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

<p>Counsel for the State Bar</p> <p>Rachel S. Grunberg Senior Trial Counsel 180 Howard Street San Francisco, CA 94105 Telephone: (415) 538-2443</p> <p>Bar # 197080</p>	<p>Case Number(s): 18-C-16471-MC</p> <p>kwiktag® 241 073 032</p> 	<p>For Court use only</p> <p>PUBLIC MATTER</p> <p>FILED <i>WJ</i></p> <p>APR 11 2019</p> <p>STATE BAR COURT CLERK'S OFFICE SAN FRANCISCO</p>
<p>Counsel For Respondent</p> <p>Daniel V. Kohls Hansen, Kohls, Sommer & Jacob, LLP 1520 Eureka Road, Suite 100 Roseville, CA 95661 Telephone: (916) 781-2550</p> <p>Bar # 167987</p>	<p>Submitted to: Settlement Judge</p> <p>STIPULATION RE FACTS, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND DISPOSITION AND ORDER APPROVING</p> <p>STAYED SUSPENSION; NO ACTUAL SUSPENSION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PREVIOUS STIPULATION REJECTED</p>	
<p>In the Matter of: MATTHEW PAUL DONAHUE</p> <p>Bar # 155080</p> <p>A Member of the State Bar of California (Respondent)</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 **December 17, 1991**.
- (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 **16** 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."



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- (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. It is recommended that (check one option only):
- Costs be awarded to the State Bar in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6086.10, and are enforceable both as provided in Business and Professions Code section 6140.7 and as a money judgment.
 - Costs be awarded to the State Bar in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6086.10 and are enforceable both as provided in Business and Professions Code section 6140.7 and as a money judgment. SELECT ONE of the costs must be paid with Respondent's membership fees for each of the following years:

If Respondent fails to pay any installment as described above, or as may be modified in writing by the State Bar or the State Bar Court, the remaining balance will be due and payable immediately.
 - Costs are waived in part as set forth in a separate attachment entitled "Partial Waiver of Costs."
 - Costs are entirely waived.

B. Aggravating Circumstances [Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct, standards 1.2(h) & 1.5]. Facts supporting aggravating circumstances are required.

- (1) **Prior record of discipline:**
- (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) **Intentional/Bad Faith/Dishonesty:** Respondent's misconduct was dishonest, intentional, or surrounded by, or followed by bad faith.
- (3) **Misrepresentation:** Respondent's misconduct was surrounded by, or followed by misrepresentation.
- (4) **Concealment:** Respondent's misconduct was surrounded by, or followed by concealment.
- (5) **Overreaching:** Respondent's misconduct was surrounded by, or followed by overreaching.

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- (6) **Uncharged Violations:** Respondent's conduct involves uncharged violations of the Business and Professions Code, or the Rules of Professional Conduct.
- (7) **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.
- (8) **Harm:** Respondent's misconduct harmed significantly a client, the public, or the administration of justice.
- (9) **Indifference:** Respondent demonstrated indifference toward rectification of or atonement for the consequences of Respondent's misconduct.
- (10) **Candor/Lack of Cooperation:** Respondent displayed a lack of candor and cooperation to victims of Respondent's misconduct, or to the State Bar during disciplinary investigations or proceedings.
- (11) **Multiple Acts:** Respondent's current misconduct evidences multiple acts of wrongdoing. **See page 12.**
- (12) **Pattern:** Respondent's current misconduct demonstrates a pattern of misconduct.
- (13) **Restitution:** Respondent failed to make restitution.
- (14) **Vulnerable Victim:** The victim(s) of Respondent's misconduct was/were highly vulnerable.
- (15) **No aggravating circumstances** are involved.

Additional aggravating circumstances:

C. Mitigating Circumstances [Standards 1.2(i) & 1.6]. 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 likely to recur.
- (2) **No Harm:** Respondent did not harm the client, the public, or the administration of justice.
- (3) **Candor/Cooperation:** Respondent displayed spontaneous candor and cooperation with the victims of Respondent's misconduct or to the State Bar during disciplinary investigations and proceedings.
- (4) **Remorse:** Respondent promptly took objective steps demonstrating spontaneous remorse and recognition of the wrongdoing, which steps were designed to timely atone for any consequences of Respondent's 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 Respondent.
- (7) **Good Faith:** Respondent acted with a good faith belief that was honestly held and objectively reasonable.

