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**STATE BAR COURT
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LOS ANGELES**

PUBLIC MATTER

STATE BAR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

HEARING DEPARTMENT - LOS ANGELES

In the Matter of)	Case No. 16-O-10349-YDR
)	
MONA FALAH,)	DECISION
)	
A Member of the State Bar, No. 280995.)	
_____)	

Introduction¹

Respondent Mona Falah (Respondent) is charged with eight counts of misconduct in a single client matter. She is charged with three counts of failing to maintain client funds in her client trust account (CTA), three counts of misappropriation, failing to promptly release her client's file, and commingling. The Office of Chief Trial Counsel of the State Bar of California (OCTC) has the burden of proving these charges by clear and convincing evidence.² Respondent has stipulated to the misconduct alleged, with the exception of the misappropriation charges. Based on the stipulated facts and the evidence admitted at trial, this court finds, by clear and convincing evidence, that Respondent is culpable of the misconduct alleged in all eight counts and recommends that Respondent be suspended from the practice of law in California for three

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all references to rules refer to the State Bar Rules of Professional Conduct. Furthermore, all statutory references are to the Business and Professions Code, unless otherwise indicated.

² Clear and convincing evidence leaves no substantial doubt and is sufficiently strong to command the unhesitating assent of every reasonable mind. (*Conservatorship of Wendland* (2001) 26 Cal.4th 519, 552.)

years, that execution of that period of suspension be stayed, and that she be placed on probation for a period of three years subject to a two-year actual suspension and until she proves her rehabilitation, fitness to practice law, and present learning and ability in the general law pursuant to standard 1.2(c)(1).

Significant Procedural History

On December 22, 2016, OCTC initiated this proceeding by filing a Notice of Disciplinary Charges (NDC) in case number 16-O-10349. Respondent filed a response to the NDC on February 16, 2017. The parties filed a Joint Stipulation as to Facts and Admission of Documents on April 17, 2017.

A two-day trial was held on April 17 and April 21, 2017. OCTC was represented by Senior Trial Counsel William Todd. Respondent represented herself. The case was submitted for decision on April 21, 2017. OCTC filed its closing brief on May 5, 2017. Respondent filed her closing brief on May 26, 2017.

Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

Respondent was admitted to the practice of law in California on December 9, 2011, and has been a member of the State Bar of California at all times since that date.

The following findings of fact and conclusions of law are based on the April 17, 2017 stipulation and the evidence admitted at trial.

Case No. 16-O-10349 – The Marvizi Matter

Facts

On August 5, 2014, Jacob Marvizi hired Respondent to represent him in a marital dissolution. On August 24, 2014, Marvizi paid Respondent \$3,500 in advance fees, which Respondent deposited into her U.S. Bank client trust account, numbered xxxxxx8343 (CTA).

On November 13, 2014, Marvizi deposited \$69,320 into Respondent's CTA. The funds represented proceeds from a real estate transaction. Respondent had received \$72,820 of Marvizi's funds since August 24, 2014. Respondent's accounting and CTA records show that between August 24, 2014, and February 1, 2015, Respondent distributed \$59,000 to Marvizi or to third parties on Marvizi's behalf. Thereafter, Respondent should have possessed \$13,820 of Marvizi's funds in her CTA.³

Respondent's accounting reveals that there were four invoices for legal services between August 24, 2014, and February 1, 2015, totaling \$12,852.72. Respondent should have held \$967.28 of Marvizi's funds between February 1, 2015 and March 23, 2015. On March 23, 2015, Respondent's CTA balance fell to \$0.40 after Respondent withdrew \$56 via a telephone-assisted transaction. Respondent should have held at least \$967.28 of Marvizi's funds in Respondent's CTA, a difference of \$966.88.

On May 14, 2015, \$90,000 was deposited into Respondent's CTA on Marvizi's behalf. The deposit represented funds from a real estate transaction. Immediately following the deposit, Respondent should have held \$90,967.28 of Marvizi's funds. Respondent's accounting and CTA records show that between May 14, 2015, and July 20, 2015, Respondent distributed \$56,832.21 to Marvizi or to third parties on Marvizi's behalf. After the distributions, Respondent should have held \$34,135.07 of Marvizi's funds in her CTA.

