

## SANCTIONS AND ACTIONS AFFECTING LICENSURE (FY 2021)

ACKERMAN, Debra Lee – Suspension by Consent for sixty days on January 4, 2021, effective March 8, 2021, for knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent made numerous misrepresentations to Bar Counsel.

ADAMS, George R. – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on September 17, 2020, for failing to represent multiple immigration clients competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his clients, failing to take steps to protect his clients' interests upon termination of his representation, failing to properly supervise a non-attorney assistant, knowingly making false statements 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, who was not admitted to the Maryland Bar, failed to keep his clients informed concerning the status of their immigration applications, failed to supervise non-attorney staff members in their dealings with his clients, and failed to properly withdraw from representation upon his retirement. Respondent then approved and submitted letters providing misinformation to Bar Counsel during its investigation.

AKIN-DEKO, Oladipo Akinwunmi – Indefinite Suspension on September 24, 2020, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, knowingly failing to respond to Bar Counsel, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent failed to appear for a motions hearing in a matter before the United States District Court for the District of Maryland, failed to respond to multiple orders to show cause, and failed to respond in any manner to disciplinary authorities.

ARMSTRONG, Darryl Russel – Disbarred on November 20, 2020, effective immediately, 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, collecting unreasonable fees, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, failing to obtain his client's informed consent, confirmed in writing, to hold the funds outside of trust, failing to promptly remove earned fees from his attorney trust account, failing to take steps to protect his clients' interests upon termination of his representation, failing to maintain fairness to opposing parties and counsel, knowingly making a false statement of material fact or law to a third person, knowingly failing to respond 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, engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, and using trust money for purposes other than the purpose for which the money is entrusted. Respondent failed to take necessary and fundamental steps in cases, failed to respond to discovery, failed to appear at pre-trial conferences and hearings on behalf of clients, appeared at proceedings unprepared, abandoned representation of clients, failed to sufficiently and timely communicate with clients, failed to remit funds from clients' settlements to pay outstanding medical bills, failed to deposit and maintain client and third-party funds in an attorney trust account, failed to consult with clients or provide updates, charged fees and provided little to no legal services, entered into

a contingency fee arrangement but failed to memorialize the agreement in writing signed by his client, failed to provide a settlement disbursement sheet to his client, provided inaccurate settlement disbursement sheets to clients, deposited trust funds into an account other than an attorney trust account without his clients' informed consent, failed to return unearned fees or to provide copies of files to clients, threatened to "blow up" a building in which a physical therapy facility that had filed a complaint against him was located, intentionally misappropriated settlement proceeds owed to clients or medical providers for his own personal use and benefit, made misrepresentations to clients and third parties, and fraudulently altered two checks.

BIRCH, Michael Scott – Disbarment by Consent on February 4, 2021, effective February 25, 2021, for failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, 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. Proceeds of a retirement account were deposited into Respondent's attorney trust account as attorney for an estate, and Respondent failed to identify the funds as estate property and misappropriated the funds for his own personal use and benefit. Respondent was subsequently criminally charged with embezzlement and theft.

BURTON, William Franklin – Disbarment by Consent on October 13, 2020, effective immediately, for failing to represent his clients competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his clients, collecting unreasonable fees, failing to take steps to protect his clients' interests upon termination of his representation, failing to maintain fairness to opposing parties and 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 the representation of several clients, Respondent failed to act with reasonable competence and diligence and failed to communicate adequately, including making false statements to some of the clients about the status of their matters. Respondent also failed to respond to Bar Counsel's requests for a response to each of the complaints filed against him.

CALDWELL, Melvin Joseph, Jr. – Commission Reprimand on December 21, 2020, for failing to adequately communicate with his client. Respondent was unaware that his client's retainer payment had been received due to internal office miscommunications and failed to stay in contact with his client regarding upcoming status conference dates. Upon receiving his client's executed retainer agreement and payment, Respondent failed to enter his appearance in his client's case, which resulted in Respondent not receiving court notifications.