- (8) **Emotional/Physical Difficulties:** At the time of the stipulated act or acts of professional misconduct, Respondent suffered extreme emotional difficulties or physical or mental 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 Respondent, such as illegal drug or substance abuse, and the difficulties or disabilities no longer pose a risk that Respondent will commit misconduct.
- (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 Respondent's control and which were directly responsible for the misconduct.
- (10) **Family Problems:** At the time of the misconduct, Respondent suffered extreme difficulties in Respondent's personal life which were other than emotional or physical in nature.
- (11) **Good Character:** Respondent's extraordinarily 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 Respondent's misconduct.
- (12) **Rehabilitation:** Considerable time has passed since the acts of professional misconduct occurred followed by subsequent rehabilitation.
- (13) **No mitigating circumstances** are involved.

Additional mitigating circumstances:

No Prior Record of Discipline. See page 12.

Pretrial Stipulation. See page 12.

Good Character. See page 12.

Remorse and Recognition of Wrongdoing. See page 13.

D. Recommended Discipline:

Stayed Suspension:

Respondent is suspended from the practice of law for **one year**, the execution of that suspension is stayed, and Respondent is placed on probation for **two years** with the following conditions.

- (1) **Review Rules of Professional Conduct:** Within 30 days after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must (1) read the California Rules of Professional Conduct (Rules of Professional Conduct) and Business and Professions Code sections 6067, 6068, and 6103 through 6126, and (2) provide a declaration, under penalty of perjury, attesting to Respondent's compliance with this requirement, to the State Bar's Office of Probation in Los Angeles (Office of Probation) with Respondent's first quarterly report.
- (2) **Comply with State Bar Act, Rules of Professional Conduct, and Probation Conditions:** Respondent must comply with the provisions of the State Bar Act, the Rules of Professional Conduct, and all conditions of Respondent's probation.
- (3) **Maintain Valid Official Membership Address and Other Required Contact Information:** Within 30 days after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must make certain that the State Bar Attorney Regulation and Consumer Resources Office (ARCR) has Respondent's current office address, email address, and telephone number. If Respondent does not maintain an office, Respondent must provide the mailing address, email address, and telephone number to

be used for State Bar purposes. Respondent must report, in writing, any change in the above information to ARCR, within ten (10) days after such change, in the manner required by that office.

- (4) **Meet and Cooperate with Office of Probation:** Within 15 days after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must schedule a meeting with Respondent's assigned probation case specialist to discuss the terms and conditions of Respondent's discipline and, within 30 days after the effective date of the court's order, must participate in such meeting. Unless otherwise instructed by the Office of Probation, Respondent may meet with the probation case specialist in person or by telephone. During the probation period, Respondent must promptly meet with representatives of the Office of Probation as requested by it and, subject to the assertion of applicable privileges, must fully, promptly, and truthfully answer any inquiries by it and provide to it any other information requested by it.
- (5) **State Bar Court Retains Jurisdiction/Appear Before and Cooperate with State Bar Court:** During Respondent's probation period, the State Bar Court retains jurisdiction over Respondent to address issues concerning compliance with probation conditions. During this period, Respondent must appear before the State Bar Court as required by the court or by the Office of Probation after written notice mailed to Respondent's official membership address, as provided above. Subject to the assertion of applicable privileges, Respondent must fully, promptly, and truthfully answer any inquiries by the court and must provide any other information the court requests.
- (6) **Quarterly and Final Reports:**
- a. **Deadlines for Reports.** Respondent must submit written quarterly reports to the Office of Probation no later than each January 10 (covering October 1 through December 31 of the prior year), April 10 (covering January 1 through March 31), July 10 (covering April 1 through June 30), and October 10 (covering July 1 through September 30) within the period of probation. If the first report would cover less than 30 days, that report must be submitted on the next quarter date and cover the extended deadline. In addition to all quarterly reports, Respondent must submit a final report no earlier than ten (10) days before the last day of the probation period and no later than the last day of the probation period.
- b. **Contents of Reports.** Respondent must answer, under penalty of perjury, all inquiries contained in the quarterly report form provided by the Office of Probation, including stating whether Respondent has complied with the State Bar Act and the Rules of Professional Conduct during the applicable quarter or period. All reports must be: (1) submitted on the form provided by the Office of Probation; (2) signed and dated after the completion of the period for which the report is being submitted (except for the final report); (3) filled out completely and signed under penalty of perjury; and (4) submitted to the Office of Probation on or before each report's due date.
- c. **Submission of Reports.** All reports must be submitted by: (1) fax or email to the Office of Probation; (2) personal delivery to the Office of Probation; (3) certified mail, return receipt requested, to the Office of Probation (postmarked on or before the due date); or (4) other tracked-service provider, such as Federal Express or United Parcel Service, etc. (physically delivered to such provider on or before the due date).
- d. **Proof of Compliance.** Respondent is directed to maintain proof of Respondent's compliance with the above requirements for each such report for a minimum of one year after either the period of probation or the period of Respondent's actual suspension has ended, whichever is longer. Respondent is required to present such proof upon request by the State Bar, the Office of Probation, or the State Bar Court.
- (7) **State Bar Ethics School:** Within one year after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must submit to the Office of Probation satisfactory evidence of completion of the State Bar Ethics School and passage of the test given at the end of that session. This requirement is separate from any Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) requirement, and Respondent will not receive MCLE credit for attending this session. If Respondent provides satisfactory

