

Falls Church, Virginia 22041

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File: D2008-061

Date:

In re: FERNANDO E. PEREZ-PENA, ATTORNEY

AUG 28 2008

IN PRACTITIONER DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE

ON BEHALF OF DHS: Rachel A. McCarthy, Bar Counsel

ON BEHALF OF GENERAL COUNSEL: Jennifer J. Barnes, Bar Counsel

ORDER:

PER CURIAM. The respondent will be expelled from practice before the Board, Immigration Courts, and Department of Homeland Security (the "DHS").

On October 4, 2007, the Washington State Supreme Court suspended the respondent from the practice of law for 60 days. In its decision, the court found the respondent subject to sanctions based on his assault on an immigration client during a fee dispute, as well as his failure to return an unearned fee. The respondent has resigned from the Washington State Bar. Consequently, on June 30, 2008, the DHS initiated disciplinary proceedings against the respondent and petitioned for the respondent's immediate suspension from practice before the DHS. On July 1, 2008, the Office of General Counsel for the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) asked that the respondent be similarly suspended from practice before EOIR, including the Board and Immigration Courts. Therefore, on July 24, 2008, we suspended the respondent from practicing before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS pending final disposition of this proceeding.

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. See 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.105(c)(1); 1292.3(e)(3)(ii). The respondent's failure to file a response within the time period prescribed in the Notice constitutes an admission of the allegations therein, and the respondent is now precluded from requesting a hearing on the matter. 8 C.F.R. § 1292.3(e)(3)(ii).

The Notice recommends that the respondent be expelled from practice before the DHS. The Office of General Counsel of EOIR asks that we extend that discipline to practice before the Board and Immigration Courts as well. As the respondent failed to file a timely answer, the regulations direct us to adopt the recommendation contained in the Notice, unless there are considerations that compel us to digress from that recommendation. 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.105(d)(2); 1292.3(e)(3)(ii).

Since the recommendation is appropriate in light of the respondent's suspension in Washington, and his resignation from the bar, 8 C.F.R. §§ 1292.3; 1003.102(e)(1), we will honor it. Accordingly, we hereby expel the respondent from practice before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS.

As the respondent is currently under our July 24, 2008, order of suspension, we will deem the respondent's expulsion to have commenced on that date. 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 him.

The respondent may petition this Board for reinstatement to practice before the Board, Immigration Courts, and DHS under 8 C.F.R. § 1003.107(b).

  
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FOR THE BOARD