

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

**IN THE MATTER OF
BRENT LAVELLE BARBOUR**

VSb DOCKET No. 24-000-132371

ORDER OF RECOMMENDATION

This matter came on to be heard on October 25, 2025, upon the Petition for Reinstatement of Brent Lavelle Barbour to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A duly convened panel of the Board consisting of Jennifer D. Royer, Chair, Carolyn V. Grady, Robin J. Kegley, David R. Tiller, and Dr. Theodore Smith, Lay Member, (the “Board”), heard the matter. Edward J. Dillon, Deputy Bar Counsel, appeared as counsel for the Virginia State Bar (the “Bar”). The Petitioner, Brent Lavelle Barbour (“Petitioner”), *pro se*, appeared in person. The court reporter for the proceeding, Jennifer L. Thomas, Chandler & Halasz, P.O. Box 1975, Mechanicsville, VA 23116, telephone 804-730-1222, was sworn by the Chair. The Chair polled the members of the Panel to determine whether any member had a personal or financial interest that might affect or reasonably be perceived to affect his or her ability to be impartial in these matters. Each member, including the Chair, responded in the negative.

All legal notices of the date and place were timely sent by the Clerk of the Disciplinary System (Clerk) in the manner prescribed by the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part Six, Section IV, Paragraph 13-25 of the Rules of Court.

The Chair advised the parties as to the hearing process. Petitioner was advised that he had the burden of proving by clear and convincing evidence that he is a person of honest demeanor and good moral character and possesses the requisite fitness to practice law.

At the beginning of the hearing, the Board received into evidence letters from members

of the public regarding Petitioner's character and fitness into evidence as Board Exhibit 1.

The Board also received Notices of Reinstatement Hearing sent by the Clerk to the members of the District Committee and the Board who heard the original Complaint against Petitioner and to the complaining witness or witnesses on all Complaints pending against the Petitioner before the Board, District Committee, or court at the date of the Revocation together with a synopsis of the petition in the *Virginia Lawyer* and in a newspaper of general circulation in the judicial circuit where the Petitioner maintained a principal office at the time of the Revocation as Board Exhibit 2. Because Petitioner currently resides in South Carolina, notice to the members of any current District Committee or to the newspaper where Petitioner currently resides was not necessary.

Both parties were given the opportunity to make opening statements.

In his opening statement, Petitioner outlined the changes in his life since the revocation of his license on February 16, 2018 (the "Revocation"), including entering into and remaining in active recovery from a substance abuse disorder, joining a faith-based organization that provides him with regular spiritual support, volunteering in his community, obtaining and maintaining gainful employment, working to repair his relationships with his family, and working to improve his physical and mental health.

In Bar Counsel's opening statement, he reserved any recommendation on behalf of the Bar until all the evidence was heard.

The Panel considered the following documents:

1. Order of Revocation entered March 15, 2018;
2. Petition for Reinstatement and exhibits dated June 7, 2024;
3. Acknowledgement to Respondent dated June 18, 2024;
4. Virginia State Bar Request for Bill of Particulars dated July 3, 2024;
5. Petitioner's Credit Report dated July 5, 2024;
6. Petitioner's Motion to Seal Confidential Documents dated July 22, 2024;