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evidence of completion of the Ethics School after the date of this stipulation but before the effective date of the Supreme Court's order in this matter, Respondent will nonetheless receive credit for such evidence toward Respondent's duty to comply with this condition.

- (8) **State Bar Ethics School Not Recommended:** It is not recommended that Respondent be ordered to attend the State Bar Ethics School because
- (9) **State Bar Client Trust Accounting School:** Within one year after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must submit to the Office of Probation satisfactory evidence of completion of the State Bar Client Trust Accounting School and passage of the test given at the end of that session. This requirement is separate from any Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) requirement, and Respondent will not receive MCLE credit for attending this session. If Respondent provides satisfactory evidence of completion of the Client Trust Accounting School after the date of this stipulation but before the effective date of the Supreme Court's order in this matter, Respondent will nonetheless receive credit for such evidence toward Respondent's duty to comply with this condition.
- (10) **Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Courses – California Legal Ethics [Alternative to State Bar Ethics School for Out-of-State Residents]:** Because Respondent resides outside of California, within _____ after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must either submit to the Office of Probation satisfactory evidence of completion of the State Bar Ethics School and passage of the test given at the end of that session or, in the alternative, complete _____ hours of California Minimum Continuing Legal Education-approved participatory activity in California legal ethics and provide proof of such completion to the Office of Probation. This requirement is separate from any MCLE requirement, and Respondent will not receive MCLE credit for this activity. If Respondent provides satisfactory evidence of completion of the Ethics School or the hours of legal education described above, completed after the date of this stipulation but before the effective date of the Supreme Court's order in this matter, Respondent will nonetheless receive credit for such evidence toward Respondent's duty to comply with this condition.
- (11) **Criminal Probation:** Respondent must comply with all probation conditions imposed in the underlying criminal matter and must report such compliance under penalty of perjury in all quarterly and final reports submitted to the Office of Probation covering any portion of the period of the criminal probation. In each quarterly and final report, if Respondent has an assigned criminal probation officer, Respondent must provide the name and current contact information for that criminal probation officer. If the criminal probation was successfully completed during the period covered by a quarterly or final report, that fact must be reported by Respondent in such report and satisfactory evidence of such fact must be provided with it. If, at any time before or during the period of probation, Respondent's criminal probation is revoked, Respondent is sanctioned by the criminal court, or Respondent's status is otherwise changed due to any alleged violation of the criminal probation conditions by Respondent, Respondent must submit the criminal court records regarding any such action with Respondent's next quarterly or final report.
- (12) **Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE):** Within _____ after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must complete _____ hour(s) of California Minimum Continuing Legal Education-approved participatory activity in SELECT ONE _____ and must provide proof of such completion to the Office of Probation. This requirement is separate from any MCLE requirement, and Respondent will not receive MCLE credit for this activity. If Respondent provides satisfactory evidence of completion of the hours of legal education described above, completed after the date of this stipulation but before the effective date of the Supreme Court's order in this matter, Respondent will nonetheless receive credit for such evidence toward Respondent's duty to comply with this condition.
- (13) **Other:** Respondent must also comply with the following additional conditions of probation:
- (14) **Proof of Compliance with Rule 9.20 Obligations:** Respondent is directed to maintain, for a minimum of one year after commencement of probation, proof of compliance with the Supreme Court's order that Respondent comply with the requirements of California Rules of Court, rule 9.20, subdivisions (a) and (c).