CHANG, Sandy Yeh – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on January 19, 2021, effective immediately, for engaging in the unauthorized practice of law, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, and failing to abide by the requirements of her prior suspension. Respondent engaged in the unauthorized practice of law in Maryland when she signed a retainer agreement on behalf of her firm and communicated with the client regarding his cases while she was still suspended from practicing law in Maryland. Respondent also engaged in the unauthorized practice of law in Maryland when she failed to disclose her suspension while

obtaining special admission, *pro hac vice*, in two cases pending before the Circuit Court for Montgomery County.

COOPER, Ronald Howard – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on February 2, 2021, effective February 6, 2021, with the right to petition for reinstatement after thirty days, 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. Between 2012 and 2017, Respondent failed to timely file federal and state payroll tax returns and remit payments to the Internal Revenue Service and the Comptroller of Maryland.

DAVENPORT, Wortham David – Disbarred on November 20, 2020, effective immediately, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, failing to abide by the scope of representation, failing to adequately communicate with his client, collecting unreasonable fees, 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. Respondent represented a client in a divorce and custody proceeding and abandoned all representation soon after its outset. Respondent failed to attend scheduled hearings, did not advise his client of the hearings, and failed to respond to discovery requests and motions. Respondent failed to withdraw from the case after the client terminated the representation, thereby adversely affecting the client's ability to settle the matter. Respondent also failed to return the unearned fee even after the client requested a refund.

FOURNIER, James Joseph – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on August 14, 2020, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, failing to abide by the scope of representation, failing to adequately communicate with his client, failing to maintain candor to the tribunal, 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. Respondent failed to comply with applicable discovery rules and as a result his client's expert witness was precluded from testifying at trial. In addition, the Respondent's statements regarding discovery disputes were not credible.

FRANK, David Elliott – Disbarred on August 26, 2020, for failing to represent his client competently, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, 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. Respondent commingled personal and client funds in his attorney trust account, used the funds in his attorney trust account for personal and familial financial obligations, failed to disburse his client's settlement funds in a timely manner, and misused his client's settlement funds.

GILLELAN, II, Joshua Thomas – Commission Reprimand on July 21, 2020, for failing to comply with the mandatory annual Pro Bono and IOLTA reporting requirements and failing to pay his mandatory annual assessment to the Client Protection Fund of Maryland for a number of years.

GOLESORKHI, Reza – Commission Reprimand on July 21, 2020, for failing to recognize a conflict of interest. In a business transaction, Respondent represented both the buyer and seller,

whose interests were adverse, and failed to obtain informed consent from either party to waive the conflict and proceed with the joint representation.

HAMILTON, Samuel Cartenius – Commission Reprimand on September 22, 2020, for failing to adequately communicate with his client, collecting unreasonable fees, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, and failing to maintain adequate client matter records. Respondent collected a \$5,000.00 fee from his client, failed to provide any substantive services of value, failed to deposit and maintain his client's funds in an attorney trust account until earned, and failed to provide his client with invoices for fees charged.

IBEBUCHI, Ferdinand Uchechukwu – Indefinite Suspension on November 20, 2020, 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, failing to reasonably expedite litigation, failing to maintain fairness to opposing party and counsel, knowingly failing to respond to Bar Counsel, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent failed to timely respond to discovery requests, failed to appear for trial, and failed to advise his client that a default judgment had been entered against him. Respondent then failed to take action to assist his client with vacating the judgment, failed to follow up with his client, and failed to refund any portion of the fee charged for his services.

JAMES, Jelani Dale – Commission Reprimand on July 27, 2020, for making cash withdrawals from his attorney trust account.

KAHN, Arthur Gary – Commission Reprimand on November 25, 2020, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, collecting unreasonable fees, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent failed to appear for his client's trial because he failed to provide the court with his new mailing address. Respondent filed a motion to vacate the court's order of dismissal but failed to appear for the hearing on the motion due to a calendaring error. Respondent also failed to deposit and maintain his client's funds in an attorney trust account until earned.