7. Criminal Background Checks for Petitioner:
 - a. South Carolina Report dated July 13, 2024, and
 - b. Virginia Report dated August 9, 2024.
8. Petitioner's Partial Answers to Bill of Particulars (Redacted) dated August 1, 2024;
9. Bar's Opposition to Motion to Seal dated July 29, 2024;
10. Petitioner's Objections to Bill of Particulars Questions dated August 16, 2024;
11. Bar's Motion to Compel and Supplemental Opposition to Motion to Seal received August 28, 2024;
12. Petitioner's Response to Motion to Compel and Supplemental Opposition to Motion to Seal dated August 31, 2024;
13. Order – Motion to Compel, Motion to Seal entered September 9, 2024;
14. Petitioner's Consent to Release Confidential Information dated August 16, 2024, September 16, 2024, and February 21, 2025;
15. Petitioner's responses to Bill of Particulars dated August 25, 2024;
16. Virginia State Bar letter to Petitioner, identifying deficiencies in responses to Bill of Particulars dated September 10, 2024;
17. Petitioner's Supplemental Answer to Bill of Particulars dated September 14, 2024;
18. Health Care Records for Petitioner:
 - a. Letter from Craig Parker documenting treatment at Parker Counseling & Consulting Services received on June 13, 2024;
 - b. Lynchburg General Hospital Records received on August 12, 2024;
 - c. Pharmacy Records received on August 14, 2024;
 - d. VJLAP (Lawyers Helping Lawyers) Records received on September 23, 2024;
 - e. Affinity Healthcare Records received September 28, 2024;
 - f. Mt. Regis Center Records received October 2, 2024;
 - g. Williamsville Wellness Records received on October 3, 2024;
 - h. Grace Family Medicine Records received October 17, 2024;
 - i. Advanced Psychotherapeutics Records received November 2024;
 - j. VJLAP Letter received March 24, 2025; and
 - k. Thriveworks letter dated August 19, 2025.
19. Petitioner's Motion to Seal Expungement Order dated September 29, 2024;
20. Public Records received from Petitioner on January 31, 2025;
21. Petitioner's Lynchburg Gen. Dist. Court Unlawful Detainer/Warrant in Debt records received January 23, 2025;
22. Confidential Expungement Records received from Petitioner on January 31, 2025;
23. Petitioner's State Law Enforcement Division No Arrest Data Verification;
24. Petitioner's Bankruptcy, Credit Report & Tax Documents (Redacted);
25. Petitioner's Federal Tax Returns for 2018-2023;
26. Petitioner's State Tax Returns for 2018-2023;
27. Report of Investigation dated February 12, 2025 with exhibits;
28. Supplemental Report of Investigation dated March 5, 2025;
29. Bar's Letter Notification of Completed Investigation dated April 4, 2025;
30. Reinstatement Pre-Hearing Order entered May 9, 2025;
31. Reinstatement Notice of Hearing dated May 12, 2025;

32. Petitioner's Motion to Allow Witness to Testify Remotely dated June 4, 2025;
33. Certification of Petitioner's prior disciplinary records dated June 4, 2025;
34. Petitioner's Supplemental Answers to Bill of dated June 9, 2025;
35. Order – Motion to Allow Witness to Testify Remotely entered June 10, 2025;
36. Petitioner's Supplemental Answers to Bill of Particulars (Redacted) June 24, 2025;
37. Membership Affidavit of DaVida M. Davis, custodian of membership records for the Virginia State Bar dated July 31, 2025;
38. Petitioner's Motion to Introduce Summaries of Medical Records received July 8, 2025;
39. Bar's Opposition to Motion to Introduce Summaries of Medical Records received July 9, 2025;
40. Wells Fargo Employment Verification dated July 9, 2025;
41. Notices of Reinstatement Hearing dated August 4, 2025;
42. US Bankruptcy Court Western District of Virginia: Certificate of Training dated August 6, 2025;
43. Affidavit of Publication – Lynchburg News & Advance dated August 8, 2025;
44. Order – Western District Bankruptcy Court dated August 14, 2025 with copies of partial payments;
45. Petitioner's Motion to Submit PDF Files of Witness/Exhibit Lists and Exhibits dated September 6, 2025;
46. Bar's Witness List dated September 10, 2025;
47. Bar's Exhibit List dated September 10, 2025;
48. Order-Motion to Submit PDF Files of Witness/Exhibit Lists and Exhibits entered September 10, 2025;
49. Bar's Letter to Petitioner regarding redacted exhibit received September 11, 2025;
50. Petitioner's Witness List dated September 14, 2025;
51. Petitioner's Exhibit List dated September 14, 2025;
52. Clerk's letter to Petitioner regarding receipt of letters of recommendation dated September 24, 2025;
53. Bar's Objections to Petitioner's Witness/Exhibit List dated October 6, 2025;
54. Petitioner's Objections to VSB Exhibits dated October 8, 2025;
55. Clerk's Pre-hearing Conference Call Letter to Chair dated October 8, 2025;
56. Bar's Letter to Clerk regarding redacted exhibit dated October 16, 2025;
57. Pre-hearing Conference Call Order entered October 17, 2025;
58. Personal Bankruptcy Case: Court Case and Credit Report;
59. Petitioner's Complete MCLE Record from 2021-June 25, 2025;
60. Employment/Performance Reviews: 2022-2025;
61. Screenshot of Diploma: Masters in Education from Liberty University;
62. Handwritten Chart of Major Medical Issues by Date (introduced at the hearing on October 24, 2025);
63. Character Reference Letters for Petitioner:
 - a. Letter from Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Barbour received June 12, 2024;
 - b. Letter from Carig L. Parker received June 13, 2024;
 - c. Letter from Pastor Ron Phillips received June 13, 2024;
 - d. Letter from Dr. Edwin Ndukwe received July 1, 2024;