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Such proof must include: the names and addresses of all individuals and entities to whom Respondent sent notification pursuant to rule 9.20; a copy of each notification letter sent to each recipient; the original receipt or postal authority tracking document for each notification sent; the originals of all returned receipts and notifications of non-delivery; and a copy of the completed compliance affidavit filed by Respondent with the State Bar Court. Respondent is required to present such proof upon request by the State Bar, the Office of Probation, or the State Bar Court.

(15) **The following conditions are attached hereto and incorporated:**

Financial Conditions

Medical Conditions

Substance Abuse Conditions

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 probation period, if Respondent has complied with all conditions of probation, the period of stayed suspension will be satisfied and that suspension will be terminated.

E. Other Requirements Negotiated by the Parties (Not Probation Conditions):

- (1) **Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination Within One Year:** Respondent must take and pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination administered by the National Conference of Bar Examiners within one year after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter and to provide satisfactory proof of such passage to the State Bar's Office of Probation within the same period. Failure to do so may result in suspension. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 9.10(b).) If Respondent provides satisfactory evidence of the taking and passage of the above examination after the date of this stipulation but before the effective date of the Supreme Court's order in this matter, Respondent will nonetheless receive credit for such evidence toward Respondent's duty to comply with this requirement.
- (2) **Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination Requirement Not Recommended:** It is not recommended that Respondent be ordered to take and pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination because .
- (3) **Other Requirements:** It is further recommended that Respondent be ordered to comply with the following additional requirements:

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In the Matter of: MATTHEW PAUL DONAHUE	Case Number(s): 18-C-16471-MC
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Substance Abuse Conditions

- a. **Abstinence:** Respondent must abstain from using alcoholic beverages and must not use or possess any illegal drugs or illegal drug paraphernalia. In each quarterly and final report, Respondent must report compliance with this condition.

- b. **Abstinence Program Meetings:** Respondent must attend a minimum of **2** meetings per **month** of an abstinence-based self-help group approved by the Office of Probation. Programs that are not abstinence-based and allow the participant to continue consuming alcohol are not acceptable. Respondent must contact the Office of Probation and obtain written approval for the program Respondent wishes to select prior to receiving credit for compliance with this condition for attending meetings of such group. Respondent must provide to the Office of Probation satisfactory proof of attendance at such group meetings with each quarterly and final report; however, in providing such proof, Respondent may not sign as the verifier of such attendance.

- c. **Laboratory Testing:** Within 45 days after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must select a licensed medical laboratory or laboratories acceptable to the Office of Probation and having the capability to provide observed testing of Respondent as specified below. Respondent must provide a copy of this condition and of the Office of Probation Lab Test Information Sheet to each and every laboratory Respondent uses to perform any portion of the testing required to comply with this probation condition. In the event that Respondent subsequently is informed or learns that any laboratory, previously approved by the Office of Probation to conduct the testing set forth below, is no longer willing or able to perform such testing in the manner set forth below, Respondent must (1) notify the Office of Probation in writing of that fact within 72 hours after acquiring such information, and (2) select a new licensed medical laboratory, acceptable to the Office of Probation and capable of providing observed testing of Respondent as specified below, sufficiently promptly that Respondent will be able to continue to comply timely with the testing requirements set forth below.

After the expiration of the first 60 days of Respondent's probation/reproval, Respondent must be tested monthly, at Respondent's expense, during the first five (5) days of each remaining calendar month of Respondent's probation/reproval conditions period to show that Respondent has abstained from the use of alcohol and drugs. This testing will include an ethyl glucuronide (EtG) test and a ten-panel drug test (or equivalent tests accepted and approved in advance by the Office of Probation) and for drugs and other substances specified by the Office of Probation, including but not necessarily limited to alcohol, amphetamines, methamphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine metabolite, opiates, oxycodone, marijuana, methadone, and propoxyphene. These tests must be performed by the laboratory pursuant to United States Department of Transportation guidelines, and all testing must be observed. Respondent must comply with all laboratory requirements regarding specimen collection and the integrity of specimens.

