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**State Bar Court of California  
Hearing Department  
San Francisco**

<p>Counsel For The State Bar</p> <p><b>Mark Hartman</b> Deputy Trial Counsel 180 Howard Street, 7th Floor San Francisco, CA 94105 Telephone: (415) 538-2558</p> <p>Bar # 114915</p>	<p>Case Number (s)</p> <p><b>08-O-14408</b> <b>09-O-11641</b></p>	<p>(for Court's use)</p> <p><b>PUBLIC MATTER</b></p> <p><b>FILED</b> <i>KDS</i></p> <p>SEP 10 2009</p> <p>STATE BAR COURT CLERK'S OFFICE SAN FRANCISCO</p>
<p>In Pro Per Respondent</p> <p><b>Lark L. Ritson</b> 755 Weston Road Scotts Valley, CA 95066 Telephone: (925) 295-0064</p> <p>Bar # 117614</p>	<p>Submitted to: <b>Assigned Judge</b></p>	
<p>In the Matter Of:</p> <p><b>LARK L. RITSON</b></p> <p>Bar # 117614</p> <p>A Member of the State Bar of California (Respondent)</p>	<p>STIPULATION RE FACTS, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND DISPOSITION AND ORDER APPROVING</p> <p><b>PUBLIC REPROVAL</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PREVIOUS STIPULATION REJECTED</p>	

**Note: All information required by this form and any additional information which cannot be provided in the space provided, must be set forth in an attachment to this stipulation under specific headings, e.g., "Facts," "Dismissals," "Conclusions of Law," "Supporting Authority," etc.**

**A. Parties' Acknowledgments:**

- (1) Respondent is a member of the State Bar of California, admitted on **June 11, 1985**.
- (2) The parties agree to be bound by the factual stipulations contained herein even if conclusions of law or disposition are rejected or changed by the Supreme Court.
- (3) All investigations or proceedings listed by case number in the caption of this stipulation are entirely resolved by this stipulation and are deemed consolidated. Dismissed charge(s)/count(s) are listed under "Dismissals." The stipulation consists of **13** pages, not including the order.
- (4) A statement of acts or omissions acknowledged by Respondent as cause or causes for discipline is included under "Facts."
- (5) Conclusions of law, drawn from and specifically referring to the facts are also included under "Conclusions of Law".
- (6) The parties must include supporting authority for the recommended level of discipline under the heading "Supporting Authority."

- (7) No more than 30 days prior to the filing of this stipulation, Respondent has been advised in writing of any pending investigation/proceeding not resolved by this stipulation, except for criminal investigations.
- (8) Payment of Disciplinary Costs—Respondent acknowledges the provisions of Bus. & Prof. Code §§6086.10 & 6140.7. (Check one option only):
- costs added to membership fee for calendar year following effective date of discipline (public reproof)
  - case ineligible for costs (private reproof)
  - costs to be paid in equal amounts for the following membership years:  
(hardship, special circumstances or other good cause per rule 284, Rules of Procedure)
  - costs waived in part as set forth in a separate attachment entitled "Partial Waiver of Costs"
  - costs entirely waived
- (9) The parties understand that:
- (a)  A private reproof imposed on a respondent as a result of a stipulation approved by the Court prior to initiation of a State Bar Court proceeding is part of the respondent's official State Bar membership records, but is not disclosed in response to public inquiries and is not reported on the State Bar's web page. The record of the proceeding in which such a private reproof was imposed is not available to the public except as part of the record of any subsequent proceeding in which it is introduced as evidence of a prior record of discipline under the Rules of Procedure of the State Bar.
  - (b)  A private reproof imposed on a respondent after initiation of a State Bar Court proceeding is part of the respondent's official State Bar membership records, is disclosed in response to public inquiries and is reported as a record of public discipline on the State Bar's web page.
  - (c)  A public reproof imposed on a respondent is publicly available as part of the respondent's official State Bar membership records, is disclosed in response to public inquiries and is reported as a record of public discipline on the State Bar's web page.

