court dismiss your case under § 707(b) of the Code. It is up to the court to decide whether the case should be dismissed.

Under chapter 7, you may claim certain of your property as exempt under governing law. A trustee may have the right to take possession of and sell the remaining property that is not exempt and use the sale proceeds to pay your creditors.

The purpose of filing a chapter 7 case is to obtain a discharge of your existing debts. If, however, you are found to have committed certain kinds of improper conduct described in the Bankruptcy Code, the court may deny your discharge and, if it does, the purpose for which you filed the bankruptcy petition will be defeated.

Even if you receive a general discharge, some particular debts are not discharged under the law. Therefore, you may still be responsible for most taxes and student loans; debts incurred to pay nondischargeable taxes; domestic support and property settlement obligations; most fines, penalties, forfeitures, and criminal restitution obligations; certain debts which are not properly listed in your bankruptcy papers; and debts for death or personal injury caused by operating a motor vehicle, vessel, or aircraft while intoxicated from alcohol or drugs. Also, if a creditor can prove that a debt arose from fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, or theft, or from a willful and malicious injury, the bankruptcy court may determine that the debt is not discharged.

### **Chapter 13: Repayment of All or Part of the Debts of an Individual with Regular Income (\$235 filing fee, \$39 administrative fee: Total fee \$274)**

Chapter 13 is designed for individuals with regular income who would like to pay all or part of their debts in installments over a period of time. You are only eligible for chapter 13 if your debts do not exceed certain dollar amounts set forth in the Bankruptcy Code.

Under chapter 13, you must file with the court a plan to repay your creditors all or part of the money that you owe them, using your future earnings. The period allowed by the court to repay your debts may be three years or five years, depending upon your income and other

factors. The court must approve your plan before it can take effect. After completing the payments under your plan, your debts are generally discharged except for domestic support obligations; most student loans; certain taxes; most criminal fines and restitution obligations; certain debts which are not properly listed in your bankruptcy papers; certain debts for acts that caused death or personal injury; and certain long term secured obligations.

**Chapter 11: Reorganization (\$1000 filing fee, \$39 administrative fee: Total fee \$1039)**

Chapter 11 is designed for the reorganization of a business but is also available to consumer debtors. Its provisions are quite complicated, and any decision by an individual to file a chapter 11 petition should be reviewed with an attorney.

**Chapter 12: Family Farmer or Fisherman (\$200 filing fee, \$39 administrative fee: Total fee \$239)**

Chapter 12 is designed to permit family farmers and fishermen to repay their debts over a period of time from future earnings and is similar to chapter 13. The eligibility requirements are restrictive, limiting its use to those whose income arises primarily from a family-owned farm or commercial fishing operation.

**3. Bankruptcy Crimes and Availability of Bankruptcy Papers to Law Enforcement Officials**

A person who knowingly and fraudulently conceals assets or makes a false oath or statement under penalty of perjury, either orally or in writing, in connection with a bankruptcy case is subject to a fine, imprisonment, or both. All information supplied by a debtor in connection with a bankruptcy case is subject to examination by the Attorney General acting through the Office of the United States Trustee, the Office of the United States Attorney, and other components and employees of the Department of Justice.

**WARNING:** Section 521(a)(1) of the Bankruptcy Code requires that you promptly file detailed information regarding your creditors, assets, liabilities, income, expenses and general financial condition. Your bankruptcy case may be dismissed if this information is not filed with the court within the time deadlines set by the Bankruptcy Code, the Bankruptcy Rules, and the local rules of the court. The documents and the deadlines for filing them are listed on Form B200, which is posted at [http://www.uscourts.gov/bkforms/bankruptcy\\_forms.html#procedure](http://www.uscourts.gov/bkforms/bankruptcy_forms.html#procedure).

**Many filing deadlines change on December 1, 2009. Of special note, 12 rules that set 15 days to act are amended to require action within 14 days, including Rule 1007(c), filing the initial case papers; Rule 3015(b), filing a chapter 13 plan; Rule 8009(a), filing appellate briefs; and Rules 1019, 1020, 2015, 2015.1, 2016, 4001, 4002, 6004, and 6007.**

**By signing below you acknowledge that you have received, read, and understood the foregoing.**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Debtor: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Joint Debtor: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_