In addition to the monthly testing, the Office of Probation may require Respondent to undergo up to **2** additional tests per month, as described above, during the period of Respondent's probation/reproval conditions period, at times selected by the Office of Probation on a random basis. During the period of probation/reproval conditions period, Respondent must maintain with the Office of Probation a current telephone number and email address at which Respondent can be reached. Such tests are to be performed by the laboratory no later than eight (8) hours after the Office of Probation's email and telephone call to Respondent that the Office of Probation requires such additional testing.

For each test, Respondent must instruct the laboratory to provide a screening report directly to the Office of Probation, at Respondent's expense, that contains an analysis of the above tests, shows that each tested

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sample was properly obtained, and demonstrates that the above testing requirements were satisfied. Failure to provide, or revocation of, such instruction for a particular required test may be deemed a failure to comply with this condition. Each screening report must be provided directly to the Office of Probation at or before the time that its results are disclosed to Respondent and within ten (10) days after the time that the tested sample is provided to the laboratory. Each report must record the date and time of the testing, list all of the substances for which Respondent was tested, and show the individual results for each such substance. An overall synopsis, e.g., "negative," with no specific breakdown, is not sufficient. In the event a previously selected and approved laboratory fails to provide the Office of Probation with test results or screening reports meeting the above requirements within two weeks of testing, the Office of Probation may require Respondent to choose a different licensed medical laboratory, approved by the Office of Probation, for future testing.

- d. **Medical Waivers:** Within 45 days after the effective date of the Supreme Court order imposing discipline in this matter, Respondent must provide the Office of Probation with an authorization to disclose and obtain medical information (medical waiver) and access to all of Respondent's medical records related to Respondent's substance abuse problem for the period **of his probation**. Revocation of any medical waiver is a violation of this condition. Any medical records obtained by the Office of Probation are confidential and no information concerning them or their contents will be given to anyone except members of the Office of Probation, the Office of Chief Trial Counsel, and the State Bar Court who are directly involved with maintaining, enforcing, or adjudicating this probation/reproval condition.
- e. **Other:**

ATTACHMENT TO
STIPULATION RE FACTS, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND DISPOSITIONS

IN THE MATTER OF:
CASE NUMBERS:

MATTHEW PAUL DONAHUE
18-C-16471-MC

FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW.

Respondent admits that the following facts are true and that the facts and circumstances surrounding the offenses for which he was convicted involved other misconduct warranting discipline.

Case No. 18-C-16471-MC (Conviction Proceedings)

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND IN CONVICTION PROCEEDING:

1. This is a proceeding pursuant to sections 6101 and 6102 of the Business and Professions Code and rule 9.10 of the California Rules of Court.
2. On December 21, 2014, respondent was involved in a traffic accident and was subsequently arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. Immediately after his arrest and before any criminal complaint was filed, respondent voluntarily entered into Soberlink, began counseling, and entered into an alcohol-abstinence agreement with his then-law partner.
3. On March 16, 2015, the Placer County District Attorney's Office filed a six-count misdemeanor complaint against respondent in Placer County Superior Court case number 72-009247, charging respondent with violations of: (1) Vehicle Code section 23152(a) [driving under the influence of alcohol]; (2) Vehicle Code section 23152(b) [driving with a blood alcohol level of 0.08 percent or greater]; Penal Code section 273a(b) [child endangerment] (two counts); and Vehicle Code section 20002(a) [hit and run driving] (two counts).
4. Given respondent's early recognition of wrongdoing and efforts at sobriety, the District Attorney delayed the entry of a plea in order to allow respondent time to continue his efforts at counseling and treatment.
5. On August 17, 2017, over two years after the criminal complaint was filed, in light of respondent's rehabilitative showing, the District Attorney allowed respondent to plead nolo contendere to violations of Vehicle Code section 23152(a) [driving under the influence of alcohol] and a newly added charge of Penal Code section 647(f) [public intoxication]—both misdemeanors. On August 17, 2017, the court accepted respondent's plea, entered judgment, and dismissed all remaining counts.
6. Respondent was sentenced to three years of formal probation and incarcerated for 12 days in Placer County Jail. Among other conditions of probation, respondent was required to

participate in Soberlink for an additional 90 days and test for alcohol use *three* times per day, complete a First Offender Program, and pay restitution and fines.

7. Respondent is in full compliance with this probation conditions and has abstained from alcohol since his arrest in 2014.