**B. Aggravating Circumstances [for definition, see Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct, standard 1.2(b)]. Facts supporting aggravating circumstances are required.**

- (1)  **Prior record of discipline** [see standard 1.2(f)]
- (a)  State Bar Court case # of prior case
  - (b)  Date prior discipline effective
  - (c)  Rules of Professional Conduct/ State Bar Act violations:
  - (d)  Degree of prior discipline
  - (e)  If Respondent has two or more incidents of prior discipline, use space provided below or a separate attachment entitled "Prior Discipline."
- (2)  **Dishonesty:** Respondent's misconduct was surrounded by or followed by bad faith, dishonesty, concealment, overreaching or other violations of the State Bar Act or Rules of Professional Conduct.

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- (3)  **Trust Violation:** Trust funds or property were involved and Respondent refused or was unable to account to the client or person who was the object of the misconduct for improper conduct toward said funds or property.
- (4)  **Harm:** Respondent's misconduct harmed significantly a client, the public or the administration of justice. **See page 11.**
- (5)  **Indifference:** Respondent demonstrated indifference toward rectification of or atonement for the consequences of his or her misconduct.
- (6)  **Lack of Cooperation:** Respondent displayed a lack of candor and cooperation to victims of his/her misconduct or to the State Bar during disciplinary investigation or proceedings.
- (7)  **Multiple/Pattern of Misconduct:** Respondent's current misconduct evidences multiple acts of wrongdoing or demonstrates a pattern of misconduct. **See pages 6 through 11.**
- (8)  **No aggravating circumstances** are involved.

**Additional aggravating circumstances:**

**C. Mitigating Circumstances [see standard 1.2(e)]. Facts supporting mitigating circumstances are required.**

- (1)  **No Prior Discipline:** Respondent has no prior record of discipline over many years of practice coupled with present misconduct which is not deemed serious. **Respondent practiced law for approximately 23 years without discipline before the start of her misconduct. See page 11.**
- (2)  **No Harm:** Respondent did not harm the client or person who was the object of the misconduct.
- (3)  **Candor/Cooperation:** Respondent displayed spontaneous candor and cooperation with the victims of his/her misconduct and to the State Bar during disciplinary investigation and proceedings. **See page 11.**
- (4)  **Remorse:** Respondent promptly took objective steps spontaneously demonstrating remorse and recognition of the wrongdoing, which steps were designed to timely atone for any consequences of his/her misconduct.
- (5)  **Restitution:** Respondent paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ in restitution to \_\_\_\_\_ without the threat or force of disciplinary, civil or criminal proceedings.
- (6)  **Delay:** These disciplinary proceedings were excessively delayed. The delay is not attributable to Respondent and the delay prejudiced him/her.
- (7)  **Good Faith:** Respondent acted in good faith.
- (8)  **Emotional/Physical Difficulties:** At the time of the stipulated act or acts of professional misconduct Respondent suffered extreme emotional difficulties or physical disabilities which expert testimony would establish was directly responsible for the misconduct. The difficulties or disabilities were not the product of any illegal conduct by the member, such as illegal drug or substance abuse, and Respondent no longer suffers from such difficulties or disabilities.
- (9)  **Severe Financial Stress:** At the time of the misconduct, Respondent suffered from severe financial stress which resulted from circumstances not reasonably foreseeable or which were beyond his/her control and which were directly responsible for the misconduct.

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- (10)  **Family Problems:** At the time of the misconduct, Respondent suffered extreme difficulties in his/her personal life which were other than emotional or physical in nature.
- (11)  **Good Character:** Respondent's good character is attested to by a wide range of references in the legal and general communities who are aware of the full extent of his/her misconduct.
- (12)  **Rehabilitation:** Considerable time has passed since the acts of professional misconduct occurred followed by convincing proof of subsequent rehabilitation.
- (13)  **No mitigating circumstances** are involved.