Respondent's accounting shows one invoice for legal services between May 14, 2015, and July 20, 2015, totaling \$4,452. Marvizi agreed that a portion of the \$90,000 deposit "went to his attorney's fees." Respondent should have possessed \$29,683.07 of Marvizi's funds between

³ Despite the parties' stipulation providing that Respondent "held," "possessed," or "retained" a certain amount of Marvizi's funds in her CTA during a certain period, those stipulated facts are contrary to the CTA records admitted at trial. Respondent's CTA dipped below the stated amount in the stipulation during the stated time period. Thus, the court's factual findings reflect the amount Respondent should have held or retained in her CTA.

July 21, 2015, and August 23, 2015. On July 21, 2015, Respondent's CTA balance fell to \$6,921.20. Respondent should have held at least \$29,683.07 of Marvizi's funds in her CTA, which was difference of \$22,761.87.

On August 24, 2015, Marvizi deposited \$30,000 into Respondent's CTA. The money represented funds from a real estate transaction. Immediately following the deposit, Respondent should have held \$59,683.07 of Marvizi's funds.

Respondent's accounting and CTA records reveal that between August 24, 2015, and September 25, 2015, Respondent distributed \$26,500 to Marvizi or to third parties on Marvizi's behalf. Respondent should have retained \$33,183.07 of Marvizi's funds. Respondent's accounting shows five invoices for legal services between August 24, 2015, and September 25, 2015, totaling \$22,944. Respondent should have held \$10,239.07 of Marvizi's funds between August 24, 2015 and September 25, 2015.

On September 25, 2015, Respondent's CTA balance fell to \$7,130.77. Respondent should have held at least \$10,239.07 of Marvizi's funds in Respondent's CTA, which is a difference of \$3,108.30. Respondent has repaid all of Marvizi's funds.⁴

On February 12, 2016, Robert Ackrich, an attorney Marvizi hired, contacted Respondent by email. Marvizi provided Respondent with a copy of a letter that included his current contact information. In the email, Ackrich identified himself as an attorney that Marvizi had retained and enclosed a substitution of attorney form that Ackrich and Marvizi had signed. Ackrich's letter also requested a copy of Marvizi's client file. Respondent did not provide Ackrich with a copy of Marvizi's file.

⁴ Respondent testified that she reimbursed Marvizi all of the misappropriated funds. OCTC failed to provide any evidence contradicting Respondent's testimony. Marvizi testified and never indicated that he was permanently deprived of the misappropriated funds.

Respondent's Trust Account

Between August 25, 2014, and June 22, 2016, Respondent issued checks or made electronic withdrawals from funds in her CTA for the payment of the following personal expenses.

Payee	Number of Withdrawals/Checks	Total Dollar Amount of Withdrawals
Andrew Stefatos	2	\$204.50
Premier Executive Suites	1	\$1,706.99
Google Wallet	16	\$543
Google	4	\$44.90
CVS	1	\$4.43
PayPal	48	\$785.71
Drugtown Pharmacy	1	\$33.50
Vanguard	2	\$200
VGI	3	\$900

Conclusions

Count One - (Rule 4-100(A) [Failure to Maintain Client Funds in Trust Account])⁵

Count Two - (§ 6106 [Moral Turpitude])⁶

In Count One, OCTC charged Respondent with willfully violating rule 4-100(A) by failing to maintain \$967.28 in her CTA on behalf of Marvizi. In Count Two, OCTC charged

⁵ Rule 4-100(A) provides that all funds received or held for the benefit of clients must be deposited in a client trust account and no funds belonging to the attorney or law firm must be deposited therein or otherwise commingled therewith, except for limited exceptions.

⁶ Section 6106 provides, in part, that the commission of any act involving dishonesty, moral turpitude, or corruption constitutes cause for suspension or disbarment.