- e. Letter from Regina Barbour received July 1, 2024;
- f. Letter from Lynette Wall received July 2, 2024;
- g. Letter from Mary Ann Echols received July 2, 2024;
- h. Letter from Eva McLean and Jason McLean received July 3, 2024;
- i. Letter from Odeater Brown received July 10, 2024;
- j. Letter from Jacquelyn M. G. Groenwald received August 2, 2025;
- k. Letter from Louis Groenwald received August 11, 2025;
- l. Letter from Gregory Andrews received September 8, 2025;
- m. Letter from Evangelist Cheryl Foster received September 16, 2025;
- n. Letter from Bobby Cruz received September 20, 2024;
- o. Email from Brian Barbour received September 20, 2024;
- p. Letter from Lyle Fried received September 23, 2024;
- q. Email from Roger and Missy Pierce received September 24, 2024;
- r. Letter from Nancy Bazemore received September 24, 2024;
- s. Letter from Homer Buffington received September 26, 2024;
- t. Letter from Darin Barbour received September 26, 2025;
- u. Letter from Georgiann Watts received September 29, 2025;
- v. Letter from Ernest Tindall received October 2, 2024, and
- w. Letter from Gary M. Bowman received October 7, 2024.

PETITIONER'S EVIDENCE

Following opening arguments, Petitioner presented the following witnesses in support of his Petition for Reinstatement: Craig Parker, LPC (appeared virtually), who served as Petitioner's counselor from August 12, 2021, through December 8, 2021. Darin Barbour, his brother, who testified that he is Petitioner's "accountability partner;" Regina Barbour, his wife, who testified to the difficulties associated with living with and being married to Petitioner during his periods of active addiction, his recovery and accountability efforts, and his lifestyle changes that have made him "a new man," including his activities with his church and with a men's support group as well as his efforts to take control of his physical health; and Petitioner, who presented evidence of his struggles since Revocation to find meaningful employment, his recovery efforts, his employment history since Revocation, his volunteer efforts, improvements he has made to his physical health, and his efforts to repair and improve his relationships with his family. Each of these witnesses was direct examined by Petitioner, cross-examined by the Bar,

and questioned by members of the Board.

Petitioner's Exhibits A-O were admitted into evidence.

THE BAR'S EVIDENCE

Upon conclusion of the Petitioner's case, the Bar offered one witness, Robert Baker, Bar Investigator, who presented brief testimony as to Petitioner's cooperation during the Bar's investigation. The Bar's exhibits were admitted into evidence as VSB Exhibits 1-21o.

During his closing statement, Bar Counsel requested that the Board recommend reinstatement of Petitioner's license to practice.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Based upon its review of the records of the Revocation proceeding, the pleadings in this matter, the parties' exhibits, witness testimony, and letters submitted to the Board from members of the public, the Board makes the following findings of fact:

1. Brent Lavelle Barbour was licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia on October 31, 2013, and began working for Prince Law, LLC as an independent contractor. Petitioner's work on behalf of Prince Law, LLC served as the basis for the charges of misconduct that led to the revocation of his license on February 16, 2018.

3. Petitioner suffered from a substance use disorder, which predated his graduation from law school in 2013; however, Petitioner maintained sobriety while attending law school from 2010-2013.

4. Petitioner relapsed in 2013. He abused cocaine, with brief intervening periods of sobriety, from 2013 until he embraced recovery on July 14, 2021.