**Additional mitigating circumstances:**

**D. Discipline:**

- (1)  **Private reproof (check applicable conditions, if any, below)**
- (a)  Approved by the Court prior to initiation of the State Bar Court proceedings (no public disclosure).
- (b)  Approved by the Court after initiation of the State Bar Court proceedings (public disclosure).

or

- (2)  **Public reproof (Check applicable conditions, if any, below)**

**E. Conditions Attached to Reproof:**

- (1)  Respondent must comply with the conditions attached to the reproof for a period of **one year**.
- (2)  During the condition period attached to the reproof, Respondent must comply with the provisions of the State Bar Act and Rules of Professional Conduct.
- (3)  Within ten (10) days of any change, Respondent must report to the Membership Records Office of the State Bar and to the Office of Probation of the State Bar of California ("Office of Probation"), all changes of information, including current office address and telephone number, or other address for State Bar purposes, as prescribed by section 6002.1 of the Business and Professions Code.
- (4)  Within thirty (30) days from the effective date of discipline, Respondent must contact the Office of Probation and schedule a meeting with Respondent's assigned probation deputy to discuss these terms and conditions of probation. Upon the direction of the Office of Probation, Respondent must meet with the probation deputy either in-person or by telephone. During the period of probation, Respondent must promptly meet with the probation deputy as directed and upon request.
- (5)  Respondent must submit written quarterly reports to the Office of Probation on each January 10, April 10, July 10, and October 10 of the condition period attached to the reproof. Under penalty of perjury, Respondent must state whether Respondent has complied with the State Bar Act, the Rules of Professional Conduct, and all conditions of the reproof during the preceding calendar quarter. Respondent must also state in each report whether there are any proceedings pending against him or her in the State Bar Court and if so, the case number and current status of that proceeding. If the first report would cover less than 30 (thirty) days, that report must be submitted on the next following quarter date, and cover the extended period.

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In addition to all quarterly reports, a final report, containing the same information, is due no earlier than twenty (20) days before the last day of the condition period and no later than the last day of the condition period.

- (6)  Respondent must be assigned a probation monitor. Respondent must promptly review the terms and conditions of probation with the probation monitor to establish a manner and schedule of compliance. During the period of probation, Respondent must furnish such reports as may be requested, in addition to the quarterly reports required to be submitted to the Office of Probation. Respondent must cooperate fully with the monitor.
- (7)  Subject to assertion of applicable privileges, Respondent must answer fully, promptly and truthfully any inquiries of the Office of Probation and any probation monitor assigned under these conditions which are directed to Respondent personally or in writing relating to whether Respondent is complying or has complied with the conditions attached to the reproof.
- (8)  Within one (1) year of the effective date of the discipline herein, Respondent must provide to the Office of Probation satisfactory proof of attendance at a session of the Ethics School, and passage of the test given at the end of that session.
- No Ethics School recommended. Reason: .
- (9)  Respondent must comply with all conditions of probation imposed in the underlying criminal matter and must so declare under penalty of perjury in conjunction with any quarterly report to be filed with the Office of Probation.
- (10)  Respondent must provide proof of passage of the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination ("MPRE"), administered by the National Conference of Bar Examiners, to the Office of Probation within one year of the effective date of the reproof.
- No MPRE recommended. Reason:
- (11)  The following conditions are attached hereto and incorporated:
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse Conditions | <input type="checkbox"/> Law Office Management Conditions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Conditions         | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Conditions             |

**F. Other Conditions Negotiated by the Parties:**

**ATTACHMENT TO STIPULATION RE FACTS,**  
**CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND DISCIPLINE**

In the Matter of:               **Lark L. Ritson**  
Membership No.:               **117614**  
State Bar Court Case Nos.:   **08-O-14408 and 09-O-11641**

**WAIVERS**

The parties waive the following: (1) the filing of a Notice of Disciplinary Charges (“NDC”) in case number 09-O-11641; (2) any variance between the NDC in case number 08-O-14408 and the facts and conclusions of law contained in this Stipulation; (3) the filing of an amended NDC in case number 08-O-14408; and (4) the right to the filing of an amended NDC and to a formal hearing on any charge not included in this Stipulation.

