

Falls Church, Virginia 22041

File: D2015-0192

Date:

OCT 30 2015

In re: WILLIAM A. FERNANDEZ, ATTORNEY

IN PRACTITIONER DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE

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

ON BEHALF OF EOIR: Jennifer J. Barnes
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 five months.

On April 29, 2015, the Superior Court for the Judicial District of Hartford, Connecticut, issued an order suspending the respondent from the practice of law in that state for five months, effective June 1, 2015. Consequently, on September 15, 2015, the Disciplinary Counsel for the DHS petitioned for the respondent's immediate suspension from practice before that agency. The Disciplinary Counsel for the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) then asked that the respondent be similarly suspended from practice before the Board of Immigration Appeals and the Immigration Courts. We granted the petition on September 30, 2015.

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 (2013). 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. § 1003.105 (2013).

The Notice proposes that the respondent be suspended from practicing before the Board and the Immigration Courts for five months. Because the respondent has failed to file an answer, the regulations direct the Board to adopt the proposed sanction contained in the Notice, unless there are considerations that compel us to digress from that proposal. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105 (2013).

The proposed sanction is appropriate in light of the respondent's suspension in Connecticut. Accordingly, the Board will honor that proposal. As the respondent is currently under our September 30, 2015, order of suspension, we will deem the respondent's suspension to have commenced on that date.

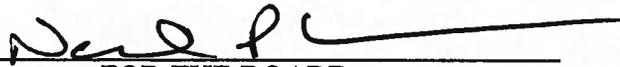
ORDER: The Board hereby suspends the respondent from practice before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS for five months.

D2015-0192

FURTHER ORDER: 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.

FURTHER ORDER: The respondent may petition this Board for reinstatement to practice before the Board, Immigration Courts, and DHS under 8 C.F.R. § 1003.107 (2013).

FURTHER ORDER: As the Board earlier imposed an immediate suspension order in this case, today's order of the Board becomes effective immediately. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.105(d)(2) (2013).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Neal P.", written over a horizontal line.

FOR THE BOARD