Respondent with dishonestly or grossly negligently misappropriating \$966.88 of Marvizi's funds, in willful violation of section 6106.⁷ Respondent is culpable of willfully violating rule 4-100(A) and section 6106.

Marvizi hired Respondent on August 5, 2014. By November 13, 2014, Respondent had received \$72,820 on Marvizi's behalf, which had been deposited into her CTA. Between August 24, 2014, and February 1, 2015, Respondent paid various individuals and retained funds for her attorney's fees, which totaled \$71,852.72. Respondent should have held \$967.28 on Marvizi's behalf, but on March 23, 2015, the balance in Respondent's CTA fell to \$.40. The mere fact that Respondent's CTA balance fell below \$967.28 raises an inference of misappropriation.

(*Giovanazzi v. State Bar* (1980) 28 Cal.3d 465, 474 [inference of misappropriation if attorney's trust account balance drops below amount attorney should maintain for client].) To rebut the inference, Respondent must demonstrate that she did not misappropriate Marvizi's funds and that she was entitled to the withdrawn fees. (*In the Matter of Sklar* (Review Dept. 1993) 2 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 602, 618 [once inference of misappropriation arises, burden shifts to attorney to prove no misappropriation occurred].)

Respondent has failed to rebut the presumption of misappropriation, however, the misappropriation was not intentional but grossly negligent. Respondent's accounting ledger reveals that she did not keep accurate records of the funds she held on Marvizi's behalf. For example, the ledger balance was actually \$3,500 lower than recorded because Respondent failed to account for Marvizi's August 24, 2014 advance fee. Moreover, Respondent acknowledged that her poor accounting skills resulted in disparities between her ledger balance and the actual CTA balance. OCTC has failed to present clear and convincing evidence that Respondent

⁷ The NDC provided that Respondent failed to maintain \$5,576 in her CTA and misappropriated \$5,576 from Marvizi, but the parties stipulated that the correct amount was \$966.88.

intentionally misappropriated Marvizi's funds. However, Respondent's gross negligence constitutes an act of moral turpitude in willful violation of Business and Professions Code section 6106. (*Lipson v. State Bar* (1991) 53 Cal.3d 1010, 1020 [moral turpitude finding proper for gross carelessness in failing to maintain trust account].)

Respondent willfully violated rule 4-100(A) by failing to maintain \$967.28 in her CTA on Marvizi's behalf. We assign no additional weight for discipline to this rule violation, however, because the misconduct underlying the moral turpitude charge in Count Two supports the same or greater discipline. (*In the Matter of Sampson* (Review Dept. 1994) 3 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 119, 127.)

Count Three - (Rule 4-100(A) [Failure to Maintain Client Funds in Trust Account])

Count Four - (§ 6106 [Moral Turpitude])

In Count Three, OCTC charged Respondent with failing to maintain \$29,683.07 in her CTA on Marvizi's behalf, in willful violation of rule 4-100(A). In Count Four, Respondent was charged with dishonestly or grossly negligently misappropriating \$22,761.87 of Marvizi's funds, in willful violation of Business and Professions Code section 6106.⁸ Respondent is culpable of willfully violating rule 4-100(A) and section 6106.

On May 14, 2015, \$90,000 was deposited into Respondent's CTA on Marvizi's behalf. Immediately after the transaction, Respondent should have held \$90,967.28 of Marvizi's funds in her CTA. From May 14, 2015, through July 20, 2015, Respondent distributed \$61,284.21 to Marvizi, to third parties on Marvizi's behalf, and paid her legal fees. Respondent stipulated that she should have maintained \$29,683.07 of Marvizi's funds in her CTA but, on July 21, 2015, Respondent's CTA balance fell to \$6,921.20. Thus, Respondent misappropriated \$22,761.87.

⁸ The NDC provided that Respondent failed to maintain \$29,693.07 in her CTA and that she misappropriated \$26,754.34 from Marvizi. The parties, however, stipulated that the correct amount she failed to maintain was \$29,683.07 and the amount misappropriated was \$22,761.87.