**FACTS**

Respondent admits that the following facts are true:

**Case Number 08-O-14408**

1. On March 19, 2008, Mr. Ramiro Serrano (“Serrano”) employed respondent to represent him regarding a potential loan modification or loan refinance of his residence. During their meeting, Serrano explained to respondent that time was of the essence since Serrano was behind on his mortgage payments and his home was at risk for foreclosure.
2. When Serrano employed respondent, respondent and Serrano entered into a fee agreement that entitled respondent to charge Serrano \$90 per hour for her services.
3. When Serrano employed respondent, he paid her \$2,500 as an advance fee.
4. On March 20, 2008, respondent spoke with a representative of Serrano’s mortgage holder.
5. On March 26, 2008, respondent and Serrano spoke regarding the status of respondent’s negotiations with Serrano’s mortgage holder.
6. On April 7, 2008, respondent issued an accounting to Serrano indicating respondent had billed Serrano for four hours of work and Serrano had a remaining credit balance of \$2,140.

7. Between March 27 and April 30, 2008, Serrano telephoned respondent's office on several occasions to obtain a status update on his matter. Each time he telephoned, Serrano left respondent a message requesting a status update on his matter.

8. Respondent received Serrano's several telephone messages soon after Serrano left them, but respondent failed to return Serrano's telephone calls and failed to provide Serrano with a status update on his matter.

9. In May 2008, Serrano telephoned respondent daily and left a message requesting that respondent provide her with a status update on her matter.

10. In May 2008, respondent received Serrano's daily telephone messages requesting status updates on his matter, but respondent failed to respond to the telephone messages and failed to provide Serrano with a status update on his matter.

11. In April and May 2008, Serrano went to respondent's office on four occasions and left her notes each time requesting that respondent provide him with a status update.

12. In April and May 2008, respondent received Serrano's notes requesting that respondent provide Serrano with a status update on his matter, but respondent failed to reply to the notes and failed to provide Serrano with a status update on his matter.

13. By early May 2009, respondent ceased performing any services for Serrano.

14. After May 2008, respondent withdrew from representation of Serrano by failing to perform any further services for Serrano.

15. When respondent withdrew from representation, she had failed to make any progress regarding a loan modification or refinance of Serrano's mortgage.

16. Before withdrawing as Serrano's counsel, respondent failed to give notice to Serrano, failed to allow time for Serrano to employ other counsel, and failed to return unearned fees to Serrano.

17. On July 31, 2008, Serrano employed attorney Ali Javaheri ("Javaheri") to assist him with his loan refinance or modification.

18. Between August 1 and 21, 2008, Javaheri telephoned respondent several times to obtain copies of the documents Serrano provided respondent at the time that Serrano employed respondent. However, Javaheri was unable to leave a message because respondent's telephone did not accept any messages.

19. On August 13, 2008, Serrano filed for bankruptcy to avoid the foreclosure of his home.

20. On August 21, 2008, Javaheri sent respondent an email requesting that respondent provide him with Serrano's client file, but the email was returned as undeliverable.

21. The services respondent provided between March 19 and 26, 2008, were of no value to Serrano because respondent did nothing to assist with a loan modification or refinance and because respondent failed to provide Serrano with a status update indicating what action she took to assist with a loan modification or refinance.

22. When respondent withdrew from employment, respondent owed Serrano a refund of his full advance fee of \$2,500 because the minimal services that respondent provided resulted in no benefit to Serrano.

23. On \_\_\_\_\_, 2009, respondent refunded \$2,875 to Serrano. This refund covered the principal amount of \$2500 plus interest of \$375 (i.e., 10 percent interest per year from March 19, 2006).

24. On September 22, 2008, the State Bar opened an investigation concerning respondent's handling of Serrano's matter.

25. On January 20, 2009, State Bar Investigator Francoise Jacobs ("Jacobs") wrote to respondent regarding her handling of Serrano's matter by placing the letter in a sealed envelope correctly addressed to respondent at her address as maintained by the State Bar in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6002.1. The letter was properly mailed by first class mail, postage prepaid, by depositing it for collection by the United States Postal Service in the ordinary course of business on the date of the letter. The United States Postal Service did not return the letter sent to respondent as undeliverable or for any other reason.

