

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.

**ACTUAL SUSPENSION** 

PREVIOUS STIPULATION REJECTED

# A. Parties' Acknowledgments:

A Member of the State Bar of California

- (1) Respondent is a member of the State Bar of California, admitted June 14, 1995.
- (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."

(Effective January 1, 2011)

Bar # 177153

(Respondent)

ABD 19/16/13



(Do no	ot write	bove this line.)			
(5)	Con- Law	nclusions of law, drawn from and specifically referring to the facts are also included under "Conclusions of			
(6)		ne parties must include supporting authority for the recommended level of discipline under the heading upporting Authority."			
(7)	No r	more than 30 days prior to the filing of this stipulation, Respondent has been advised in writing of any nding 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 6 6140.7. (Check one option only):				
	<ul> <li>Until costs are paid in full, Respondent will remain actually suspended from the practice of law unless relief is obtained per rule 5.130, Rules of Procedure.</li> <li>✓ Costs are to be paid in equal amounts prior to February 1 for the following membership years: three (3) billing cycles following the effective date of discipline. (Hardship, special circumstances or other good cause per rule 5.132, Rules of Procedure.) If Respondent fails to pay any installment as described above, or as may be modified by the State Bar Court, the remaining balance is due and payable immediately.</li> <li>Costs are waived in part as set forth in a separate attachment entitled "Partial Waiver of Costs".</li> </ul>				
F	Profe	vating Circumstances [for definition, see Standards for Attorney Sanctions for sional Misconduct, standard 1.2(b)]. Facts supporting aggravating circumstances quired.			
(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.			
(2)		<b>Dishonesty:</b> 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.			
(3)		<b>Trust Violation:</b> 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 Attachment Page 10.			
(5)	$\boxtimes$	Indifference: Respondent demonstrated indifference toward rectification of or atonement for the consequences of his or her misconduct. See Attachment Page 10.			

(Do n	ot write	above this line.)		
(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 Attachment Page 10.		
(8)		No aggravating circumstances are involved.		
Add	litiona	al aggravating circumstances:		
	_	ating Circumstances [see standard 1.2(e)]. Facts supporting mitigating mstances are required.		
(1)		<b>No Prior Discipline:</b> Respondent has no prior record of discipline over many years of practice coupled with present misconduct which is not deemed serious.		
(2)		No Harm: Respondent did not harm the client or person who was the object of the misconduct.		
(3)		<b>Candor/Cooperation:</b> Respondent displayed spontaneous candor and cooperation with the victims of his/her misconduct and to the State Bar during disciplinary investigation and proceedings.		
(4)		<b>Remorse:</b> 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)		<b>Restitution:</b> Respondent paid \$ on in restitution to without the threat or force of disciplinary, civil or criminal proceedings.		
(6)		<b>Delay:</b> 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)		<b>Emotional/Physical Difficulties:</b> 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)		<b>Severe Financial Stress:</b> 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.		
(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)	) <u></u>	<b>Good Character:</b> 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)	) 🗆	<b>Rehabilitation:</b> Considerable time has passed since the acts of professional misconduct occurred followed by convincing proof of subsequent rehabilitation.		