8. On August 17, 2018, respondent self-reported his misdemeanor conviction to the State Bar.

9. On December 18, 2018, the Review Department of the State Bar Court issued an order referring the matter to the Hearing Department for a hearing and decision recommending the discipline to be imposed in the event that the Hearing Department found that the facts and circumstances surrounding the offenses for which respondent was convicted involved moral turpitude or other misconduct warranting discipline.

FACTS:

10. On December 21, 2014, at approximately 11:00 a.m., respondent was driving a GMC Yukon northbound on Highway 89 on route to Squaw Valley Ski Resort. It was a clear day and the road was dry. His two minor children, aged six and eight, were in the back seat of the vehicle.

11. At the intersection of Highway 89 and Squaw Valley Road, respondent slowed to turn left (westbound) onto Squaw Valley Road and rear-ended a GMC Terrain ("Vehicle 1") driven by AR, who had pulled into the left turn lane and was waiting to turn onto Squaw Valley Road. There were three passengers in AR's vehicle. No one was injured, but Vehicle 1 sustained minor damage to the rear bumper. After impact, AR and respondent both turned left onto Squaw Valley Road. AR merged to the shoulder assuming respondent would also pull over, but respondent accelerated and continued westbound on Squaw Valley Road. Respondent was swerving in and out of the lane lines. AR followed respondent in her vehicle and called law enforcement. Shortly thereafter, respondent entered the Squaw Valley Ski Resort parking lot and attempted to park.

12. As respondent pulled into a parking space, his vehicle made contact with the front bumper of a Toyota Tundra ("Vehicle 2") parked directly in front of him. Respondent exited his vehicle and made no attempt to leave his information for the owner of Vehicle 2.

13. While still in the parking lot, respondent released his children to a ski resort employee, who escorted them to the resort office.

14. AR pulled into the parking lot and parked behind respondent's vehicle. She attempted to exchange information with respondent, but he was uncooperative. Respondent walked away from his vehicle and from AR and entered the ski resort, but returned shortly thereafter where he was met by California Highway Patrol ("CHP") Officer Sean Armacher ("Armacher").

15. Respondent was defensive and uncooperative. Respondent's speech was slurred and he swayed from side to side. Also, respondent's eyes were red and watery and there was a strong

odor of alcohol emitting from his body and breath. Respondent submitted to a chemical breath test, which measured 0.28 percent, 0.25 percent, and 0.27 percent blood alcohol content.

16. Armacher arrested respondent for a violation of Vehicle Code section 23152(a) [driving under the influence of an alcoholic beverage]. Armacher placed respondent in handcuffs and seated him in the rear of his patrol vehicle. Respondent was transported to the Nevada County Jail. On the way, respondent became very upset, yelling at times, but then would calm down and apologize for acting out.

17. At some point, the owner of Vehicle 2 arrived on scene at the Ski Valley Ski Resort parking lot, met with CHP personnel, inspected his car for damage, determined there was no damage, and declined to file a traffic collision report.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

18. The facts and circumstances surrounding the above-described conviction do not involve moral turpitude, but do involve other conduct warranting discipline.

AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

Multiple Acts of Wrongdoing (Std. 1.5(b)): Respondent was responsible for two alcohol-related accidents; he attempted to leave the scene of both accidents; and he caused property damage to at least one car. (See *In the Matter of Bach* (Review Dept. 1991) 1 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 631, 646–647 [two instances of misconduct may constitute multiple acts].)

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

No Prior Record of Discipline: Respondent was admitted to the practice of law in California in 1991, and has no prior record discipline or criminal history. Respondent's 23-year, misconduct-free, legal career prior to his 2014 arrest is mitigating. (See *Hawes v. State Bar* (1990) 51 Cal.3d 587, 596 [10 years without discipline is entitled to significant mitigation].)

Pretrial Stipulation: By entering into this stipulation, respondent has acknowledged his misconduct and is entitled to mitigation for recognition of wrongdoing and saving the State Bar significant resources and time. (*Silva-Vidor v. State Bar* (1989) 49 Cal.3d 1071, 1079 [mitigative credit given for entering into a stipulation as to facts and culpability]; *In the Matter of Spaith* (Review Dept. 1996) 3 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 511, 521 [attorney's stipulation to facts and culpability is mitigating].)

