SUPREME COURT, STATE OF COLORADO ORIGINAL PROCEEDING IN DISCIPLINE BEFORE THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING DISCIPLINARY JUDGE 1300 BROADWAY, SUITE 250 DENVER, CO 80203	
Complainant: THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF COLORADO **Respondent:** DARLENE MANN, #36328	Case Number: **26PDJ20**

OPINION APPROVING STIPULATION TO DISCIPLINE

SUMMARY

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved a stipulation to discipline and suspended Darlene Mann (attorney registration number 36328) for fifteen months. The suspension takes effect immediately.

Between 2022 and 2024, Respondent engaged in misconduct in five client matters. In one matter, Respondent failed to file required documents, notices of hearings, and a joint trial management certificate in her client's domestic relations case despite the trial court's orders that she file the documents. In another client's dissolution of marriage case, Respondent did not set an initial status conference despite the trial court's multiple orders that she do so, causing the case to de dismissed. Respondent also did not respond to opposing counsel's communications about re-opening the client's matter.

In a third dissolution of marriage case, Respondent failed to comply with the trial court's order that she provide notice of mediation. Moreover, she did not schedule mediation and did not substantively advance the matter, causing the trial court to dismiss the case for failure to prosecute. Throughout the representation, Respondent failed to notify her client about the status of the case, including that it had been dismissed. On multiple occasions, Respondent did not respond to her client's requests for information.

On April 24, 2024, Respondent was suspended from the practice of law for twenty-six months, effective May 29, 2024. Respondent did not notify her client or opposing counsel of her suspension as her disciplinary orders required. Respondent also failed to provide notice of her suspension to opposing counsel and the trial courts in two cases for a different client. Respondent did not withdraw from those matters before her suspension took effect and failed to include the

cases in her required notices that she filed the Presiding Disciplinary Judge. In addition, Respondent did not pay the costs of her disciplinary case for nearly two years.

Through this misconduct, Mann violated Colo. RPC 1.3 (a lawyer must act with reasonable diligence and promptness when representing a client); Colo. RPC 1.4(a)(3) (a lawyer must keep a client reasonably informed about the status of the matter); Colo. RPC 1.4(a)(4) (a lawyer must promptly comply with reasonable requests for information); and Colo. RPC 3.4(c) (a lawyer must not knowingly disobey an obligation under the rules of a tribunal).

THE PARTIES' STIPULATION

On August 17, 2026, Michele L. Melnick of the Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel ("the People") and Nathan A. Bruggeman, counsel for Darlene Mann ("Respondent"), filed a "Stipulation to Discipline Pursuant to C.R.C.P. 242.19" with Presiding Disciplinary Judge Bryon M. Large ("the Court").

Stipulated Facts and Rule Violations[1]

Respondent was admitted to practice law in Colorado on May 18, 2005, under attorney registration number 36328. She is thus subject to the Court's jurisdiction.

J.B. Matter

Respondent represented J.B. in his dissolution of marriage case in Denver District Court. On March 7, 2023, the parties appeared at an initial status conference, where the trial court set March 24, 2023, as the deadline for the parties to file sworn financial statements. During the conference, the trial court scheduled the parties' permanent orders hearing for June 6, 2023, and directed Respondent to provide notice to J.B.'s spouse.

Respondent filed J.B.'s sworn financial statement on May 10, 2023, after the established deadline. On May 16, 2023, the trial court issued an order directing the parties to comply with the governing case management order after finding that both parties had failed to comply with the order. Specifically, the trial court found Respondent did not timely file a certificate of compliance with mandatory financial disclosures, a parenting plan, and a separation agreement. In its order, the trial court reminded the parties that a joint trial management certificate would need to be filed no later than seven days prior to the scheduled hearing. The order included the trial court's

[1] The People filed their complaint in this matter on June 2, 2026. Respondent affirms the factual allegations in the People's complaint are true. The Court thus draws its recitation of facts from the People's complaint.

templates for the missing filings and for a certificate demonstrating compliance with alternative dispute resolution requirements. The trial court set a deadline for the parties to comply with the case management order by June 1, 2023.