(Do not write above this line.)					
(13)		No n	nitiga	ting circumstances are involved.	
Addi	tiona	ıl miti	igatin	g circumstances:	
	Se	e At	tachr	ment Page 11.	
D. D	isci	pline	<b>ə</b> :		
(1)	$\boxtimes$	☑ Stayed Suspension:			
	(a)	$\boxtimes$	Resp	pondent must be suspended from the practice of law for a period of two (2) years.	
		i.		and until Respondent shows proof satisfactory to the State Bar Court of rehabilitation and present fitness to practice and present learning and ability in the law pursuant to standard 1.4(c)(ii) Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct.	
		ii.		and until Respondent pays restitution as set forth in the Financial Conditions form attached to this stipulation.	
		iii.		and until Respondent does the following:	
	(b)	$\boxtimes$	The	above-referenced suspension is stayed.	
(2)	$\boxtimes$	Probation:			
		Respondent must be placed on probation for a period of two (2) years, which will commence upon the effective date of the Supreme Court order in this matter. (See rule 9.18, California Rules of Court)			
(3)	$\boxtimes$	Actual Suspension:			
	(a)	Respondent must be actually suspended from the practice of law in the State of California for a period of ninety (90) days.			
		i.		and until Respondent shows proof satisfactory to the State Bar Court of rehabilitation and present fitness to practice and present learning and ability in the law pursuant to standard 1.4(c)(ii), Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct	
		ii.		and until Respondent pays restitution as set forth in the Financial Conditions form attached to this stipulation.	
		iii.		and until Respondent does the following:	
E. A	ddi	tiona	al Co	nditions of Probation:	
(1)		If Respondent is actually suspended for two years or more, he/she must remain actually suspended until he/she proves to the State Bar Court his/her rehabilitation, fitness to practice, and learning and ability in the general law, pursuant to standard 1.4(c)(ii), Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct.			
(2)	$\boxtimes$	During the probation period, Respondent must comply with the provisions of the State Bar Act and Rules of Professional Conduct.			
(3)	$\boxtimes$	With Stat	nin ten e Bar	(10) days of any change, Respondent must report to the Membership Records Office of the and to the Office of Probation of the State Bar of California ("Office of Probation"), all changes of	

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		further hearing until passage. But see rule 9.10(b), California Rules of Court, and rule 5.162(A) & (E), Rules of Procedure.
		☐ No MPRE recommended. Reason:
(2)		Rule 9.20, California Rules of Court: Respondent must comply with the requirements of rule 9.20, California Rules of Court, and perform the acts specified in subdivisions (a) and (c) of that rule within 30 and 40 calendar days, respectively, after the effective date of the Supreme Court's Order in this matter.
(3)		Conditional Rule 9.20, California Rules of Court: If Respondent remains actually suspended for 90 days or more, he/she must comply with the requirements of rule 9.20, California Rules of Court, and perform the acts specified in subdivisions (a) and (c) of that rule within 120 and 130 calendar days, respectively, after the effective date of the Supreme Court's Order in this matter.
(4)		<b>Credit for Interim Suspension [conviction referral cases only]:</b> Respondent will be credited for the period of his/her interim suspension toward the stipulated period of actual suspension. Date of commencement of interim suspension:
(5)		Other Conditions:

In the Matter of:	Case Number(s):
DAWN MARIE HUNTER Member #: 177153	12-O-12104
Weinber #. 17/155	

#### **Financial Conditions**

#### a. Restitution

Respondent must pay restitution (including the principal amount, plus interest of 10% per annum) to the payee(s) listed below. If the Client Security Fund ("CSF") has reimbursed one or more of the payee(s) for all or any portion of the principal amount(s) listed below, Respondent must also pay restitution to CSF in the amount(s) paid, plus applicable interest and costs.

Payee	Principal Amount	Interest Accrues From	
Pearl Ryan	\$4,146.00	December 26, 2011	
	\$		
	\$ .		
	\$		

Respondent must pay above-referenced restitution and provide satisfactory proof of payment to the Office of Probation not later than

#### b. Installment Restitution Payments

Respondent must pay the above-referenced restitution on the payment schedule set forth below. Respondent must provide satisfactory proof of payment to the Office of Probation with each quarterly probation report, or as otherwise directed by the Office of Probation. No later than (60) days prior to the expiration of the period of probation (or period of reproval), Respondent must make any necessary final payment(s) in order to complete the payment of restitution, including interest, in full.

Payee/CSF (as applicable)	Minimum Payment Amount	Payment Frequency	
Pearl Ryan	\$200	Monthly on the first day of each month beginning the month following the effective date of discipline	
	\$	·	
	\$		
	\$		

If Respondent fails to pay any installment as described above, or as may be modified by the State Bar Court, the remaining balance is due and payable immediately.