The court finds that Respondent's continuous inaccurate record-keeping caused the misappropriation, which was grossly negligent and a willful violation of Business and Professions Code section 6106.

Respondent also violated rule 4-100(A) by failing to maintain \$29,683.07 in her CTA on Marvizi's behalf. We assign no additional weight for discipline to this rule violation, however, because the misconduct underlying the moral turpitude charge in Count Four supports the same or greater discipline.

Count Five - (Rule 4-100(A) [Failure to Maintain Client Funds in Trust Account])

Count Six - (§ 6106 [Moral Turpitude])

On August 24, 2015, Marvizi deposited \$30,000 into Respondent's CTA. The deposit consisted of funds from a real estate transaction. Immediately after the deposit, Respondent should have held \$59,683.07 of Marvizi's funds in her CTA. From August 24, 2015, through September 25, 2015, Respondent distributed \$49,444 to Marvizi, to third parties on Marvizi's behalf, and paid her legal fees. Thus, Respondent should have maintained \$10,239.07 of Marvizi's funds in her CTA. Respondent stipulated that on September 25, 2015, Respondent's CTA balance fell to \$7,130.77. Thus, Respondent misappropriated \$3,108.30. The court finds that Respondent's continuous defective bookkeeping practices caused the misappropriation, which was grossly negligent and a willful violation of section 6106.

Respondent also violated rule 4-100(A) by failing to maintain \$10,239.07 in her CTA on Marvizi's behalf. We assign no additional weight for discipline to this rule violation, however, because the misconduct underlying the moral turpitude charge in Count Six supports the same or greater discipline. (*In the Matter of Sampson, supra*, 3 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. at p. 127.)

Count Seven - (Rule 3-700(D)(1) [Failure to Return Client Papers/Property])⁹

OCTC charged Respondent with failing to promptly release Marvizi's file upon Marvizi's request. On February 12, 2016, Marvizi's subsequent attorney requested that Respondent provide him with a copy of Marvizi's file. Respondent stipulated that she did not provide the file to Marvizi's attorney as requested. Thus, clear and convincing evidence exists establishing that Respondent willfully violated rule 3-700(D)(1).

Count Eight - (Rule 4-100(A) [Commingling])

Count Eight of the NDC alleges that Respondent willfully violated rule 4-100(A) by issuing checks and making electronic withdrawals for personal expenses from funds in Respondent's CTA. Respondent stipulated that from August 25, 2014, through June 22, 2016, Respondent used funds in her CTA to pay personal expenses on 78 occasions. Respondent is culpable of commingling her personal funds in her CTA, in willful violation of rule 4-100(A).

Aggravation¹⁰

OCTC must establish aggravating circumstances by clear and convincing evidence. (Std. 1.5.) The court finds one aggravating circumstance.

Multiple Acts (Std. 1.5(b).)

Respondent's multiple acts of wrongdoing are a significant aggravating factor. She continuously paid personal expenses from her CTA for almost two years, misappropriated Marvizi's funds on several occasions, and failed to return Marvizi's file.

⁹ Rule 3-700(D)(1) requires an attorney, upon termination of employment, to promptly release to the client, at the client's request, all client papers and property, subject to any protective order or non-disclosure agreement. This includes pleadings, correspondence, exhibits, deposition transcripts, physical evidence, expert's reports and other items reasonably necessary to the client's representation, whether the client has paid for them or not.

¹⁰ All references to standards (Std.) are to the Rules of Procedure of the State Bar, title IV, Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct.

Mitigation

It is Respondent's burden to prove mitigating circumstances by clear and convincing evidence. (Std. 1.6.) The court finds Respondent has established one mitigating factor.

Candor/Cooperation to Victims/State Bar (Std. 1.6(e).)

Respondent demonstrated cooperation with OCTC by entering into a stipulation as to facts and culpability. Respondent stipulated to five of the eight ethical violations alleged. She also acknowledged that she misappropriated Marvizi's funds, but challenged OCTC's assertion that the misappropriations were intentional. Respondent is afforded significant mitigation for this factor. (*Silva-Vidor v. State Bar* (1989) 49 Cal.3d 1071, 1079 [mitigation credit given for entering into a stipulation as to facts and culpability]; *In the Matter of Johnson* (Review Dept. 2000) 4 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 179, 190 [where appropriate, more extensive weight in mitigation is accorded to those who admit to culpability as well as facts].)