KARAMBELAS, Nicholas G. – Disbarred on October 6, 2020, effective immediately, by Per Curiam Order. Opinion of the Court of Appeals to follow.

KEATING, Mary Theresa – Indefinite Suspension on December 23, 2020, effective immediately, for failing to maintain candor to the tribunal, committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on her 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. Respondent falsely attested that she witnessed her client's signature on a will she prepared for him by adding her signature as a witness three days after her client's death. Respondent then submitted the will to the Register of Wills when she filed a petition for administration of her deceased client's estate, falsely affirming under the penalty of perjury in the petition that the will was properly executed in accordance with Maryland law when she knew she had not witnessed the decedent's signature.

KOLAWOLE, Olufolajimi Abayomi – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on February 5, 2021, effective March 15, 2021, with the right to petition for reinstatement after six months, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his client, knowingly making a false statement of material fact or law to a third person, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent notarized a General Power of Attorney (“POA”) and a document entitled “Indemnity” even though he had not communicated directly with the individual giving the authority or witnessed her sign either document. In addition, Respondent offered to help effectuate the POA and Indemnity with the individual’s bank and advised the bank that he had “witnessed the signature ceremony,” a false statement that Respondent failed to correct.

LORD, Nancy Theresa – Indefinite Suspension on December 10, 2020, effective immediately, in a reciprocal action from the Supreme Court of Nevada for violating the Nevada Rules of Professional Conduct. Respondent made statements that she knew to be false concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge.

LOVE, Jonathan Frederick Seamon – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on January 4, 2021, effective on February 19, 2021, with the right to petition for reinstatement after ninety days, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his client, collecting unreasonable fees, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent agreed to defend a client in a lawsuit for breach of contract and agreed to assist the client in additional related services. Respondent failed to advise his client that his funds had been depleted, failed to timely provide his client with an invoice accounting for his time, and failed to maintain adequate records of costs paid on his client’s behalf. With respect to the breach of contract litigation, Respondent failed to appear for a settlement conference and failed to respond to the opposing party’s discovery requests, resulting in the court granting a motion for sanctions and precluding the Respondent’s client from introducing any evidence at trial.

LUCEY, Rand William – Commission Reprimand on October 21, 2020, for failing to represent his client diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his client, and failing to take steps to protect his client’s interest upon termination of his representation. Over a five-year period, Respondent failed to inform his client of the status of her case or terminate the representation.

MITCHELL, Michael Anthony – Commission Reprimand on November 30, 2020, for failing to adequately communicate with his client, failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, and disclosing confidential client information. The Respondent accepted a payment from his client via PayPal and failed to ensure those funds were deposited directly into his attorney trust account and maintained until earned. In addition, the Respondent did not send an invoice to his client during the pendency of his representation and disclosed confidential client information when he emailed a portion of a Bar Counsel complaint to a friend.

MORENO, David Fernando – Suspension by Consent for sixty days on January 4, 2021, effective immediately, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his client, 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. Respondent represented a client in immigration matters and, after failing to respond to his client's attempts to reach him during the months leading up to his client's asylum hearing, advised his client to attend the hearing without counsel to request a postponement. Respondent failed to appear at the hearing, and the Court ordered his client deported. Although Respondent told his client he would assist him in reopening the case thereafter, Respondent failed to take any further action.

MURPHY, Timothy J – Disbarment by Consent on November 4, 2020, effective January 1, 2021, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his client, collecting unreasonable fees, 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 making false statements to Bar Counsel, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice.

