

SANCTIONS AND ACTIONS AFFECTING LICENSURE (FY 2024)

ANDERSON, Lawrence John – Disbarment by Consent on February 22, 2024, effective April 22, 2024, for failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent intentionally misappropriated a portion of his clients' settlement funds for his personal use and benefit, and he subsequently deposited the exact amount he had misappropriated into his firm's attorney trust account to cover the shortfall.

BAKER, Kellee Genean – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on June 17, 2024, effective immediately, with the right to petition for reinstatement after one year, for filing frivolous pleadings; falsifying evidence, counseling or assisting a witness to testify falsely, or offering an inducement to a witness that is prohibited by law; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent was sued for breach of contract based on her failure to repay a loan and subsequently filed a bankruptcy petition in bad faith for the purpose of delaying the forced sale of her property. The Respondent's bankruptcy petition was dismissed with prejudice, and she was barred from refile for one year.

BIGHAM, Ellen F. – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on July 17, 2023, effective immediately, with the right to petition for reinstatement after two years, for failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel, knowingly failing to respond to Bar Counsel, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent failed to provide any services of value, failed to refund the fees paid by the client, and knowingly misrepresented to Bar Counsel that she did not know why the immigration court rejected her client's I-485 application.

BOBOTEK, Henry Mark – Reprimand by Consent on January 19, 2024, for failing to represent his client competently, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, and failing to comply with the record-keeping requirements of a trustee. When the Respondent, as trustee, attempted to prepare a formal accounting, he discovered that he could not account for approximately \$30,000.00 that should have been transferred from one trust to another. The Respondent promptly reported that finding to Bar Counsel and used his personal funds to replace the amount that should have been transferred.

BUIE III, William Roosevelt – Suspension by Consent for 180 days on January 19, 2024, stayed in favor of one year of probation with the terms contained in the Probation Agreement, for knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel and committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as an attorney. The Respondent submitted a false loan application.

CHANG, Elaine H. – Suspension by Consent for sixty days on February 16, 2024, stayed in favor of six months of probation with the terms contained in the Probation Agreement. The Respondent provided legal support to foreign-born employees of a corporation based in New York City. The Respondent failed to obtain a written waiver of a potential conflict of interest in representing her

employer and an employee of her employer, and she failed to adequately communicate with her client.

DAVIS, Donald Dorin – Indefinite Suspension on October 23, 2023, effective immediately, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently; failing to adequately communicate with his client; collecting unreasonable fees; failing to take steps to protect his client's interest upon termination of the representation; knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel; knowingly failing to respond to Bar Counsel; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent failed to fully render agreed-upon legal services and communicate with his client; abandoned the client, forcing the client to seek successor counsel; failed to refund any unearned fees; made intentional misrepresentations to his client and the Commission; and failed to cooperate with the Commission during the investigatory process.

DAVIS, Richmond Timothy Paul – Commission Reprimand on August 23, 2023, for failing to represent his client competently and failing to comply with attorney trust account record-keeping requirements. Without seeking and receiving prior court approval, the Respondent improperly received estate funds as fees and improperly deposited the estate funds into his attorney trust account. Eventually, the Respondent sought and received court approval for a portion of the fees, and, after his removal, the Respondent delivered a check to the successor Personal Representative for the difference between the total received by the Respondent and the amount of fees approved by the court.

DENNIS, Jason Anthony – Commission Reprimand on October 23, 2023, for failing to represent his client competently and failing to adequately communicate with his client. In an immigration matter, the Respondent failed to inform his client of the effect that the filing of her Adjustment of Status petition would have on her current I-Visa. His lack of competence eventually resulted in Customs and Border Patrol denying his client reentry to the United States.

DONNELLY, Vernon Charles – Disbarred on February 27, 2024, for failing to adequately communicate with his client; entering into a business transaction with a current client without obtaining the client's informed consent; filing frivolous pleadings; failing to maintain candor to the tribunal; knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel; committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as an attorney; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent entered into a loan agreement with a client without first advising the client, in writing, of the desirability of seeking the advice of independent counsel regarding the transaction; failed to repay the loan on time; continually refused to fully repay the loan; failed to communicate with the client regarding his proposed change to the loan; and misrepresented the terms of the loan agreement before the court, Bar Counsel, and during the disciplinary hearing.