No Other Mitigating Factors

Respondent failed to provide clear and convincing evidence of any other mitigating circumstances. Respondent testified that she suffers from depression, but she failed to provide any evidence about her future prognosis or stage of recovery. Thus, she has not clearly and convincingly established her rehabilitation. (*In the Matter of Broderick* (Review Dept. 1994) 3 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 138, 150.) Moreover, Respondent's change in her billing software, car accident, loss of an employee, and the relocation of her office were not sufficiently severe or extreme to establish mitigating circumstances. These experiences are normal circumstances that many attorneys experience in their practice.

Respondent contends that she should be afforded mitigation credit for her lack of prior discipline. However, Respondent's three plus years of discipline-free practice is not sufficient to satisfy the standard 1.6 subdivision (a) requirement of an "absence of any prior record of

discipline over many years of practice” and as such, Respondent is not given any mitigation credit for a lack of prior discipline. (See, e.g., *In the Matter of Hertz* (Review Dept. 1991) 1 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 456, 473 [where attorney practiced for only four years before his misconduct, the lack of prior discipline was not mitigating.])

Finally, Respondent’s scant testimony about her participation as a mock trial advisor from 2011 to 2012 does not demonstrate the “zeal in undertaking pro bono work” that constitutes a mitigating factor. (See, e.g., *Rose v. State Bar* (1989) 49 Cal.3d 646, 665-666 [numerous pro bono activities seeking to advance the rights of handicapped people, lecturer for the California Continuing Education of the Bar, guest lecturer at Loyola of Los Angeles School of Law, recipient of certificate for outstanding contributions, etc.])

Level of Discipline

OCTC argues that the appropriate level of discipline for Respondent’s misconduct is disbarment. Respondent maintains that her misconduct warrants two years’ probation with conditions “that include a minimal period of actual suspension.” The court finds that Respondent’s misconduct warrants an actual suspension of two years and until she proves her rehabilitation, fitness to practice, and present learning and ability in the general law pursuant to standard 1.2(c)(1).

The purpose of attorney discipline is not to punish the attorney, but to protect the public, the courts, and the legal profession; to preserve public confidence in the profession; and to maintain high professional standards for attorneys. (Std. 1.1.) The discipline analysis begins with the standards, which promote the consistent and uniform application of disciplinary measures and are entitled to great weight. (*In re Silverton* (2005) 36 Cal.4th 81, 91 [Supreme Court will not reject recommendation arising from standards unless grave doubts as to propriety

of recommended discipline].) The two most relevant standards applicable to Respondent's misconduct are standards 2.11 and 2.1(b).

Standard 2.11 provides, in part, that "[d]isbarment or actual suspension is the presumed sanction for an act of moral turpitude" The degree of sanction depends on the magnitude of the misconduct, the extent of harm to the victim, the impact on the administration of justice, and the extent to which the misconduct is related to the practice of law. Standard 2.1(b) specifically addresses grossly negligent misappropriations and directs that an actual suspension is the presumed sanction.

Applying these standards to the facts of this case, Respondent's most serious misconduct involves the misappropriation of funds from a single client on three separate occasions. Her misconduct was directly related to the practice of law, and although the misappropriations were the result of gross negligence, they totaled over \$26,500. This is a significant amount of money. (See *Lawhorn v. State Bar* (1987) 43 Cal.3d 1357, 1367-1368 [misappropriation of \$1,355.75 deemed significant].)