MURRAY, Charles Alex – Indefinite Suspension on August 24, 2020, with the right to petition for reinstatement only following reinstatement in Florida and the District of Columbia, in a reciprocal action from the Supreme Court of Florida for making a false statement to a tribunal and failing to correct his false statement previously made to the tribunal. Respondent signed a client's name to a post-conviction motion verification and perjury acknowledgement and thereafter failed to take corrective action to notify the tribunal concerning the falsified client signature.

NARVAIZ, Santiago Ricardo – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on February 23, 2021, effective sixty days from the date of the Court's Order, with the right to petition for reinstatement after ninety days, 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, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent failed to deposit a client's funds into an attorney trust account and instead deposited the funds into his personal money market account and, after the client terminated Respondent's representation and repeatedly requested that Respondent provide her with an invoice and return any unearned fees, Respondent still failed to produce either a refund or an accounting. Bar Counsel's investigation revealed that Respondent routinely used his attorney trust account to pay personal expenses, made cash withdrawals, and commingled personal funds with client funds when he failed to withdraw earned fees. The investigation also revealed that Respondent failed to create and maintain the necessary client matter records and monthly reconciliations for his attorney trust account.

NIER, George Carlos – Disbarment by Consent on September 2, 2020, effective September 30, 2020, 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. In an estate matter, as successor personal representative and sole trustee of trusts established for two of the decedent's great-grandchildren, Respondent misappropriated hundreds of thousands of dollars from both trusts and left each with a balance of zero.

OKEDI, Ginikanwa Chinaemerem – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on November 16, 2020, effective December 16, 2020, 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 maintain candor to the tribunal, failing to maintain fairness to opposing party and counsel, engaging in the unauthorized practice of law, assisting another in engaging in the unauthorized practice of law, making false or misleading communications about his legal services, misusing a firm's name or letterhead, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent shared an office for the practice of law in Maryland with an individual who was not licensed to practice law in Maryland. After moving the office to the District of Columbia, where neither was licensed, Respondent continued to assist his officemate in the unauthorized practice of law and engaged in the unauthorized practice of law in the District of Columbia himself over a period of four years. Respondent also operated his law practice without an attorney trust account and improperly deposited funds belonging to clients and third parties in his operating account.

RIELY, John T. – Indefinite Suspension on November 25, 2020, effective December 25, 2020, with the right to petition for reinstatement no sooner than one year, for failing to represent his clients competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his clients, failing to take steps to protect his clients' interest upon termination of his representation, knowingly making a false statement of material fact or law to a third person, knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Respondent, an experienced immigration attorney, failed to appear on behalf of an immigrant couple at status hearings in immigration court, failed to file a visa extension application on a timely basis on behalf of another client, and made misleading statements to a client, an immigration enforcement agent, and Bar Counsel to conceal some aspects of his failure to represent that client competently and diligently.

RIVERA, Artemio – Disbarment by Consent on October 30, 2020, 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. Respondent was convicted by a jury on four counts of wire fraud.

SATIN, Wendy L. – Commission Reprimand on December 24, 2020, for failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account, failing to report another attorney's professional misconduct, commingling of funds, and disbursing funds from an attorney trust account when the disbursement created a negative balance with respect to an individual client matter or all client matters in the aggregate. During a five-year period, Respondent failed to promptly withdraw earned fees from her firm's attorney trust account and made cash withdrawals on the occasions when she did withdraw earned fees. Respondent also failed to timely inform the Attorney Grievance Commission of her law partner's condition that raised substantial questions as to his fitness as an attorney.

SCOTT, James L. – Commission Reprimand on December 21, 2020, for failing to represent his clients competently and diligently. Respondent failed to enter his appearance on behalf of seven

clients in post-conviction proceedings paneled to him by the Office of the Public Defender. As a result of Respondent's failure to enter his appearance, in at least one instance, Respondent did not appear at his client's post-conviction hearing, necessitating an attorney with the Office of the Public Defender to appear instead and request a continuance.