EMBRY, Akia Yvonne – Commission Reprimand on December 21, 2023, for failing to adequately communicate with her client, failing to safekeep funds and make required deposits in an attorney trust account, failing to promptly deliver funds her client was entitled to receive, failing to take

steps to protect her client's interest upon termination of the representation, and failing to maintain required financial records of an attorney trust account. The incarcerated client's family retained the Respondent to represent the client in a criminal matter and made several payments. The Respondent failed to safekeep the payments in an attorney trust account and instead deposited these payments into an operating account without obtaining written, informed consent from the client or the family. The Respondent failed to provide a refund and failed to provide invoices or timesheets to the family upon their request.

FARMER, George L. – Indefinite Suspension on July 10, 2023, effective immediately, for failing to adequately communicate with his clients, collecting and billing for unreasonable fees, representing two clients involving a conflict of interest, failing to withdraw from representing his clients when continued representation resulted in violation of the Maryland Attorneys' Rules of Professional Conduct, filing a frivolous lawsuit, and engaging in the unauthorized practice of law. The Respondent failed to explain to either client the conflict of interest presented by his dual representation and failed to obtain the clients' informed consent, confirmed in writing, to continue with the representation. He also failed to provide the clients with any services of value.

FINK, David E. – Commission Reprimand on June 24, 2024, for failing to comply with requirements regarding the professional independence of an attorney. The Respondent and a non-attorney worked out an arrangement for compensation wherein the Respondent would lease telephone lines from the non-attorney at a highly inflated rate for the purpose of compensating the non-attorney for client referrals. Potential clients would call, the Respondent would answer, introduce himself, and then offer to represent the potential clients who did not know they were calling the Respondent. If the potential client was not sure about hiring the Respondent, the non-attorney would contact the potential client to reassure them.

GOLDSTEIN, Jeffrey Stephen – Disbarment by Consent on March 19, 2024, effective March 31, 2024, for failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account; failing to comply with attorney trust account record-keeping and prohibited transaction requirements; making cash withdrawals from his attorney trust account; using trust money for purposes other than the purpose for which the money is entrusted; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent routinely failed to safeguard client funds, created a negative balance in his attorney trust account on multiple occasions, and withdrew funds from his attorney trust account before earning them.

HAMLIN, Derrick G. – Commission Reprimand on November 27, 2023, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent was held in contempt of court for willfully failing to appear for court when he was aware of the time and place of the proceeding and had a duty to appear.

JOHNSON, Anitha Wileen – Disbarred on January 19, 2024, effective immediately, in a reciprocal action from the District of Columbia, for failing to represent her clients competently and diligently; failing to abide by the scope of representation; failing to adequately communicate with her clients;

collecting unreasonable fees; failing to provide a written retainer agreement when collecting a contingency fee; disclosing confidential client information; failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account and failing to promptly remove earned fees from her attorney trust account; failing to take steps to protect her client's interest upon termination of the representation; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that seriously interferes with the administration of justice. The Respondent engaged in misconduct during her representation of clients in a civil rights action alleging excessive use of force by police, a divorce proceeding, a medical malpractice matter, and a custody and personal injury matter.

JOHNSON, Bruce Allen, Jr. – Suspension by Consent for sixty days on February 16, 2024, stayed in favor of one year of probation with the terms contained in the Probation Agreement, for failing to represent his client competently, failing to adequately communicate the fees for his services to his client, failing to provide invoices or time records to support his fees, and making payments to himself in attorney's fees from his client's trust funds while serving as the trustee of the trust.

JOHNSON, Marlene A. – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on September 1, 2023, effective October 31, 2023, for failing to represent her clients competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with her clients, collecting unreasonable fees, failing to take steps to protect her client's interest upon termination of the representation, engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, and failing to comply with attorney trust account record-keeping requirements. The Respondent utilized the services of an independent contractor to assist in her law practice and, on two separate occasions, gave the independent contractor payment checks drawn on the Respondent's operating account at times when that account lacked sufficient funds to cover the checks. In addition, the Respondent engaged in professional misconduct while representing clients in three separate civil matters.