Good Character: Respondent submitted 10 character letters from a wide range of individuals in the community— including friends, family, colleagues, former clients, a doctor, and two attorneys. All are fully aware of respondent's misconduct and attest to his overall good character, his integrity, his ongoing commitment to sobriety, and his dedication to his work and to his children.

Remorse and Recognition of Wrongdoing: Respondent demonstrated prompt and remedial steps to address his misconduct. Immediately after his arrest, and before any criminal complaint was filed, respondent voluntarily entered into Soberlink (where he underwent alcohol testing three times a day), out-patient counseling, and an alcohol-abstinence agreement with his then-law partner. Respondent also paid full restitution to AR for the damage to her vehicle.

Respondent has been true to his word and has abstained from alcohol use since his arrest in December 2014, as documented by his toxicology tests which were performed on a regular basis from January 2015 to February 2019. Respondent recognizes that he made a grievous mistake and put the lives of his children and others in jeopardy. He takes full responsibility for his actions, is deeply remorseful, and has since devoted himself to maintaining sobriety and making sure alcohol does not affect his professional or family life, or put the public at risk.

AUTHORITIES SUPPORTING DISCIPLINE.

The Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct “set forth a means for determining the appropriate disciplinary sanction in a particular case and to ensure consistency across cases dealing with similar misconduct and surrounding circumstances.” (Rules Proc. of State Bar, tit. IV, Stds. for Atty. Sanctions for Prof. Misconduct, std. 1.1. All further references to standards are to this source.) The standards help fulfill the primary purposes of discipline, which include: protection of the public, the courts and the legal profession; maintenance of high professional standards; and preservation of public confidence in the legal profession. (Std. 1.1; *In re Morse* (1995) 11 Cal.4th 184, 205.)

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.) If a recommendation is at the high end or low end of a standard, an explanation must be given as to how the recommendation was reached. (Std. 1.1.) Any discipline recommendation that deviates from the standards must include clear reasons for the departure. (Std. 1.1; *Blair v. State Bar* (1989) 49 Cal.3d 762, 776, fn. 5.)

In determining whether to impose a sanction greater or less than that specified in a given standard, in addition to the factors set forth in the specific standard, consideration is to be given to the primary purposes of discipline; the balancing of all aggravating and mitigating circumstances; the type of misconduct at issue; whether the client, public, legal system or profession was harmed; and the member’s willingness and ability to conform to ethical responsibilities in the future. (Std. 1.7(b) & (c).)

Standard 2.16(b) is directly on point and provides: “Suspension or reproof is the presumed sanction for final conviction of a misdemeanor not involving moral turpitude but involving other misconduct warranting discipline.” Respondent’s misdemeanor conviction does not involve moral turpitude, but does involve other misconduct warranting discipline. Respondent’s misconduct was serious—he drove with a very high blood alcohol content (measuring nearly three times the legal limit), endangered his minor children and others, caused two traffic

accidents (including one that resulted in property damage), and attempted to leave the scene without cooperating with the victims. In aggravation, respondent committed multiple acts of misconduct. In mitigation, respondent has no prior discipline, he presented good character evidence, he has expressed remorse and recognition of wrongdoing, and he entered into this pretrial stipulation. Notably, respondent's arrest occurred in December 2014. Thereafter, respondent took immediate and remedial steps to address his misconduct, and he has since dedicated himself to complete sobriety. On balance, given the totality of circumstances, including the intervening four plus years since the misconduct and respondent's efforts at rehabilitation during that time, respondent has demonstrated that he is able and willing to conform to ethical responsibilities. Accordingly, a one-year stayed suspension is an appropriate and adequate sanction that will serve the primary purposes of discipline.

While there is no precedent directly on point, case law does provide guidance. *In re Kelley* (1990) 52 Cal.3d 487, involved an attorney, with no prior record of discipline, who acquired two driving under the influence misdemeanor convictions just a few years apart. Neither incident involved injury or property damage, but the second conviction occurred while Kelley was on probation for her first misdemeanor. Kelley failed to acknowledge her alcohol abuse problem and made no showing of rehabilitative efforts. The Supreme Court found that Kelley did not commit acts of moral turpitude, but her lack of respect for the legal system and her apparent alcohol dependency problem warranted a public reproof with conditions, including three years of probation and referral to the State Bar's alcohol abuse program. The Court emphasized that "[Kelley's] problems, if not checked, may spill over into [her] professional practice and adversely affect her representation of clients and her practice of law." (*Id.* at p. 496.)