26. Jacobs's letter of January 20, 2009, requested that on or before February 5, 2009, respondent reply in writing to specified allegations of misconduct being investigated by the State Bar in case number 08-O-14408.

27. Soon after January 20, 2009, respondent received Jacobs's initial letter regarding her handling of Serrano's matter.

28. Respondent did not reply to Jacobs's letter of January 20, 2009.

29. On February 11, 2009, Jacobs wrote another letter to respondent regarding her conduct in Serrano's matter by placing the letter in a sealed envelope correctly addressed to respondent at her address as maintained by the State Bar in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6002.1. The letter was properly mailed by first class mail, postage prepaid, by depositing it for collection by the United States Postal Service in the ordinary course of business on the date of the letter. The United States Postal Service did not return the letter sent to respondent as undeliverable or for any other reason.

30. Jacobs's letter of February 11, 2009, enclosed a copy of her letter of January 20, 2009, and requested that respondent respond in writing by February 25, 2009.

31. Soon after February 11, 2009, respondent received Jacobs's second letter regarding her handling of Serrano's matter.



32. Respondent did not reply to Jacobs's letter of February 11, 2009.

**Case Number 09-O-11641**

1. On April 13, 2007, Mr. M. Brewster Smith ("Smith") hired respondent to represent him regarding a car accident.
2. From April 2007 to January 2008, respondent provided legal services to Smith.
3. After January 2008, respondent failed to perform any further services for Smith. She thus failed to finish the services necessary for completing Smith's matter.
4. After January 2008, respondent withdrew from representation of Smith by failing to perform any further services for Smith.
5. Before withdrawing as Smith's attorney, respondent failed to give notice to Smith and failed to allow Smith time to hire another attorney.
6. In the spring of 2008, Smith mailed respondent a letter asking about the status of his matter. This letter was not returned as undeliverable.
7. In the spring of 2008, Smith telephoned the office number of respondent to ask about the status of his matter. He learned that respondent's office telephone had been disconnected.
8. On April 3, 2009, the State Bar opened an investigation into respondent's handling of Smith's matter.
9. On May 12, 2009, Jacobs wrote a letter to respondent regarding her handling of Smith's matter by placing the letter in a sealed envelope correctly addressed to respondent at her address as maintained by the State Bar in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6002.1. The letter was properly mailed by first class mail, postage prepaid, by depositing it for collection by the United States Postal Service in the ordinary course of business on the date of the letter. The United States Postal Service did not return the letter sent to respondent as undeliverable or for any other reason.
10. Jacobs's letter requested that respondent respond in writing to specified allegations of misconduct being investigated by the State Bar in this matter on or before May 27, 2009.
11. Soon after May 12, 2009, respondent received Jacobs's initial letter regarding her handling of Smith's matter.
12. Respondent did not reply to Jacobs's letter of May 12, 2009.
13. On May 27, 2009, Jacobs wrote another letter to respondent regarding the handling of Smith's matter by placing the letter in a sealed envelope correctly addressed to respondent at her address as maintained by the State Bar in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6002.1. The letter was properly mailed by first class mail, postage prepaid, by depositing it for collection by the

United States Postal Service in the ordinary course of business on the date of the letter. The United States Postal Service did not return the letter sent to respondent as undeliverable or for any other reason.

14. The letter of May 27, 2009, enclosed a copy of the, letter of May 12, 2009, and requested that respondent respond in writing by June 20, 2009.

15. Soon after May 27, 2009, respondent received Jacobs's second letter regarding her handling of Smith's matter.

16. Respondent did not reply to Jacobs's letter of May 27, 2009.

## **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

Respondent admits that the following conclusions of law are true:

### **Case Number 08-O-14408**

1. Respondent wilfully violated rule 3-700(A)(2) of the Rules of Professional Conduct by failing, upon termination of employment, to take reasonable steps to avoid reasonably foreseeable prejudice to her client as follows: she failed to give notice to Serrano of her withdrawal and to allow time for Serrano to employ other counsel.