Respondent did not comply with any portion of the trial court's order and failed to file the requisite documents before the established deadline. Nor did Respondent file a joint trial management certificate or any other motion seeking relief from the trial court's order.

On June 6, 2023, rather than hold the permanent orders hearing, the trial court converted the hearing to a status conference, where it set a parenting schedule in the case. During the conference, the trial court directed Respondent to file a proposed child support worksheet and a proposed support order and to provide social security numbers for the minor children no later than June 9, 2023. The trial court reset the permanent orders hearing to October 10, 2023, and set a remote-appearance pretrial conference for September 22, 2023. The trial court directed Respondent to draft the notice for the reset pretrial conference and the permanent orders hearing.

On June 7, 2023, the trial court issued written temporary orders. The orders warned that the trial court would issue a child support order without J.B.'s financial information if Respondent failed to file the required documents by June 9, 2023. Respondent did not timely file the documents.

In an order dated September 6, 2023, the trial court found that Respondent failed to comply with its temporary orders and issued temporary child support orders. The trial court again directed Respondent to provide notice of the pretrial conference and permanent orders hearing by September 7, 2023. Two days later, the trial court's clerk issued notice for the pretrial conference and permanent orders hearing.

On September 22, 2023, Respondent and J.B. appeared at the pretrial conference. During the conference, Respondent stated that she was preparing the parenting plan and separation agreement. She also stated that she believed she previously filed J.B.'s sworn financial statement and certificate of compliance for J.B.'s financial disclosures. Respondent said that she would file the documents immediately following the status conference. The trial court found Respondent had not complied with its orders and directed her to file a joint trial management certificate. The same day, Respondent filed J.B.'s sworn financial statement, parenting plan, property and financial agreement, and certificate of compliance with mandatory financial disclosures.

Under the governing case management order, Respondent was required to file a joint trial management certificate no later than seven days prior to the permanent orders hearing. But Respondent failed to file the certificate and did not seek an extension to comply with the trial court's orders.

Respondent's misconduct in J.B.'s matter violated Colo. RPC 1.3, which requires lawyers to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client; and Colo. RPC 3.4(c), which prohibits lawyers from knowingly disobeying an obligation under the rules of a tribunal.

P.A.C. Matter

On September 16, 2023, Respondent filed a petition for dissolution of marriage for her client, P.A.C., in Denver District Court. Two days later, the trial court issued a case management order outlining specific obligations, including that Respondent was required to set an initial status conference no later than October 7, 2023. But Respondent did not set the conference.

On October 9, 2023, the trial court issued an order to show cause. The order required Respondent to set the initial status conference within thirty-five days and warned that her failure to do so could result in the case being dismissed without further notice. Respondent again failed to set the status conference, and on November 13, 2023, the trial court dismissed P.A.C.'s divorce case.

On December 11, 2023, Respondent filed a motion for a civil protection order and a forthwith motion seeking to reopen the divorce matter. The next day, the trial court issued a temporary protection order and set the permanent protection order hearing for December 18, 2023. In addition, the trial court stated that it would reopen the divorce matter but required, among other things, that Respondent set the initial status conference within ten days. The trial court denied the permanent protection order on December 18, 2023.

Also on December 18, 2023, Respondent emailed her opposing counsel with proposed dates for the initial status conference. Opposing counsel responded with her availability on two of the proposed dates. Respondent did not respond. On December 26, 2023, opposing counsel again emailed Respondent to follow up on the setting, but Respondent did not respond. On December 28, 2023, the trial court again dismissed P.A.C.'s matter.

On January 3, 2024, opposing counsel emailed Respondent to follow up on issues, including setting an initial status conference. Respondent replied two days later advising that she would discuss a setting with the clerk.