5. In or around April of 2014, Holly and Micah Repass retained the services of Prince Law, LLC, to represent them in a bankruptcy filing in the United States Bankruptcy Court

for the Western District of Virginia (the “Bankruptcy Court”). The *Repass* bankruptcy was assigned to Petitioner, who filed the bankruptcy petition on March 16, 2015. During his representation of the Repasses, Petitioner engaged in multiple instances of professional misconduct, violating Rules 1.1, 1.3(a), 1.4(a), 1.4(b), 3.4(d) and 8.4(c) of the Rules of Professional Conduct, as found by the Board and set forth in the Order of Revocation dated March 15, 2018.

6. On February 17, 2016, the Bankruptcy Court conducted an evidentiary hearing into Petitioner’s handling of the *Repass* bankruptcy. By Memorandum Opinion and Order entered May 5, 2016, the Bankruptcy Court concluded that Petitioner violated Rule 9011(b) of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure;¹ made false certifications in filings with the Bankruptcy Court; entered into an agreement with Prince Law Firm, which constituted “sham transactions with no purpose other than to skirt the fee sharing disclosure obligations in both the Bankruptcy Code and the Bankruptcy Rules;” misrepresented the status of the bankruptcy case to the Debtors by failing to inform them of the filing of the Petition and failing to review the Petition with the Debtors prior to filing; failed to inform the Debtors of the dismissal of their

¹ Rule 9011(b) of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure states as follows:

(b) *Representations to the Court.* By presenting to the court a petition, pleading, written motion, or other document—whether by signing, filing, submitting, or later advocating it—an attorney or unrepresented party certifies that, to the best of the person's knowledge, information, and belief formed after an inquiry reasonable under the circumstances:

(1) it is not presented for any improper purpose, such as to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase litigation costs;

(2) the claims, defenses, and other legal contentions are warranted by existing law or by a nonfrivolous argument to extend, modify, or reverse existing law, or to establish new law;

(3) the allegations and factual contentions have evidentiary support—or if specifically so identified, are likely to have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation or discovery; and

(4) the denials of factual contentions are warranted on the evidence—or if specifically so identified, are reasonably based on a lack of information or belief.

case; misled the Debtors into believing that a May 21, 2015, hearing date for the reconsideration of the dismissal of their case was actually for the purpose of the initial meeting of the creditors; failed to inform the Debtors that because Petitioner had failed to notify the Court that he would be absent at the hearing, and because of his absence, the Court denied the reconsideration request; and failed to respond to a Show Cause Order issued by the Bankruptcy Court. The Bankruptcy Court revoked Petitioner's privilege to practice before the Bankruptcy Court, sanctioned Petitioner \$2,500, which was due 60 days from the date of the Order, and ordered Petitioner to attend training on the Court's electronic filing system. Petitioner did not pay the sanction as required by the Order or attend the mandated training, so the Bankruptcy Court sanctioned Petitioner an additional \$2,500 for a total sanction of \$5,000.

7. The Bar opened an investigation into the Repasses' allegations of misconduct against Petitioner, which resulted in the Tenth District Subcommittee's certification of misconduct to the Board for a hearing on asserted violations of Rules 1.1, 1.3(a), 1.4(a), 1.4(b), 3.4(d), and 8.4(c) of the *Rules of Professional Conduct* (the "Misconduct Proceeding").

8. All required notices were timely sent by the Clerk of the Disciplinary System to Petitioner by certified mail, in the manner prescribed by the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part Six, IV, Paragraph 13.

9. The Board conducted a prehearing conference call in the Misconduct Proceeding on February 7, 2018, and both the Bar and Petitioner attended. Petitioner did not state that he could not be present at the hearing scheduled for February 16, 2018, or raise any concerns with the hearing date set in the matter. Petitioner also did not raise any issues related to his substance use disorder that would have prevented him from attending or participating in the hearing or serve as a basis for a defense to or mitigation of the charges of misconduct.