SHOEMAKER, Jason W. – Disbarment by Consent on September 21, 2020, effective December 1, 2020, for failing to represent his clients competently and diligently, failing to adequately communicate with his clients, representing clients involving a conflict of interest, failing to safekeep his clients' funds in his attorney trust account, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. Over a four-year period, Respondent failed to adequately manage his attorney trust account when he failed to deposit client funds therein, maintained negative client ledger balances, and commingled personal funds with trust funds. Respondent also allowed his spouse to access and misappropriate funds from his attorney trust account and failed to take remedial measures for approximately five months. In addition, Respondent failed to recognize a conflict of interest when he represented co-defendants in an unrelated criminal matter.

SMITH, Timothy Guy – Indefinite Suspension by Consent on November 12, 2020, effective December 31, 2020, for failing to adequately communicate with his client, failing to recognize conflicts of interest, entering into business transactions with a current client without obtaining the client's informed consent, failing to uphold his duty to a former client, knowingly making a false statement of material fact or law, and engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation. Respondent provided legal and business advice to his client and made numerous loans to his client to help fund his client's business without advising his client to seek independent legal advice. Later, Respondent represented his own company in litigation filed against his former client's company without his former client's informed consent. Respondent also sent a pretextual email to his former client's company to gather financial information he needed for litigation against his former client.

SNYDER, Stephen Lawrence – Temporary Suspension by Consent on October 23, 2020, effective March 31, 2021, pending the resolution of the criminal charges against Respondent in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland.

TAPP, Barry M. – Commission Reprimand on December 21, 2020, for failing to safekeep funds in an attorney trust account and failing to comply with attorney trust account record-keeping and prohibited transaction requirements. Respondent failed to establish appropriate record-keeping systems, and his attorney trust account was overdrawn. Respondent also made cash withdrawals from his attorney trust account and regularly commingled funds by depositing payments from Chapter 13 Trustees into his attorney trust account.

TERZIU, Jack Ryan – Commission Reprimand on September 9, 2020, for failing to recognize conflicts of interest. For approximately three years, Respondent represented clients as a sole practitioner where his representation involved a conflict of interest with his former firm's clients. The conflicts included representing clients who were directly adverse to a firm client and where

there was a significant risk that Respondent's representation of his client would be materially limited by his responsibilities, through the firm, to another client.

WERTHEIMER, Marc – Commission Reprimand on August 29, 2020, for failing to recognize that his representation of one client was directly adverse to the interests of other clients in violation of the prohibition against conflicts of interest. Respondent represented an estate in probate proceedings while representing the decedent's former business partners who had claims against the estate based, in part, upon written agreements drafted by the Respondent and previously executed by the decedent and his partners.

YI, John Xander – Disbarred on August 21, 2020, for failing to represent his client competently and diligently, failing to abide by the scope of representation, failing to adequately communicate with his client, collecting unreasonable fees, failing to reasonably communicate his fees to his client, failing to take steps to protect his client's interest upon termination of his representation, failing to maintain accurate records concerning his firm's trust account, failing to promptly deliver to his client funds to which his client was entitled, knowingly making false statements of material fact, engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation, and engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice. As a relatively new attorney without significant criminal law experience, Respondent agreed to represent an immigrant charged with serious drug offenses that could have resulted in imprisonment and affected her immigration status, failed to communicate adequately with his client, failed to diligently analyze the discovery provided by the prosecution and prepare adequately the defense of the charges, mishandled his client's fee payment, mismanaged his firm's attorney trust account, and made misrepresentations and otherwise failed to adequately respond to Bar Counsel's requests for information.

YOUNG, Tristan Doyle – Disbarred by Consent on December 21, 2020, effective immediately, for knowingly making false statements to Bar Counsel and knowingly failing to respond to Bar Counsel. Respondent submitted his Application to the Maryland Bar and was admitted to the Maryland Bar under false pretenses as Respondent intentionally failed to disclose numerous prior serious transgressions because he believed their disclosure would prevent his admission to the Maryland Bar.