Here, respondent has no prior discipline or criminal history, but his misconduct is arguably more serious than in *Kelley*, given his extremely high blood alcohol level, the fact that his minor children were in the car, his initial lack of cooperation with the victims and with law enforcement, and the property damage he caused. However, unlike *Kelley*, respondent fully acknowledged his wrongdoing and took prompt and comprehensive measures to address his issues and maintain sobriety. He has maintained sobriety for over four years and continues to undergo counseling and random testing. Nonetheless, the Supreme Court has held that efforts at sobriety, while laudable, do not vitiate the need for discipline: "While evidence that the attorney has taken steps to deal with his alcohol problem is mitigating evidence that may properly be taken into account in determining the degree and nature of the discipline that should be imposed, such evidence does not eliminate the initial misconduct as an appropriate basis for discipline." (*In re Hickey* (1990) 50 Cal.3d 571, 579.) Moreover, given that "[t]he community's interest in prosecuting driving under the influence cases has increased dramatically" (see *People v. Ford* (1992) 4 Cal.App.4th 32, 38), so too has the need to ensure that attorneys heed the consequences of such misconduct in order to protect the public and maintain confidence in the legal profession.

Respondent has shown great strides in his rehabilitative efforts, including some voluntary efforts, and he has been sober for over four years; however, for the majority of this time respondent has been under the auspices of the criminal courts and supervised probation. Accordingly, a one-year stayed suspension, with attendant conditions, is necessary and appropriate discipline that will provide a meaningful period beyond criminal probation for respondent to demonstrate his full rehabilitation and ensure that his potentially harmful misconduct does not recur. (*In the Matter of Bodell* (Review Dept. 2002) 4 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 459, 464 [some weight given to

respondent's activities while on probation, but far greater weight given to those after completion of criminal probation].)

COSTS OF DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS.

Respondent acknowledges that the Office of Chief Trial Counsel has informed respondent that as of March 11, 2019, the discipline costs in this matter are \$2,699. 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 MINIMUM CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION ("MCLE").

Respondent may not receive MCLE credit for completion of State Bar Ethics School. (Rules Proc. of State Bar, rule 3201.)

(Do not write above this line.)

In the Matter of: MATTHEW PAUL DONAHUE	Case Number(s): 18-C-16471-MC
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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 Facts, Conclusions of Law, and Disposition.

<u>3-12-19</u> Date	 Respondent's Signature	<u>Matthew Paul Donahue</u> Print Name
<u>3/12/19</u> Date	 Respondent's Counsel Signature	<u>Daniel V. Kohls</u> Print Name
<u>3/13/19</u> Date	 Deputy Trial Counsel's Signature	<u>Rachel S. Grunberg</u> Print Name

(Do not write above this line.)

In the Matter of:
MATTHEW PAUL DONAHUE

Case Number(s):
18-C-16471-MC

STAYED SUSPENSION 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.

1. On page 11 of the Stipulation, in numbered paragraph 7, "Respondent is in full compliance with this probation conditions..." is deleted, and in its place inserted "Respondent is in full compliance with his probation conditions..."
2. On page 11 of the Stipulation, in numbered paragraph 8, "...respondent self-reported his misdemeanor conviction..." is deleted, and in its place inserted "...respondent self-reported his misdemeanor convictions..."

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 Rules Proc. of State Bar, rule 5.58(E) & (F).) **The effective date of this disposition is the effective date of the Supreme Court order herein, normally 30 days after the filed date of the Supreme Court order. (See Cal. Rules of Court, rule 9.18(a).)**

Date

4/11/19


MANJARI CHAWLA
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 Court Specialist 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 April 11, 2019, 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:

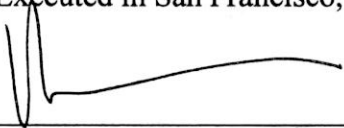
by first-class mail, with postage thereon fully prepaid, through the United States Postal Service at San Francisco, California, addressed as follows:

DANIEL V. KOHLS
HANSEN KOHLS SOMMER & JACOB LLP
1520 EUREKA RD STE 100
ROSEVILLE, CA 95661

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

Rachel S. Grunberg, Enforcement, San Francisco

I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed in San Francisco, California, on April 11, 2019.



Vincent Au
Court Specialist
State Bar Court