2. Respondent wilfully violated section 6068, subdivision (m) of the Business and Professions Code by failing to respond promptly to reasonable status inquiries of a client as follows: she failed to respond to Serrano's requests for a status update regarding his matter.

3. Respondent wilfully violated rule 3-700(D)(2) of the Rules of Professional Conduct by failing to refund promptly any part of an unearned advance fee as follows: she failed to refund any of the \$2,500 unearned advance fee to Serrano.

4. Respondent wilfully violated rule 3-110(A) of the Rules of Professional Conduct by intentionally, recklessly, or repeatedly failing to perform legal services with competence, as follows: she intentionally or recklessly failed to assist Serrano with a loan modification or refinance.

5. Respondent wilfully violated section 6068, subdivision (i) by failing to cooperate and participate in a disciplinary investigation against her as follows: she failed to respond to the investigation letters sent to her on January 20 and February 11, 2009.

### **Case Number 09-O-11641**

1. Respondent wilfully violated rule 3-700(A)(2) of the Rules of Professional Conduct by failing, upon termination of employment, to take reasonable steps to avoid reasonably foreseeable prejudice to her client as follows: she failed to give notice to Smith of her withdrawal and to allow time for Smith to employ other counsel.

2. Respondent wilfully violated section 6068, subdivision (m) of the Business and Professions Code by failing to respond promptly to reasonable status inquiries of a client as follows: she failed to respond to Smith's requests for a status update regarding his matter.

3. Respondent wilfully violated rule 3-110(A) of the Rules of Professional Conduct by intentionally, recklessly, or repeatedly failing to perform legal services with competence, as follows: she recklessly failed to finish the work necessary to complete Smith's matter.

4. Respondent wilfully violated section 6068, subdivision (i) by failing to cooperate and participate in a disciplinary investigation against her as follows: she failed to respond to the investigation letters sent to her on May 12 and May 27, 2009.

## **AGGRAVATION**

### **Multiple Acts**

Respondent's misconduct involved multiple acts of wrongdoing.

### **Significant Harm**

Respondent significantly harmed Serrano by failing to return the \$2,500 unearned advance fee. She significantly harmed Smith by not finishing necessary work on his matter and by not informing him of the status of his matter.

## **MITIGATION**

### **No Prior Discipline**

Respondent practiced law for almost 23 years before the start of her misconduct, and case numbers 08-O-14408 and 09-O-11641 ("the current cases") are not deemed serious.

### **Cooperation in the Current Cases**

When respondent became aware of the current cases, she cooperated with the State Bar.

## **SUPPORTING AUTHORITY**

The determination of discipline begins "by looking to the purpose of sanctions for attorney misconduct." (*In re Morse* (1995) 11 Cal.4th 184, 205.) Standard 1.3 provides: "The primary purposes of disciplinary proceedings . . . are the protection of the public, the courts[,] and the legal profession; the maintenance of high professional standards by attorneys[;] and the preservation of public confidence in the legal profession."

The standards provide guidance and deserve “great weight.” (*In re Naney* (1990) 51 Cal.3d 186, 190; *Van Sloten v. State Bar* (1989) 48 Cal.3d 921, 933, fn. 5.) “[A]dherence to the standards in the great majority of cases serves the valuable purpose of eliminating disparity and assuring consistency, that is, the imposition of similar attorney discipline for instances of similar misconduct.” (*In re Naney, supra*, 51 Cal.3d at p. 190; see also *In re Brown* (1995) 12 Cal.4th 205, 220.) The California Supreme Court accepts a disciplinary recommendation resulting from application of the standards unless it has “grave doubts” about the recommendation’s propriety. (*In re Morse, supra*, 11 Cal.4th at p. 206; *In re Lamb* (1989) 49 Cal.3d 239, 245.)