JONES, Gregory Wayne – Suspension for ninety days on July 12, 2023, stayed in favor of one year of probation with the terms contained in the Probation Agreement, for failing to represent his clients competently and diligently; failing to abide by the scope of representation; failing to adequately communicate with his clients; charging unreasonable fees; failing to communicate to his client the basis of the fee; failing to safekeep unearned fees in his attorney trust account and failing to obtain his clients' informed consent, confirmed in writing, to hold the funds outside of trust; failing to take steps to protect his client's interest upon termination of the representation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent filed a plea in a criminal case without his client's knowledge or consent, failed to act with diligence and competence in two client matters, and charged and retained unreasonable flat fees.

KURTYKA, Brian Martin – Disbarment by Consent on March 20, 2024, effective immediately, for committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as an attorney; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent pled guilty to two counts of embezzlement and one count of forgery.

LAMM, Jason D. – Reprimand by Consent on June 17, 2024, in a reciprocal action from the Attorney Discipline Probable Cause Committee of the Supreme Court of Arizona, for representing a client involving a conflict of interest and failing to uphold his duty to a former client. The Respondent represented a client in two DUI cases and later represented that former client's ex-spouse in their divorce matter where the former client's substance abuse was at issue.

LOWE, Allen Jay – Commission Reprimand on August 23, 2023, for failing to represent his client diligently and failing to promptly deliver funds that his client and third parties were entitled to receive. For over three years, the Respondent failed to undertake efforts to reach agreements with his client's medical providers in a workers' compensation case, and a portion of his client's settlement funds remained in his firm's attorney trust account during this time.

LUKE, Purcell S. – Reprimand by Consent on September 1, 2023, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his client, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, failing to take steps to protect his client's interest upon termination of the representation, knowingly failing to respond to Bar Counsel, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent failed to deposit or maintain the unearned portion of fees in an attorney trust account and repeatedly failed to respond to his client's reasonable requests for information regarding the status of the representation. In another matter, the Respondent repeatedly failed to respond to Bar Counsel's requests for information.

MOIR, Thomas Ian – Disbarment by Consent on March 21, 2024, effective immediately, in a reciprocal action from the District of Columbia for committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as an attorney; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent pled guilty to one count of child pornography in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2252(a)(2).

PAUL, Dana Andrew – Suspension by Consent for thirty days on September 25, 2023, effective immediately, in a reciprocal action from the District of Columbia, for disclosing confidential client information.

PIERRE, Marylin – Reprimand on August 16, 2023, for making a statement that she knew to be false or with reckless disregard as to its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge or of a candidate for judicial office; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice; and providing incomplete and intentionally misleading information in connection with her application for admission to the New York Bar. The Respondent made a knowing and intentional misrepresentation that impugned the integrity of sitting judges during an election campaign and made a knowing and intentional misrepresentation by omission of information on an out-of-state bar application.

ROSIER, Michael Samuel – Suspension by Consent for thirty days on October 20, 2023, stayed in favor of six months of probation with the terms contained in the Probation Agreement, for failing to adequately communicate with his client; failing to communicate to his client the scope of the representation and the basis or rate of the fee and expenses for which his client would be

responsible before or within a reasonable time after commencing the representation; failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account; failing to take steps to protect his client's interest upon termination of the representation; communicating about the subject of representation with a person known to be represented by counsel; engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice; and failing to comply with attorney trust account record-keeping and monthly reconciliation requirements. The Respondent failed to respond to his client's requests for information in a timely manner, failed to provide a full accounting for the funds paid and the services provided until several months after the representation, and failed to maintain contemporary reconciliation reports for his attorney trust account and client matter records regarding the receipt, maintenance, and disbursement of client funds.

ROSSBACH, Natasha Veytsman – Indefinite Suspension on August 31, 2023, effective immediately, for failing to represent her clients competently and diligently; failing to adequately communicate with her clients; collecting unreasonable fees; failing to take steps to protect her clients' interests upon termination of the representation; knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel; knowingly failing to respond to Bar Counsel; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. In two bankruptcy matters, the Respondent failed to take meaningful action to advance the clients' cases, failed to communicate with the clients, and failed to appear for scheduled meetings.

SAYADIAN, Nema – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on December 22, 2023, effective immediately, with the right to petition for reinstatement conditioned on the satisfactory report of a mental health or substance abuse professional preapproved by Bar Counsel, for failing to represent his clients competently and diligently; failing to abide by the scope of the representation; failing to adequately communicate with his clients; practicing law in a jurisdiction in violation of the regulation of the legal profession in that jurisdiction; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent engaged in professional misconduct while representing clients in personal injury matters, including failing to file suit before the expiration of the statute of limitations on behalf of three clients, failing to pay healthcare providers in two client matters, failing to settle claims when instructed to do so in two client matters, and failing to timely disburse client funds in two client matters.