10. On February 16, 2018, the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Board held a hearing with proper notice to Petitioner. Prior to the hearing, the Bar introduced 25 exhibits, but Petitioner introduced no exhibits on his behalf. Petitioner did not appear at the hearing or communicate that he was unable to attend the hearing. The Bar called one witness, the Bar investigator, and relied on the exhibits introduced at the onset of the hearing. The Board found, by clear and convincing evidence, that Petitioner had violated Rules 1.1, 1.3(a), 1.4(a), 1.4(b), 3.4(d), and 8.4(c) of the *Rules of Professional Conduct*. During the sanctions phase of the hearing, the Board heard evidence of Petitioner's prior misconduct, which included the following:

- April 12, 2016 – Violation of Rule 1.3 for failure to appear at eight (8) distinct hearings between May 21, 2015-November 6, 2015, for which the Petitioner received a Dismissal for Exceptional Circumstances due to ongoing health concerns;
- September 11, 2015 – United States Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Virginia entered a one-year suspension of Petitioner's ability to file bankruptcy petitions in that Court;
- December 2015 – Campbell County Circuit Court fined Petitioner \$100.00 for his failure to appear at a hearing; and
- December 2015 – Roanoke City Circuit Court took two (2) Rules to Show Cause under advisement for a period of six (6) months related to Petitioner's unexplained absences from court hearings.

11. Concerned with what it saw as a pattern of misconduct, a refusal to acknowledge wrongdoing, and conduct that involved dishonesty and misrepresentation to clients and the court,

which reflected adversely on his ability to practice law, the Board entered a Summary Order revoking Petitioner's license to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia effective as of February 16, 2018. A Memorandum Opinion was entered on March 15, 2018.

12. Following Revocation, Petitioner struggled financially as he was unable to find gainful employment, which required his wife to work two to three jobs, and the Barbours filed for bankruptcy.

13. Petitioner's substance use disorder continued for more than three years following Revocation with multiple efforts at recovery. Petitioner participated in multiple substance use disorder programs, including Lawyers Helping Lawyers in 2017; Williamsville Wellness Center in 2019; and a sixteen (16) day inpatient program at Mt. Regis from July 21, 2021, through August 6, 2021, which marked the beginning of his sustained period of sobriety. Petitioner also attended twenty-two (22) weekly counseling sessions from August 12, 2021, through December 8, 2021, with Craig Parker, LPC, with Parker Counseling & Consulting Services, Inc., who began counseling Petitioner after Petitioner had achieved thirty (30) days of sobriety, to assist Petitioner in his recovery from substance abuse; and Thriveworks, which provided Petitioner with individual counseling in June and July of 2025. Petitioner currently receives support through Celebrate Recovery and The Forge, a men's accountability group from whom he receives support on a daily basis.

14. Petitioner has been sober and in active recovery since July 14, 2021. As of the date of the hearing on his Petition for Reinstatement, Petitioner had been sober for over four (4) years, three (3) months, and eleven (11) days.

15. On March 4, 2022, Petitioner completed the requirements to achieve a Master's degree in Higher Education: Educational Leadership through Liberty University.

16. Petitioner is currently employed full-time by Wells Fargo Bank as a Senior Fraud & Claims Operations Representative. He has been employed with Wells Fargo Bank since November 28, 2022. His employment records indicate that he is a “high-performing team member” who consistently meets his employer’s expectations and is actively engaged in continuous improvement.

17. Petitioner also serves as a volunteer substitute teacher at a local school in North Carolina.

18. On June 17, 2024, Petitioner filed his Petition for Reinstatement under penalty of perjury pursuant to Part 6, § IV, ¶ 13-25(E) of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. Petitioner paid the requisite cash bond of \$5,000; submitted evidence of completion of 115.5 hours of Continuing Legal Education credits in compliance with the continuing education requirement; passed the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination with a scaled score of 89; paid costs previously assessed against Petitioner by the Bar with interest; and reimbursed the Client Protection Fund for any sums of money it paid as a result of Petitioner’s misconduct.

19. Petitioner initially sought to have the sanctions imposed against him by the Bankruptcy Court in the *Repass* case paid from his bankrupt estate by the United States Trustee in his Chapter 13 bankruptcy case, Case 17-62236, in November of 2017. When his Chapter 13 case was closed due to insufficient assets, Petitioner then sought to discharge the sanctions in his Chapter 7 bankruptcy case in Case 20-61438 filed on October 29, 2020.