Opposing counsel again emailed Respondent on January 12, 2024, but Respondent did not respond. On January 25, 2024, opposing counsel emailed Respondent, advising she intended to file a status report with the trial court which would include an indication that Respondent was not communicating about setting the initial status conference. Respondent replied, indicating that she would be in court that day and would set the conference. Opposing counsel responded five minutes later and advised Respondent that she would wait and get the conference dates from Respondent. Respondent went to the courthouse that same day and learned the case was closed. She emailed opposing counsel, stating that the "[m]atter has been closed for awhile [sic] now. We need to file a stipulated motion to reopen the matter."[2]

[2] Pet. ¶ 76.

Opposing counsel responded the next day and advised that she would move to reopen the case and seek attorney's fees unless Respondent filed a motion to reopen no later than the following Monday.

On February 5, 2024, P.A.C. filed a new petition pro se. On February 7, 2024, opposing counsel filed a motion to reopen the original matter and asked the trial court to award attorney's fees in her client's favor. On February 11, 2024, the trial court reopened the matter but deferred on the issue of attorney's fees until Respondent's response deadline of February 22, 2024.

On February 20, 2024, opposing counsel filed "Notice of Initial Status Conference," reflecting that the conference was set for March 28, 2024. Opposing counsel noted four fruitless attempts to confer with Respondent over three different days.

On February 23, 2024, one day after the trial court's deadline, Respondent filed her response.

In P.A.C.'s matter, Respondent violated Colo. RPC 1.3 and Colo. RPC 3.4(c).

G.E.L. Matters

On June 28, 2023, Respondent began representing G.E.L. for a civil protection hearing in G.E.L.'s post-decree case in Denver District Court. Respondent entered her appearance in the case on July 7, 2023. On October 13, 2023, the trial court held the permanent protection order hearing, granted the permanent protection order, and closed the case.

On November 8, 2023, Respondent filed a verified motion to modify division of property. Respondent stated in the conferral statement that she did not confer with G.E.L.'s former spouse before filing the motion. In the motion, Respondent asserted that the parties' separation agreement and sworn financial statements failed to list a property in Englewood, Colorado, and that G.E.L.'s former spouse failed to disclose a house and land in Durango, Mexico. The trial court reopened the case on November 9, 2023.

On February 26, 2024, the trial court set a hearing on G.E.L.'s verified motion for March 21, 2024. On February 27, 2024, Jeffrey List filed an entry of appearance on behalf of G.E.L.'s former spouse.

On March 20, 2024, List sought to continue the motions hearing, citing a need for a business valuation. Respondent did not oppose the request. Two days later, the trial court granted the motion to continue and set the matter for hearing on June 24, 2024. The governing case management order required the parties to file a joint trial management certificate no later than seven days prior to the hearing.

On April 24, 2024, the PDJ approved a stipulation to discipline in case number 23PDJ022 and suspended Respondent's law license for twenty-six months, effective May 29, 2024. The order required Respondent to complete the notifications listed in C.R.C.P. 242.32(b)-(e) concerning the winding up of her practice, including by notifying her current clients, no later than May 8, 2024. The rule required that Respondent notify List in writing of her suspension and her inability to continue representing G.E.L. after the effective date of suspension and provide List with G.E.L.'s contact information. Respondent was also required to notify the trial court of her suspension. But Respondent failed to provide the required notices by the deadline.

On May 28, 2024, one day before her suspension took effect, Respondent orally notified List of her disciplinary suspension and her intention of withdraw from the case. She did not provide List with written notice of her suspension.

On May 29, 2024, Respondent's suspension from the practice of law became effective. She failed to withdraw from G.E.L.'s case before that date, however, and she remained the counsel on record. Respondent was also required to pay the costs in her disciplinary matter by the effective date of her suspension but did not do so until almost two years later.

In addition, within fourteen days of the effective date of her suspension, or by June 12, 2024, Respondent was required to file an affidavit under C.R.C.P. 242.32(f) attesting to her compliance with the windup rules and identifying her pending matters and clients. In her affidavit, Respondent did not identify G.E.L.'s matter as a pending matter.