#### c. Client Funds Certificate

- 1. If Respondent possesses client funds at any time during the period covered by a required quarterly report, Respondent must file with each required report a certificate from Respondent and/or certified public accountant or other financial professional approved by the Office of Probation, certifying that:
  - a. Respondent as maintained a bank account in a bank authorized to do business in the State of California, at a branch located within the State of California, and that such account is designated as a "Trust Account" or "Clients' Funds Account":

In the Matter of:	Case Number(s):	
DAWN MARIE HUNTER Member #: 177153	12-O-12104	

- b. Respondent has kept and maintained the following:
  - i. A written ledger for each client on whose behalf funds are held that sets forth:
    - 1. the name of such client;
    - 2. the date, amount and source of all funds received on behalf of such client;
    - 3. the date, amount, payee and purpose of each disbursement made on behalf of such client; and
    - 4. the current balance for such client.
  - ii. A written journal for each client trust fund account that sets forth:
    - 1. the name of such account;
    - 2. the date, amount and client affected by each debit and credit; and
    - 3. the current balance in such account.
  - iii. All bank statements and cancelled checks for each client trust account; and
  - iv. Each monthly reconciliation (balancing) of (i), (ii), and (iii) above, and if there are any differences between the monthly total balances reflected in (i), (ii), and (iii) above, the reasons for the differences.
- c. Respondent has maintained a written journal of securities or other properties held for clients that specifies:
  - i. each item of security and property held;
  - ii. the person on whose behalf the security or property is held;
  - iii. the date of receipt of the security or property;
  - iv. the date of distribution of the security or property; and
  - v. the person to whom the security or property was distributed.
- 2. If Respondent does not possesses any client funds, property or securities during the entire period covered by a report, Respondent must so state under penalty of perjury in the report filed with the Office of Probation for that reporting period. In this circumstance, Respondent need not file the accountant's certificate described above.
- 3. The requirements of this condition are in addition to those set forth in rule 4-100, Rules of Professional Conduct.

#### d. Client Trust Accounting School

Ш	Within one (1) year of the effective date of the discipline herein, Respondent must supply to the Office of
	Probation satisfactory proof of attendance at a session of the Ethics School Client Trust Accounting School,
	within the same period of time, and passage of the test given at the end of that session.

## **ATTACHMENT TO**

# STIPULATION RE FACTS, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND DISPOSITION

IN THE MATTER OF: DAWN MARIE HUNTER

Case Number(s): 12-O-12104

#### FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW.

Respondent admits that the following facts are true and that she is culpable of violations of the specified statutes and Rule of Professional Conduct.

## Case No. 12-O-12104 (Complainant: Pearl Ryan)

#### **FACTS:**

- 1. On May 24, 2011, Pearl Ryan ("Ryan") employed Respondent and paid \$1,000 in advanced legal fees for Respondent's representation in a lawsuit already pending in Superior Court in which Ryan was the plaintiff.
- 2. On May 26, 2011, the California Supreme Court served Respondent with an order, effective July 1, 2011, suspending her from the practice of law for failure to pay State Bar membership fees. Respondent received the Supreme Court order. To date, Respondent has not paid her State Bar membership fees and remains suspended from the practice of law.
- 3. At no time before or after the effective date of the suspension did Respondent inform Ryan that she would be or was suspended from the practice of law as of July 1, 2011.
- 4. Between August 25, 2011, and December 26, 2011, while suspended from the practice of law, Respondent charged Ryan an additional \$4,146 in legal fees for services performed after the date of the suspension, which fees Ryan paid and Respondent collected.
- 5. Between September 12, 2011, and October 12, 2011, while suspended from the practice of law and purportedly acting as counsel for Ryan, Respondent sent multiple e-mails concerning the lawsuit to a representative of one of the defendants. The representative received the e-mails.
- 6. Between September 12, 2011, and October 21, 2011, while suspended from the practice of law and purportedly acting as counsel for Ryan, Respondent sent multiple e-mails to Ryan regarding damages and other issues in connection with the lawsuit. Ryan received the e-mails.
- 7. When Respondent sent the e-mails to Ryan and to the defendant's representative, Respondent knew, that she had been suspended and was not eligible to practice law. Respondent concealed these facts from Ryan and defendant's representative, and by her concealment misrepresented that she was an active member of the State Bar and entitled to practice law.