In addition to the standards, case law is considered to determine the appropriate level of discipline. In reaching a two-year actual suspension, the court is guided by *In the Matter of Robins* (Review Dept. 1991) 1 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 708 and *Lawhorn v. State Bar*, *supra*, 43 Cal.3d 1357. In *Robins*, *supra*, the attorney was culpable of six counts of grossly negligent misappropriation of trust funds totaling over \$20,000 in medical liens. None of the attorney's misappropriations were for his own personal use. The attorney's practice primarily focused on representing the very poor and uneducated whom he often paid a few days before a settlement check cleared. At times, he made substantial advances to them before the settlement check came in. These advances came out of his trust account. The attorney was not aware of any specific problem with his trust account balance because he had an arrangement with his bank for

overdraft protection and it never returned a check. The attorney's misconduct was aggravated by a pattern of misconduct, grossly negligent accounting for client funds, significant harm to one client who was sued by a collection agency for failing to pay a medical lien, and up to a two-year delay in paying the liens after discovery of the problem. The court found mitigating the attorney's: (1) lack of a prior discipline record; (2) physical disabilities at the time of some of the misconduct; (3) candor and cooperation; (4) performance of extensive pro bono services; (5) efforts to improve his law office management practices; (6) the change in values through a spiritual reawakening; and (7) demonstrable remorse. The attorney was suspended for one year.

In *Lawhorn, supra*, 43 Cal.3d 1357, a relatively inexperienced attorney misappropriated \$1,355.75 from one of his clients. When the client demanded her money, the attorney initially said that his wife had placed a freeze on his client trust account as part of divorce proceedings between the two, when in fact no freeze of the client trust account was ever sought or imposed. The attorney failed to respond to his client's repeated telephone calls, and it was only after the client threatened to complain to the State Bar that he returned the misappropriated funds, but with interest. The attorney's misconduct consisted of making a false representation to his client, willfully failing to pay his client as she requested, commingling, and misappropriation. The attorney's conduct was mitigated by full restitution to his client before a complaint was filed and before any contact from the State Bar and strain from the attorney's marital difficulties. In sum, the Supreme Court determined the mitigating factors were "compelling" and stressed that they were "dealing here with but a single instance of misconduct, technically willful but founded in negligence and inexperience." *Lawhorn, supra*, 43 Cal.3d at p. 1368. The Supreme Court suspended the attorney for two years.

Respondent's misconduct has certain similarities with *Robins* and *Lawhorn*. As in *Robins*, Respondent was culpable of multiple misappropriations, the amount misappropriated

was over \$20,000, the misappropriation resulted from gross negligence, and she made restitution. In contrast to this case, *Robins* had much more mitigation that would be deemed “compelling” and most importantly, he instituted procedures to ensure that his trust account was properly maintained. Respondent has little mitigation and has not provided any evidence that she has changed her CTA mismanagement practices.

The seriousness of Respondent’s misconduct is more in line with *Lawhorn*. As in *Lawhorn*, Respondent was an inexperienced attorney whose misappropriation was the result of gross negligence. In addition, both attorneys made restitution to their clients. Unlike Respondent’s case, however, *Lawhorn* involved mere negligence, a single instance of misappropriation that the attorney repaid his client after five months, a significantly less amount of misappropriated funds, and compelling mitigation. What made *Lawhorn* more serious was the false representation the attorney made to the client. Respondent’s multiple instances of misappropriation over a one year period coupled with the large amount misappropriated and lack of mitigation also calls for a lengthy period of actual suspension.

Guided by standard 2.1(b), the *Lawhorn* case, the minimal mitigation and the facts and circumstances surrounding Respondent’s misconduct, the court finds that the appropriate discipline level is a two-year actual suspension and until Respondent proves her rehabilitation, fitness to practice, and learning and ability in the general law pursuant to standard 1.2(c)(1).