On June 23, 2024, List moved to continue the motions hearing set for the next day. In the motion, List stated that he had not conferred with G.E.L. or Respondent because Respondent was suspended but had not withdrawn from the case. List further explained that he avoided contacting G.E.L. directly because he did not know whether Respondent's representation had formally terminated. On June 24, 2024, the trial court granted the continuance and ordered Respondent withdrawn from the matter.

Meanwhile, on March 13, 2024, Respondent entered her appearance on G.E.L.'s behalf in a civil action filed in Adams County District Court. On May 17, 2024, opposing counsel filed notice of a case management conference set for July 3, 2024, as well as a proposed case management order. In the proposed order, opposing counsel stated that he repeatedly but unsuccessfully tried to engage with Respondent in preparing the document. Opposing counsel also advised that he and Respondent did not complete a conferral required under C.R.C.P. 16.

After Respondent's twenty-six-month suspension took effect on May 29, 2024, Respondent failed to notify opposing counsel of her suspension or withdraw from the case.

Respondent's misconduct in G.E.L's cases violated Colo. RPC 3.4(c).

M.G.G. Matter

On January 31, 2022, M.G.G. filed a petition for the dissolution of marriage in Garfield County District Court. On March 2, 2022, Monica Groom entered her appearance on behalf of M.G.G.'s spouse.

M.G.G. hired Respondent on September 13, 2023. The same day, Respondent entered her appearance and requested an extension to schedule mediation. In her request, Respondent misinformed the trial court that the "parties have been unable to locate [a] mediator and schedule mediation. I would work with opposing counsel as I have obtained two bilingual mediators who offer virtual mediation with great success."[3] Respondent had not spoken with Groom prior to requesting the extension. After receiving Respondent's entry of appearance, Groom emailed Respondent and advised that the parties did in fact mediate and had some agreements. Groom also offered to contact the mediator and request a certificate verifying the parties' attendance at mediation.

The trial court granted the motion for an extension on September 14, 2023, and ordered the parties to provide notice of mediation within seven days.

On September 27, 2023, M.G.G. texted Respondent to request a meeting. Respondent replied on October 2, 2023, telling M.G.G. that she was on the telephone and had another person waiting in her office. Respondent asked whether M.G.G. had an emergency requiring immediate attention.

On October 11, 2023, a family court facilitator emailed the parties to request an update on mediation. The family court facilitator explained that the trial court's order of September 14, 2023, order granting Respondent's extension request required that the parties file a notice of mediation within seven days, but that the required notice had not been filled.

On October 13, 2023, M.G.G. sent Respondent two text messages asking what could be done to finalize her divorce as soon as possible. M.G.G. expressed urgency about completing the divorce and asked to discuss the matter with Respondent. Four days later, Respondent replied that she was attempting to complete the divorce through the trial court without requiring M.G.G.'s appearance. Respondent also stated that the parties had reached no agreements and that the principal outstanding issue was determining ownership of a mobile home. M.G.G. agreed with Respondent's proposed approach.

On October 20, 2023, Respondent texted M.G.G., stating that she was attempting to contact Groom to complete the proceeding because Respondent was in poor health. M.G.G. acknowledged receipt of message.

[3] Pet. ¶ 176.

On November 3, 2023, the trial court issued a notice of dismissal for failure to prosecute. In the notice, the trial court advised that it would dismiss M.G.G.'s case without prejudice in thirty-five days, or on December 8, 2023, unless M.G.G. filed a written motion showing cause why the matter should not be dismissed for failure to comply with the trial court's orders , including the order of September 14, 2023, granting the request for an extension to schedule mediation.

On November 24, 2023, M.G.G. texted Respondent requesting an update on her case. Three days later, Respondent replied to say that she would contact M.G.G. later.