- 8. On March 21, 2012, Ryan filed a complaint against Respondent with the State Bar of California.
- 9. On April 26, 2012, and May 15, 2012, a State Bar investigator mailed letters to Respondent requesting that she respond in writing to specified allegations of misconduct under investigation in connection with Ryan's complaint by May 10, 2012, and May 30, 2012, respectively. Respondent received the letters but did not respond or otherwise cooperate in the investigation.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

- 10. By continuing employment with Ryan after she had been suspended from the practice of law effective July 1, 2011, accepting fees for legal services when she was not an active member of the State Bar of California, failing to notify Ryan that she would be or had been suspended from the practice of law effective July 1, 2011, and purporting to act as counsel for Ryan after she had been suspended from the practice of law, Respondent held herself out as entitled to practice law and actually practiced law in willful violation of Business and Professions Code sections 6125 and 6126, and thereby failed to comply with the laws of the State of California in willful violation of Business and Professions Code section 6068(a).
- 11. By representing Ryan when she knew that she was not entitled to practice law, and by concealing the suspension of her State Bar membership status from Ryan and a third party, Respondent committed acts involving dishonesty in willful violation of Business and Professions Code section 6106.
- 12. By charging and collecting \$4,146 in legal fees from Ryan for legal services performed when Respondent was not an active member of the State Bar, Respondent entered into an agreement for, charged, and collected an illegal fee in willful violation of Rules of Professional Conduct, rule 4-200(A).
- 13. By failing to respond to the investigator's letters, Respondent failed to cooperate and participate in a disciplinary investigation pending against her in willful violation of Business and Professions Code section 6068(i).

#### ADDITIONAL FACTS RE AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

Multiple Acts of Misconduct (Std. 1.2(b)(ii)): Respondent has engaged in multiple acts of misconduct by engaging in the unauthorized practice of law, concealing the status of her bar license from her client and a third party, collecting and charging an illegal fee, and failing to cooperate in a State Bar investigation.

Harm (Std. 1.2(b)(iv)): As a result of Respondent's misconduct, Ryan suffered harm as she has been without the \$4,146 that Respondent illegally charged and collected for approximately 18 months.

Indifference (Std. 1.2(b)(v)): Respondent has failed to show any remorse by failing to pay restitution to the client in the amount of \$4,146. (See *In the Matter of Wells* (Review Dept. 2006) 4 Cal State Bar Ct. Rptr. 896, 913 [failure to refund the fees and costs an attorney wrongfully collected demonstrates indifference toward rectification of or atonement for the consequences of his or her misconduct].)

# ADDITIONAL FACTS RE MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

**No Prior Record of Discipline:** Although Respondent's current misconduct is serious, at the time of the misconduct, Respondent had no prior record of discipline over approximately 15 years of practice prior to the misconduct, which is entitled to mitigation. (See *In the Matter of Riordan* (Review Dept. 2007) 5 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 41, 49).

**Prefiling Stipulation**: Respondent is also receiving mitigation for entering into a full stipulation to resolve this matter prior to the filing of formal disciplinary charges, thereby preserving State Bar Court time and resources. (*In the Matter of Downey* (Review Dept. 2009) 5 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 151, 156; *In the Matter of Van Sickle* (Review Dept. 2006) 4 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 980, 993-994.) However, the mitigating weight given to Respondent's cooperation in entering into the stipulation is tempered by Respondent's failure to participate in the State Bar investigation.

## **AUTHORITIES SUPPORTING DISCIPLINE.**

The Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct provide a "process of fixing discipline" pursuant to a set of written principles to "better discharge the purposes of attorney discipline as announced by the Supreme Court." (Rules Proc. of State Bar, tit. IV, Stds. for Atty. Sanctions for Prof. Misconduct, Introduction (all further references to standards are to this source).) The primary purposes of disciplinary proceedings and of the sanctions imposed 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." (*In re Morse* (1995) 11 Cal.4th 184, 205; std. 1.3.)