20. After confirming that the sanctions had not been discharged by the Bankruptcy Court, Petitioner attempted to make partial payments to the Court, but because he was not on an approved payment plan, those partial payments were rejected by the Court and returned to Petitioner. On June 12, 2025, Petitioner filed a letter with the Court, requesting that the Court

accept payment of the initial \$2,500 sanction and dismiss the remaining \$2,500 sanction. By Order dated August 14, 2025, the Bankruptcy Court denied Petitioner's request to dismiss the second sanction but granted his request to pay in installments.

21. To date, Petitioner has paid the initial \$2,500 sanction and plans to pay the second sanction by August 31, 2026, as required by the Bankruptcy Court's August 14, 2025, Order.

20. Petitioner also sought to have the debt he owed to the Client Protection Fund in 2019 discharged in his Chapter 7 bankruptcy case; however, the Bankruptcy Court held that such debt was excepted from discharge under 11 USC § 523(a)(7) by Order dated June 7, 2021. Petitioner repaid the Client Protection Fund in full on November 23, 2021.

21. Petitioner has produced sufficient evidence that he has become a person of good character with the requisite fitness to practice law.

ANALYSIS

Pursuant to Paragraph 13-25(G)(6)(b) of the Rules of Court, the Board considered the following factors in determining whether Petitioner met his burden of proof as to his good character and fitness to practice law:

1. The severity of the Petitioner's Misconduct, including, but not limited to, the nature and circumstances of the Misconduct.

The Board considered Petitioner's actions concerning the numerous ethical violations in his handling of the bankruptcy petition on behalf of Holly and Micah Repass, including the findings that Petitioner made false certifications in pleadings filed with the Bankruptcy Court, that he misled the Repasses and made false representations to them about the status of their case, that he failed to attend multiple hearings for the Repasses, which was consistent with his prior history of misconduct. The Board also considered Petitioner's failure to publicly acknowledge his substance abuse problems that were affecting his personal and professional life at the time of

the ethical violations that led to the revocation of Petitioner's license to practice law. The Board finds the misconduct to be severe but not to a degree which would preclude reinstatement.

2. The Petitioner's character, maturity, and experience at the time of his Revocation.

Petitioner had been practicing law for five (5) years at the time of Revocation. Petitioner's physical state and mental state were in severe decline due to his active drug use and the consequences that arose in his family and work as a result. Petitioner acknowledged that he lacked good character, maturity, and legal experience in bankruptcy at the time of Revocation. Petitioner obtained his license later in life, so while he was an older practitioner at the time of his misconduct, he was a newer practicing attorney, who was largely inexperienced before the Bankruptcy Court.

3. The time elapsed since the Petitioner's Revocation.

Petitioner's license to practice was suspended effective February 16, 2018. At the time of the hearing on his Petition for Reinstatement, Petitioner's license had been revoked for over seven years.

4. Restitution to the clients and/or the Bar.

Due to financial challenges and the length of time it took Petitioner to embrace responsibility for his misconduct, Petitioner's payments of the sanctions imposed by the Bankruptcy Court were not prompt, but he attempted to make installment payments before being placed on a payment plan by the Bankruptcy Court. Petitioner is on track to complete payment to the Bankruptcy Court before August 2026.

While Petitioner did seek the discharge of the costs imposed upon him by the Board for the Misconduct Proceedings and for the payments made by the Client Protection Fund on his behalf in his Chapter 7 bankruptcy proceeding, he did not oppose the adversary proceeding filed

by the Bar that objected to the discharge of those debts, and those debts were not discharged.

Petitioner has paid the costs assessed against him by the Bar in full, with interest. Petitioner has repaid the Client Protection Fund for two payments it issued to clients on his behalf in 2019. A total of \$2,700 was paid on his behalf by the Client Protection Fund.

