

Falls Church, Virginia 22041

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File: D2019-0036

Date: MAY 13 2019

In re: Veronica REYES, Attorney

IN PRACTITIONER DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE

ON BEHALF OF EOIR: Paul A. Rodrigues, Disciplinary Counsel

ON BEHALF OF DHS: Catherine M. O'Connell, Disciplinary Counsel

The respondent will be suspended from practice before the Board of Immigration Appeals, the Immigration Courts, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for 6 months.

On February 12, 2019, the Presiding Disciplinary Judge of the Supreme Court of Colorado issued an Order Approving Conditional Admission of Misconduct and Imposing Sanctions under C.R.C.P. 251.22 in the respondent's disciplinary proceedings in that state. The order suspended the respondent from the practice of law in Colorado for 1 year and 1 day, with 6 months to be served and 6 months and 1 day to be stayed upon the successful completion of a 2-year period of probation. The respondent's suspension was effective March 19, 2019.

On March 26, 2019, the Disciplinary Counsel for the Executive Office for Immigration Review petitioned for the respondent's immediate suspension from practice before the Immigration Courts and the Board of Immigration Appeals. The Disciplinary Counsel for the DHS then asked that the respondent be similarly suspended from practice before that agency. We granted the petition on April 16, 2019.

The respondent was required to file a timely answer to the allegations contained in the Notice of Intent to Discipline but has failed to do so. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105. The respondent's failure to file a response within the time period prescribed in the Notice of Intent to Discipline constitutes an admission of the allegations therein, and the respondent is now precluded from requesting a hearing on the matter. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105(d)(1).

The Notice of Intent to Discipline proposes that the respondent be suspended from practicing before the Board of Immigration Appeals and the Immigration Courts for a period of 6 months. The Disciplinary Counsel for the DHS asks us to extend that discipline to practice before that agency as well. Because the respondent has failed to file an answer, the regulations direct us to adopt the proposed sanction contained in the Notice of Intent to Discipline, unless there are considerations that compel us to digress from that proposal. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105(d)(2).

The proposed sanction is appropriate in light of the respondent's suspension in Colorado. We therefore will honor the proposed discipline and will order the respondent suspended from practice before the Board of Immigration Appeals, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS for 6 months. Further, as the respondent is currently under our April 16, 2019, order of suspension, we will deem her suspension to have commenced on that date.

ORDER: The Board hereby suspends the respondent from practice before the Board of Immigration Appeals, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS for a period of 6 months. The suspension is deemed to have commenced on April 16, 2019.

FURTHER ORDER: The respondent must maintain compliance with the directives set forth in our prior order. The respondent must notify the Board of Immigration Appeals of any further disciplinary action against her.

FURTHER ORDER: The contents of the order shall be made available to the public, including at the Immigration Courts and appropriate offices of the DHS.

FURTHER ORDER: The respondent may petition this Board for reinstatement to practice before the Board of Immigration Appeals, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS under 8 C.F.R. § 1003.107.



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FOR THE BOARD