Although not binding, the standards are entitled to "great weight" and should be followed "whenever possible" in determining level of discipline. (In re Silverton (2005) 36 Cal.4th 81, 92, quoting In re Brown (1995) 12 Cal.4th 205, 220 and In re Young (1989) 49 Cal.3d 257, 267, fn. 11.) Adherence 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 attorney misconduct. (In re Naney (1990) 51 Cal.3d 186, 190.) Any discipline recommendation different from that set forth in the applicable standards should clearly explain the reasons for the deviation. (Blair v. State Bar (1989) 49 Cal.3d 762, 776, fn. 5.)

Respondent admits to committing four distinct ethical violations. Standard 1.6 (a) requires that where a Respondent acknowledges two or more acts of misconduct, and different sanctions are prescribed by the standards that apply to those acts, the sanction imposed shall be the more or most severe prescribed in the applicable standards.

The most severe sanction applicable to Respondent's misconduct is found in standard 2.3, which applies to Respondent's violation of Business and Professions Code section 6106.

Standard 2.3 provides that, "Culpability of a member of an act of moral turpitude, fraud, or intentional dishonesty toward a court, client or another person or of concealment of a material fact to a court, client

or another person shall result in actual suspension or disbarment depending upon the extent to which the victim of the misconduct is harmed or misled and depending upon the magnitude of the act of misconduct and the degree to which it relates to the member's acts within the practice of law.

In the instant case, Respondent committed multiple serious acts of misconduct, which included acts of dishonesty to her client and a third party. To date, Respondent has not refunded the illegal fees that she collected from her client for services that she performed while she knew that she was not entitled to practice law. Additionally, Respondent failed to cooperate in a State Bar investigation. In mitigation, Respondent practiced approximately 15 years before she committed the misconduct described herein, and she agreed to enter into this stipulation. Although these facts are mitigating, they are not sufficiently compelling to warrant a deviation from Standard 2.3 given the seriousness of Respondent's misconduct.

In consideration of the misconduct, the aggravating and mitigating facts surrounding the misconduct, and the applicable Standard, discipline consisting of two years' stayed suspension, two years' probation with conditions, including a 90-day actual suspension is warranted in order to satisfy the purposes of attorney discipline.

### COSTS OF DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS.

Respondent acknowledges that the Office of the Chief Trial Counsel has informed respondent that as of October 11, 2013, the prosecution costs in this matter are \$2,925.00. Respondent further acknowledges that should this stipulation be rejected or should relief from the stipulation be granted, the costs in this matter may increase due to the cost of further proceedings.

#### **EXCLUSION FROM MCLE CREDIT**

Pursuant to rule 3201, Respondent may <u>not</u> receive MCLE credit for completion of State Bar Ethics School and any MCLE courses ordered as a condition of suspension. (Rules Proc. of State Bar, rule 3201.)

# 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 Facts, Conclusions of Law, and Disposition.

October 24, 2013	Nown In Alash	Dawn Marie Hunter
Date	Respondent's Signature	Print Name
, 2013		
Date	Respondent's Counsel Signature	Print Name
0.0	, , , , , ,	
October 29, 2013	mul / Islass	Michael J. Glass
Date	Senior Trial Counsel's Signature	Print Name

(Effective January 1, 2011)

11/15/13

Judge of the State Bar Court

#### **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

[Rules Proc. of State Bar; Rule 5.27(B); 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 Los Angeles, on November 18, 2013, I deposited a true copy of the following document(s):

# STIPULATION RE FACTS, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND DISPOSITION AND ORDER APPROVING ACTUAL SUSPENSION

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 Los Angeles, California, addressed as follows:

DAWN M. HUNTER 224 E 2ND ST # E NEWELL, IA 50568

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

## MICHAEL GLASS, Enforcement, Los Angeles

I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed in Los Angeles, California, on November 18, 2013.

Tammy Cleaver Case Administrator State Bar Court