U.S. Department of Justice
Executive Office for Immigration Review

Falls Church, Virginia 22041

Decision of the Board of Immigration Appeals

File: D2006-038 Date: APR - 6 2007

In re: MARIA INES GONZALEZ, ATTORNEY

IN PRACTITIONER DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE

ON BEHALF OF GENERAL COUNSEL: Jennifer J. Barnes, Esquire

ON BEHALF OF DHS: Eileen M. Connolly, Appellate Counsel

ORDER:

PER CURIAM. On January 25, 2007, the respondent was suspended from the practice of law for 3 months, effective February 24, 2007, by the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

Consequently, on February 16, 2007, the Office of General Counsel for the Executive Office for Immigration Review petitioned for the respondent's immediate suspension from practice before the Board of Immigration Appeals and the Immigration Courts. On January 21, 2007, the Department of Homeland Security (the "DHS") asked that the respondent be similarly suspended from practice before that agency. Therefore, on March 1, 2007, we suspended the respondent from practicing before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS pending final disposition of this proceeding.

The respondent filed a timely answer to the allegations contained in the Notice of Intent to Discipline on March 19, 2007. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105(c)(1).

The respondent does not contest the allegations in the Notice of Intent to Discipline. Rather, the answer states that the respondent seeks to have her suspension deemed to have commenced on February 24, 2007, the effective date of her suspension in New Jersey. The respondent states that she has not practiced before the DHS or the Immigration Courts since the effective date of her suspension in New Jersey. The respondent did not request a hearing on the matter, and she has therefore waived a hearing on the charges. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105(c)(3). We therefore find it appropriate to issue a final order on the OGC's charges.

The Notice of Intent to Discipline recommends that the respondent be suspended from practicing before the Board and the Immigration Courts, for a period of 3 months. The DHS asks that we extend that discipline to practice before it as well. Since the recommendation is appropriate in light of the respondent's suspension from the practice of law in New Jersey, we will honor the government's recommendation. Accordingly, we hereby suspend the respondent from practice before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS for a period of 3 months. Further, after consideration of the respondent's submissions in her answer, we will deem the respondent's suspension to have commenced on February 24, 2007, the date her suspension was effective in New Jersey. The respondent is instructed to maintain compliance with the directives set forth in our prior

order. The respondent is also instructed to notify the Board of any further disciplinary action against her. We direct that the contents of this notice be made available to the public, including at Immigration Courts and appropriate offices of the DHS.

After the suspension period expires, the respondent may petition this Board for reinstatement to practice before the Board, Immigration Courts, and DHS. *See* 8 C.F.R.§ 1003.107(a). In order to be reinstated, the respondent must demonstrate that she meets the definition of an attorney or representative, as set forth in 8 C.F.R. § 1001.1(f) and (j). *Id.* Therefore, the respondent must show that she has been reinstated to practice law in New Jersey before she may be reinstated by the Board. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 1001.1(f) (stating that term "attorney" does not include any individual under order suspending him from the practice of law).

FOR THE BOARD