

Recorder
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Section: In Brief

N.Y.'S KELLEY DRYE CLOSING L.A. OFFICE

By Alexei Oreskovic

Kelley Drye & Warren is closing its Los Angeles office, according to attorneys inside the firm.

The 25-attorney outpost of the New York firm will shut its doors on March 31. The news was announced to the Los Angeles staff and attorneys by the firm's managing partner in a meeting last week.

"Basically, it just wasn't as productive as hoped, and bringing in new people just hasn't revived it," said one attorney who attended the meeting.

A spokesperson for Kelley Drye did not return calls for comment.

Kelley Drye has more than 300 attorneys at offices in New York, Chicago and Washington, D.C. The firm gained a Los Angeles office in 1984 when it merged with Mori & Ota.

The office's main practices are litigation, corporate and labor and employment. With the closure of its Los Angeles outpost, Kelley Drye loses its West Coast presence.

A number of partners and associates at the Los Angeles office have left the firm in the past two years, said the attorney, and a lack of work meant that many attorneys in the corporate group were having trouble meeting their 2,000 billable hours goals. At its peak, said the attorney, the office had nearly 50 lawyers.

While a few attorneys have been offered jobs at other Kelley Drye offices, most will be let go, said the attorney. Associates will receive three months of severance pay, while staff severance will be doled out on a sliding scale.