On November 29, 2023, Respondent emailed Groom about the anticipated dismissal and acknowledged the deadline to complete mediation by December 8, 2023. Respondent provided the name and email address of a proposed mediator and asked that mediation be scheduled as soon as possible. Respondent also requested documentation establishing ownership of the parties' mobile home. On December 4, 2023, Groom agreed and said she would contact her client to request the documentation. But Respondent failed to schedule a second mediation or otherwise advance M.G.G.'s case. On December 7, 2023, Respondent and Groom exchanged several text messages. Groom emailed Respondent the mobile home ownership documentation and later asked Respondent to confirm receipt. Respondent did not reply.

On December 13, 2023, Groom emailed Respondent proposing a joint status report to prevent the case from being dismissed. Respondent did not respond. On December 15, 2023, the trial court dismissed the matter. Respondent did not inform M.G.G. that her case had been dismissed.

On December 21, 2023, Groom emailed Respondent stating that Respondent could file a motion to reopen the case as unopposed. Respondent did not reopen the case.

On January 10, 2024, M.G.G. texted Respondent for an update. Respondent replied that she had news about the case and said she would call M.G.G. in twenty minutes. On February 13, 2024, M.G.G. texted Respondent, again asking to discuss her case. Respondent told M.G.G. that she was seeing a doctor, and M.G.G. stated they could speak later. M.G.G. renewed her request one week later, and again three days after that, on February 23, 2024. Respondent replied, telling M.G.G. that she had news but that she could not talk at the moment, and asking if she could call M.G.G. the following day. M.G.G. confirmed that she would be available to speak with Respondent the next day.

On February 27, 2024, Respondent emailed Groom explaining that she was recovering from an illness, changing physicians, and undergoing additional medical testing. Respondent also told Groom that she had identified an evaluator for the parties' mobile home, provided his contact information, and asked whether Groom would agree to use him to appraise the property. Groom replied that she would file an unopposed motion to reopen the dissolution proceeding, explaining to the trial court that circumstances beyond the parties' control had interfered with the case and that the parties intended to reschedule mediation and resolve the matter. Groom asked whether Respondent agreed with that approach. Respondent did not reply.

A month later, Respondent emailed Groom asking whether she had filed the motion to reopen the case. Respondent also asked whether Groom could prepare a separation agreement so the parties could submit an affidavit for a decree without appearing in court. Groom replied that day requesting additional information about Respondent's medical circumstances to support the proposed motion to reopen. Respondent did not reply. The dissolution proceeding remained closed.

On April 18, 2024, Respondent and the People filed a stipulation discipline with the PDJ. The PDJ approved the stipulation on April 24, 2024, suspending Respondent from the practice of law for twenty-six months, effective May 29, 2024. The PDJ's order required Respondent to wind up her practice, provide notice of her suspension to current clients, and file lists of clients and copies of the client notices with the PDJ's office within fourteen days after the effective date of the suspension.

Respondent stopped communicating with M.G.G. after April 2024. Respondent's twenty-six-month suspension took effect on May 29, 2024. Respondent did not provide M.G.G. or Groom with written notice of her suspension and failed to submit the required client notices to the PDJ's office by the deadline in June 2024.

On June 28, 2024, Groom texted Respondent asking whether she had a new email address because an earlier email had been returned with a notice indicating that Respondent's email account was closed. Respondent replied, "I'm suspended." When Groom asked what Respondent meant, Respondent explained that she had been suspended for two years.

Respondent's misconduct in M.G.G.'s case violated Colo. RPC 1.3; Colo. RPC 1.4(a)(3), which requires lawyers to keep clients reasonably informed about the status of their matters; Colo. RPC 1.4(a)(4), which requires lawyers to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information; and Colo. RPC 3.4(c).

SANCTIONS ANALYSIS

The Court endeavors to honor parties' agreements and is favorably inclined to accept targeted and proportionate stipulations that protect the public and promote confidence in the legal profession, recognizing that the Colorado Supreme Court has granted this Court discretion to accept or reject stipulations to discipline "in accordance with the considerations governing imposition of disciplinary sanctions . . . ."[4] In reviewing a stipulation to discipline, the Court is mindful of the guiding principles and authorities governing the imposition of lawyer discipline. The lawyer discipline system is designed to further the Colorado Supreme Court's regulatory objectives, including promoting the public interest; increasing the public's understanding of, and confidence in, the rule of law; ensuring compliance with the Colorado Rules of Professional

[4] C.R.C.P. 242.19(c).

