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NEWS RELEASE

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EOIR Announces Latest Disciplinary Actions Under Rules of Professional Conduct

One Attorney Reinstated; Three Receive Final Orders

The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has reinstated one previously suspended attorney and taken disciplinary action against three others after charging them with violations of the rules of professional conduct for immigration practitioners provided in Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR Parts 3 and 292). The attorneys' rule violations arose out of sanctions imposed by other jurisdictions.

Disciplinary proceedings began in each case with a Petition for Immediate Suspension and Notice of Intent to Discipline filed with the Board of Immigration Appeals (the Board) by EOIR's Office of the General Counsel. The Board then ordered each attorney's immediate suspension from practice before the Immigration Courts, the Board, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (the Service) and required the attorney to respond to the alleged violations.

Reinstatement

The Board granted a motion filed by the following attorney to be reinstated to practice before the immigration tribunals after having completed his period of suspension.

- **Antonio Reyes-Vidal** was reinstated February 26, 2002, after he offered evidence asserting that he has been reinstated to practice law in Texas.

Final Orders of Discipline

The Board issued Final Orders of Discipline against the following attorneys after they failed to respond as required to the Notice of Intent to Discipline.

- **Chester Lee Wheless, Jr.**, disbarred from practice by the State Bar of Texas on January 14, 1998, was immediately suspended by the Board on October 12, 2001. The Final Order of January 28, 2002, suspends him from practice before the immigration tribunals for five years.
- **William Wright, Jr.**, disbarred by the Supreme Court of New Jersey and the Supreme Judicial Court of Suffolk County, Massachusetts, was immediately suspended by the Board on December 7, 2001. The Final Order of February 11, 2002, expels him from practicing before the immigration tribunals.

An Immigration Judge issued a Final Order of Discipline against the following attorney after a disciplinary hearing.

- **John Hykel** was suspended from practice before the immigration tribunals for two years followed by probation for three years, effective March 8, 2001.

Summary

In each of the disciplinary matters cited above, the suspended attorney was directed "to promptly notify, in writing, any clients with cases currently pending before the Board, the Immigration Courts, or the Service" that he or she may no longer represent clients before these tribunals.

The rules of professional conduct include provisions specifying grounds for disciplinary action, requirements for receiving and investigating complaints, and procedures for conducting hearings. The rules also authorize the Board to immediately suspend a practitioner who has been subject to disbarment, suspension, or resignation with an admission of misconduct as imposed by a State or Federal court, pending a summary proceeding and final sanction.

EOIR announces these disciplinary actions to inform the public about practitioners who are not authorized to represent any matter before an immigration tribunal. EOIR also posts a list of suspended and expelled practitioners on its Web site at www.usdoj.gov/eoir.

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