

*People v. Sophia Juliana Johnson. 24PDJ026. April 22, 2024.*

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' stipulation and imposed reciprocal discipline, suspending Sophia Juliana Johnson (attorney registration number 56244) from the practice of law in Colorado for one year. Johnson's suspension takes effect on May 28, 2024.

This reciprocal discipline case arose out of discipline imposed on Johnson in Louisiana. In October 2023, Johnson's Louisiana law license was placed on interim suspension. Then, on February 6, 2024, the Louisiana Supreme Court granted Johnson's consent to discipline with Louisiana disciplinary authorities; that tribunal suspended Johnson for one year, retroactive to October 12, 2023—the date Johnson's interim suspension began.

Johnson's Louisiana discipline was premised on her failure to timely file expert disclosures in a civil matter. When she realized her mistake, she falsified an email that purported to timely make the disclosures and then sought sanctions against her opponents when they refused to withdraw their motion in limine to exclude the experts. Johnson's opponents and her own firm separately uncovered her deception. She initially denied any misconduct but eventually admitted to it. She prepared a filing disclosing her misconduct to the presiding court, but before she could file it the court granted her opponents' motion in limine. Johnson was terminated from her firm. Her clients sought new representation, and the clients' subsequent counsel was able to obtain relief from the motion in limine and to make the expert disclosures. Johnson's misconduct violated Louisiana rules of professional conduct prohibiting a lawyer from lodging frivolous claims, from making false claims to a tribunal, from falsifying evidence, from making false statements of material fact, from prejudicing the administration of justice, and from attempting to violate the Louisiana rules of professional conduct.

Johnson self-reported her misconduct to Louisiana disciplinary authorities and timely self-reported her Louisiana discipline to Colorado disciplinary authorities.

Through this conduct, Johnson engaged in conduct constituting grounds for reciprocal discipline under C.R.C.P. 242.21, which calls for imposition of the same discipline as that imposed in Louisiana.

The case file is public per C.R.C.P. 242.41(a)(2).