Conduct in a manner that is fair, efficient, targeted, and proportionate; and safeguarding the rule of law to foster a robust system of justice.[5]

The Court looks to the theoretical framework set forth in the American Bar Association *Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions* ("ABA *Standards*"),[6] which were created "to enhance the consistency of sanctions imposed in attorney disciplinary proceedings"[7] as well as authoritative caselaw.[8] The Court is also mindful of sanctions imposed after disciplinary hearings in comparable cases. Indeed, while the Court's prior cases do not serve as *stare decisis*,[9] the Court at times finds the reasoning used by prior hearing boards when applying the ABA *Standards* to be helpful when determining the appropriate sanction for misconduct.

Under the ABA *Standards'* model, the Court must consider the duty the lawyer violated, the lawyer's mental state, and the actual or potential injury the lawyer's misconduct caused. These three variables yield a presumptive sanction that may then be adjusted based on aggravating and mitigating factors.[10] Here, the parties agree that Respondent violated her duty of diligence to J.B., P.A.C., G.E.L., and M.G.G. Respondent also violated her duty of communication to M.G.G. Further, Respondent violated obligations to various trial courts, including this Court with respect to her disciplinary order. The parties further stipulate that Respondent acted knowingly in her violations. The parties say Respondent's misconduct caused actual injury to her clients, to the court system, and to her opposing counsel. The Court agrees with the parties' analysis.

ABA Standards *4.0-8.0 – Presumptive Sanction*

The parties agree Respondent's misconduct implicates a number of ABA *Standards*, including ABA *Standard* 4.42(b), which provides for suspension when a lawyer engages in a pattern of neglect resulting in injury or potential injury to a client; ABA *Standard* 6.22, which says suspension is generally appropriate when a lawyer knows that she is violating a court order or rule and causes injury or potential injury to a client or a party; and ABA *Standard* 7.2, which calls for suspension when a lawyer knowingly engages in conduct that violates a duty owed as a professional, thereby causing injury or potential injury to a client or the legal system. The Court agrees that these ABA *Standards* apply to Respondent's misconduct.

The parties also point to ABA *Standard* 8.1(a), which provides for disbarment as a generally appropriate sanction when a lawyer intentionally or knowingly violates the terms of a prior disciplinary order, causing injury or potential injury to a client, the public, the legal system, or the legal profession. The Court finds that ABA *Standard* 8.1(a) is out of proportion to Respondent's

[5] *See* Preamble to Chapters 18 to 20, Colorado Court Rules, ¶¶ 1, 2, 7.
[6] Found in ABA *Annotated Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions* (2d ed. 2019).
[7] *In re Roose*, 69 P.3d 43, 47 (Colo. 2003).
[8] *See* C.R.C.P. 242.19(c); *In re Att'y F.*, 2012 CO 57, ¶ 19; *In re Raykin*, 2025 CO 12 ¶ 18.
[9] *See Roose*, 69 P.3d at 48.
[10] *Att'y F.*, ¶ 19.

misconduct, however, and is thus not fitting here. As the hearing board in *People v. Swarts* recognized, "ABA *Standard* 8.0 is unique among the *Standards*," and ABA *Standard* 8.1(a) "exists to maintain the integrity of the disciplinary process."[11] The *Swarts* hearing board observed that ABA *Standard* 8.1(a) "normally should be applied where [its] elements are satisfied so as to promote consistency."[12] In Colorado, when the PDJ or hearing boards invoke ABA *Standard* 8.1(a), they do so when the violation of a prior disciplinary order involves practicing law while suspended and injury or potential injury.[13] In contrast, hearing boards rarely, if ever, invoke ABA *Standard* 8.1(a) for violations of disciplinary orders other than practicing law while under an order of suspension. In *People v. Harro*, for example, a hearing board declined to apply ABA *Standard* 8.1(a) for the lawyer's failure to give notice of her suspension, finding that the technical violation did not warrant the mechanical application of that *Standard*.[14]