Standards 2.4(b) and 2.10 of the Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct call for reproof or suspension in the current cases. A public reproof is appropriate because (1) she practiced law for 23 years before the start of her misconduct, (2) her misconduct is not deemed serious, and (3) she cooperated with the State Bar in resolving the current cases.

## **ETHICS SCHOOL**

The Minimum Continuing Legal Education (“MCLE”) credit given for participation in Ethics School shall be counted toward the MCLE hours required for attorneys generally.

## **ESTIMATED PROSECUTION COST**

The estimated prosecution cost of the current cases is \$4,279. This sum is only an estimate. If this Stipulation is rejected or if relief from this Stipulation is granted, the prosecution cost of the current cases may increase because of the cost of further proceedings.

## **DATE OF DISCLOSURE OF ANY PENDING INVESTIGATION OR PROCEEDING**

On August 28, 2009, the State Bar sent a disclosure letter by e-mail to respondent. In this letter, the State Bar advised her of any pending investigations or proceedings against her other than the current cases.

(Do not write above this line.)

In the Matter of  <b>LARK L. RITSON, No. 117614,</b>  A Member of the State Bar.	Case number(s):  <b>08-O-14408 09-O-11641</b>
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**SIGNATURE OF THE PARTIES**

By their signatures below, the parties and their counsel, as applicable, signify their agreement with each of the recitations and each of the terms and conditions of this Stipulation Re Fact, Conclusions of Law and Disposition.

Sept. 1, 2009  
Date

*Lark L. Ritson*  
Respondent's Signature

Lark L. Ritson  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent's Counsel Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

9 / 8 / 09  
Date

*Mark Hartman*  
Deputy Trial Counsel's Signature

Mark Hartman  
Print Name

(Do not write above this line.)

In the Matter Of  <b>LARK L. RITSON</b> <b>No. 117614,</b>  <b>A Member of the State Bar</b>	Case Number(s):  <b>08-O-14408</b> <b>09-O-11641</b>
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**ORDER**

Finding the stipulation to be fair to the parties and that it adequately protects the public, IT IS ORDERED that the requested dismissal of counts/charges, if any, is GRANTED without prejudice, and:

- The stipulated facts and disposition are APPROVED and the DISCIPLINE RECOMMENDED to the Supreme Court.
- The stipulated facts and disposition are APPROVED AS MODIFIED as set forth below, and the DISCIPLINE IS RECOMMENDED to the Supreme Court.
- All Hearing dates are vacated.

The parties are bound by the stipulation as approved unless: 1) a motion to withdraw or modify the stipulation, filed within 15 days after service of this order, is granted; or 2) this court modifies or further modifies the approved stipulation. (See rule 135(b), Rules of Procedure.) **The effective date of this disposition is the effective date of the Supreme Court order herein, normally 30 days after file date. (See rule 9.18(a), California Rules of Court.)**

Sept. 10, 2009  
Date

[Signature]  
Judge of the State Bar Court  
Luigi Armendariz

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

[Rule 62(b), Rules Proc.; Code Civ. Proc., § 1013a(4)]

I am a Case Administrator of the State Bar Court of California. I am over the age of eighteen and not a party to the within proceeding. Pursuant to standard court practice, in the City and County of San Francisco, on September 10, 2009, I deposited a true copy of the following document(s):

**STIPULATION RE FACTS, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND DISPOSITION AND ORDER APPROVING**

in a sealed envelope for collection and mailing on that date as follows:

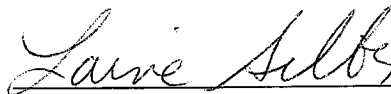
- by first-class mail, with postage thereon fully prepaid, through the United States Postal Service at San Francisco, California, addressed as follows:

LARK L RITSON  
755 WESTON ROAD  
SCOTTS VALLEY, CA 95066

- by interoffice mail through a facility regularly maintained by the State Bar of California addressed as follows:

MARK HARTMAN, Enforcement, San Francisco

I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed in San Francisco, California, on September 10, 2009.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Laine Silber  
Case Administrator  
State Bar Court