Recommendations

It is recommended that respondent Mona Falah, State Bar Number 280995, be suspended from the practice of law in California for three years, that execution of that period of suspension

be stayed, and that Respondent be placed on probation¹¹ for a period of three years subject to the following conditions:

1. She must be suspended from the practice of law for a minimum of the first two years of her probation and until she provides proof to the State Bar Court of her rehabilitation, fitness to practice and present learning and ability in the general law. (Rules Proc. of State Bar, tit. IV, Stds. for Atty. Sanctions for Prof. Misconduct, std. 1.2(c)(1).)
2. She must comply with the provisions of the State Bar Act, the Rules of Professional Conduct, and all of the conditions of her probation.
3. Within 10 days of any change in the information required to be maintained on the membership records of the State Bar pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 6002.1, subdivision (a), including her current office address and telephone number, or if no office is maintained, the address to be used for State Bar purposes, she must report such change in writing to the Membership Records Office and the State Bar's Office of Probation.
4. Within 30 days after the effective date of discipline, she must contact the Office of Probation and schedule a meeting with her assigned probation deputy to discuss the terms and conditions of probation. Upon the direction of the Office of Probation, she must meet with the probation deputy either in person or by telephone. During the period of probation, she must promptly meet with the probation deputy as directed and upon request.
5. She must submit written quarterly reports to the Office of Probation on each January 10, April 10, July 10, and October 10 of the period of probation. Under penalty of perjury, she must state whether she has complied with the State Bar Act, the Rules of Professional Conduct, and all of the conditions of her probation during the preceding calendar quarter. In addition to all quarterly reports, a final report, containing the same information, is due no earlier than 20 days before the last day of the probation period and no later than the last day of the probation period.
6. Subject to the assertion of applicable privileges, she must answer fully, promptly, and truthfully, any inquiries of the Office of Probation that are directed to her personally or in writing, relating to whether she is complying or has complied with the conditions contained herein.
7. Within one year after the effective date of the discipline herein, she must submit to the Office of Probation satisfactory evidence of completion of the State Bar's Ethics School and of the State Bar's Client Trust Accounting School and passage of the tests given at the end of those sessions. This requirement is separate from any Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) requirement, and she shall not receive MCLE credit for attending Ethics School or Client Trust Accounting School. (Rules Proc. of State Bar, rule 3201.)

¹¹ The probation period will commence on the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter. (See Cal. Rules of Court, rule 9.18.)

The period of probation will commence on the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter. At the expiration of the period of probation, if she has complied with all conditions of probation, the period of stayed suspension will be satisfied and that suspension will be terminated.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY EXAMINATION

We further recommend that Mona Falah be ordered to take and pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination administered by the National Conference of Bar Examiners during the period of her actual suspension in this matter and to provide satisfactory proof of such passage to the Office of Probation within the same period. Failure to do so may result in an automatic suspension. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 9.10(b).)

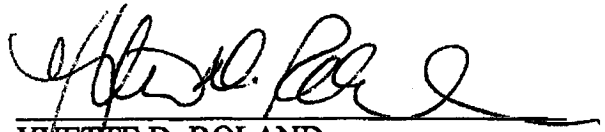
RULE 9.20

We further recommend that Mona Falah be ordered to comply with the requirements of rule 9.20 of the California Rules of Court, and to perform the acts specified in subdivisions (a) and (c) of that rule within 30 and 40 days, respectively, after the effective date of the Supreme Court order in this proceeding. Failure to do so may result in disbarment or suspension.

COSTS

We further recommend that costs be awarded to the State Bar in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6086.10, such costs being enforceable both as provided in section 6140.7 and as a money judgment.

Dated: July 6, 2017


YVETTE D. ROLAND
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 July 6, 2017, I deposited a true copy of the following document(s):

DECISION

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

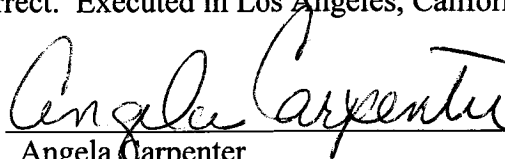
- by first-class mail, with postage thereon fully prepaid, through the United States Postal Service at Los Angeles, California, addressed as follows:

MONA FALAH
LAW OFFICES OF MONA FALAH
803 5TH ST
SANTA MONICA, CA 90403 - 1307

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

William S. Todd, Enforcement, Los Angeles

I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed in Los Angeles, California, on July 6, 2017.



Angela Carpenter
Case Administrator
State Bar Court