Here, Respondent's knowing failure to comply with her disciplinary order meets the elements of ABA *Standard* 8.1(a), and the Court does not view the violation to be technical, as in *Harro*. Even so, the Court finds that the misconduct in this case less egregiously affronts the integrity of the legal system than the practice of law in violation of disciplinary orders because Respondent's violation is not the result of her practicing law during suspension. The Court thus disagrees with the parties and declines to apply ABA *Standard* 8.1(a) here. Rather, applying ABA *Standard* 6.22 is a better fit.

ABA Standard *9.0 – Aggravating and Mitigating Factors*

The parties agree that three aggravating factors under ABA *Standard* 9.22 apply, including for Respondent's prior discipline, her pattern of misconduct, and her substantial experience in the practice of law.[15] They also agree that four factors in mitigation apply under ABA *Standard* 9.32. Those include an absence of a dishonest or selfish motive, a cooperative attitude toward these proceedings, physical disability, and remorse.[16] The Court accepts the parties' stipulated aggravating and mitigating factors, noting that the parties' agreements are not inconsistent with their stipulated factual recitations.

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[11] 414 P.3d 1168, 1171 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2018).

[12] 414 P.3d at 1171.

[13] *See*, *e.g.*, *People v. Egbune*, 576 P.3d 233, 239 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2025); *People v. Romero*, 536 P.3d 353, 375 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2023); *People v. Layton*, 531 P.3d 34, 58 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2023); *People v. Wake*, 528 P.3d 943, 953 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2023); *People v. Maynard*, 483 P.3d 289, 299-300 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2021); *People v. McMenaman*, 461 P.3d 16, 22 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2020); *Swarts* at 1171, *People v. Heupel*, 470 P.3d 1101, 1107-08 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2017); *People v. Kanwal*, 357 P.3d 1236, 1243 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2015); *People v. McNamara*, 311 P.3d 662, 672 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2013); *People v. Zodrow*, 276 P.3d 113, 121 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2011); *People v. Mason*, 212 P.3d 141, 148-49 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2009).

[14] 581 P.3d 798, 820 (Colo. O.P.D.J. 2025).

[15] ABA *Standards* 9.22(a), (c), and (i).

[16] ABA *Standards* 9.32(b), (e), (h), and (l).

The Parties' Sanction

In reaching their resolution, the parties agree that a fifteen-month suspension is the appropriate sanction for Respondent's misconduct. The parties note that Respondent has been suspended twice before and is currently serving a twenty-six-month suspension that took effect on May 29, 2024. They ask that this fifteen-month suspension be effective as of July 30, 2026, such that it runs consecutively to the twenty-six-month suspension. Finally, as part of the stipulation, the People move the Court to dismiss Claim 6 in their complaint.

CONCLUSION

With the exception of the effective date of the suspension, the Court finds the parties' stipulation to be consistent with considerations governing the imposition of disciplinary sanctions. The Court also finds that the parties' proposed sanction is appropriately tailored to the stipulated facts and to the circumstances of the case. The Court does not find that the parties have articulated good cause to backdate the effective date of the suspension, however, and the parties do not provide a legal basis for their request. The Court thus exercises discretion and **APPROVES** the parties' stipulation but **ORDERS** that Respondent's fifteen-month suspension take effect **IMMEDIATELY**.[17] In addition, the Court **GRANTS** the People's motion to dismiss Claim 6 in their complaint and **DISMISSES** that claim.

DATED THIS 14th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2026.

BRYON M. LARGE
PRESIDING DISCIPLINARY JUDGE

[17] The Court will issue an order and notice of suspension contemporaneously with this opinion.

Copies to:

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