SHIELDS, Theodore Alan – Commission Reprimand on August 23, 2023, for committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as an attorney; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent entered an Alford Plea to one count of indecent exposure and was found guilty. Thereafter, the Respondent failed to report the judgment of conviction to Bar Counsel.

SOMERLOCK, Carl David – Reprimand by Consent on October 30, 2023, for engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent was indicted by the Grand Jury for the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland and charged with multiple firearms offenses. The Respondent entered into a Deferred Prosecution Agreement and submitted to an additional year of pretrial supervision. Pursuant to the agreement, the charges were dismissed.

TAPPAN, Richard J. – Suspension by Consent for six months on May 31, 2024, effective *nunc pro tunc* to November 1, 2023, in a reciprocal action from the District of Columbia for violating the District of Columbia Rules of Professional Conduct. The Respondent failed to provide competent representation, failed to act with reasonable promptness, charged unreasonable fees, and failed to maintain complete records of client funds.

TATUNG, Celestine – Reprimand by Consent on August 15, 2023, for failing to represent his client diligently, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, and failing to adequately communicate with his client. In an immigration matter, the Respondent failed to adequately communicate with his client regarding the status of his case and failed to appear for a hearing, instead sending another attorney not associated with the Respondent’s firm to appear on behalf of his client. After the court denied his client’s asylum application and ordered his removal from the United States, the Respondent failed to consult with his client about his appeal rights, failed to issue any refund, and failed to take any remedial action.

TEITELBAUM, George Alan – Suspension for thirty days on May 31, 2024, stayed in favor of one year of probation with the terms imposed by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, in a reciprocal action from the District of Columbia for failing to appropriately safekeep funds. The Respondent failed to keep complete records of account funds in a probate matter.

TOMLIN, Valeria Nolita – Commission Reprimand on April 1, 2024, for failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account. Between July 2019 and June 2020, the Respondent maintained negative client ledger balances, commingled funds, and made one cash withdrawal. Additionally, the Respondent failed to create and maintain client ledgers for all clients, failed to create and maintain accurate client ledgers reflecting all deposit and disbursement items for other client matters, and failed to reconcile her trust account.

TREZEVANT, William Francis – Indefinite Suspension on July 7, 2023, with the right to petition for reinstatement in ninety days, for representing a client when the representation would result in violation of the Maryland Attorneys’ Rules of Professional Conduct; failing to maintain candor to the tribunal; knowingly making false statements of material fact or law to third persons; engaging in the unauthorized practice of law; knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel; committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as an attorney; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. The Respondent lives in the District of Columbia and is not admitted to the Maryland Bar. The Respondent represented a relative in her custody case in Maryland and did not inform the attorney that he replaced that he was not licensed in Maryland. The Respondent appeared at a hearing without advising the court that he was not licensed in Maryland and without seeking admission *pro hac vice*. In subsequent communications with opposing counsel and in a later court proceeding, the Respondent knowingly and intentionally claimed, falsely, that he had orally moved for admission *pro hac vice* at the prior hearing and that his motion had been granted. He then falsely told Bar Counsel that he had never practiced law in Maryland and that he had made his role clear to the court in the custody case.

WEINBERG, Asher Newton – Indefinite Suspension on August 31, 2023, effective immediately, with the right to petition for reinstatement after six months, for failing to maintain candor to the tribunal; making statements that he knew to be false or with reckless disregard as to their truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of judges; engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation; and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. In his representation of a client in a criminal matter, the Respondent made false statements in pleadings regarding the victim's ability to identify the client as the perpetrator of crimes against the victim; knowingly and recklessly made false statements that impugned the integrity of various judges who conducted proceedings in the criminal case against his client; and, in committing the aforementioned acts, committed misconduct that had the potential to bring the legal system into disrepute. On February 21, 2024, the Supreme Court of Maryland ordered that the Respondent's suspension would be stayed in favor of six months of probation, subject to the condition that the Respondent comply with the Maryland Attorneys' Rules of Professional Conduct.