Notably, the Repasses and the complainants that had petitions pending at the time of Revocation were notified of his Petition for Reinstatement, and no one opposed his efforts to obtain reinstatement of his license. Holly Repass noted that if Petitioner takes responsibility for his clients, appears at scheduled court hearings, and does his job, he should be able to have his license reinstated because she believes everyone is entitled to a second chance.

5. The Petitioner's activities since Revocation, including, but not limited to, his conduct and attitude during that period of time.

Petitioner has changed his life since Revocation, mentally, physically, and spiritually. Petitioner's character witnesses testified that he is a "new man" in every meaningfully measurable way.

The first three years after Revocation were challenging for Petitioner, who struggled in every aspect of his life, including accepting responsibility for the misconduct that led to the revocation of his license, significant challenges to his physical health, an active cocaine addiction, infidelity, unemployment, poverty with ensuing bankruptcies, and fractured family dynamics.

Once Petitioner embraced recovery in July of 2021, he actively began to change his life: revisiting his faith, caring for his physical and mental health, rebuilding his relationships with his wife and son, gaining employment in a career that provides ample growth opportunities, volunteering in his community, seeking and providing support for other men in recovery, repaying his debts to the legal profession, and accepting responsibility for his actions that led to

Revocation.

Petitioner earned his master's degree from Liberty University in Higher Education: Educational Leadership on March 14, 2022.

Darin Barbour, Petitioner's brother, traveled to the hearing from Indiana to testify to the changes he has witnessed in Petitioner. Mr. Barbour testified that he is Petitioner's accountability partner, that he speaks with his brother almost daily if not multiple times a day, that he keeps in close contact with Petitioner's wife, and that he is intimately familiar with Petitioner's activities in recovery and within the community.

Petitioner's wife Regina Barbour testified that Petitioner is not the same person that he was in 2018. She remained steadfastly supportive of Petitioner throughout his trials; however, he pushed her to the point where she was willing to end her relationship with him to protect herself and her son. She watched him rebuild his life from the depths of active addiction to becoming a healthier, more respectable, more spiritual version of himself.

Petitioner testified that he has fully embraced sobriety; has not relapsed since July 14, 2021; has a strong support system in his family, his church, and his support groups; has accepted responsibility for his actions that led to the Revocation; is actively working to repair his relationship and trust with his wife and son; has plans for his future in his current career choice with the hope of working in Wells Fargo's legal department if his license is reinstated; and has hope for his future.

6. The Petitioner's present reputation and standing in the community.

The Board heard testimony and received 25 letters submitted in support of Petitioner's Petition for Reinstatement. The Board received only one letter opposing Petitioner's petition, but it did not state a basis for the opposition.

Petitioner volunteers in his local community, serving as a volunteer substitute teacher and working with the food missions/food banks with a variety of churches. Petitioner also volunteers with civic groups associated with his employer.

Petitioner is well regarded by his community.

7. The Petitioner's familiarity with the Virginia Rules of Professional Conduct and his current proficiency in the law.

Within the four years preceding the filing of the Petition, from October 4, 2021, to present, Petitioner completed 115.5 hours of continuing legal education, of which 29 hours were in the areas of legal ethics or professionalism. Petitioner also took 105 classes in banking laws and banking regulations as part of his non-legal job at Wells Fargo. He also passed the MPRE with a scaled score of 89.

8. The sufficiency of the punishment undergone by the Petitioner.

Petitioner has been sufficiently punished for his misconduct. Petitioner completed a revocation period of seven years and seven months as of the date of the hearing on his petition. During his revocation, he was forced to work several low-paying, non-legal jobs and suffered from poverty as he was unable to earn sufficient income to provide for his family, resulting in his need to declare bankruptcy. His wife also had to work two to three jobs sometimes to support the family during times when Petitioner could not obtain gainful employment, and watching his wife and family suffer for his misconduct weighed heavily on his heart.

9. The Petitioner's sincerity, frankness and truthfulness in presenting and discussing factors related to his Revocation and Reinstatement.

The Board found Petitioner to be sincere, frank, and truthful in presenting and discussing the factors related to his Revocation and Reinstatement. Petitioner was asked directly if he now accepts that the conduct that he described as "a lack of sophistication" with the Bankruptcy

Court was, in fact, a lack of competency, diligence, communication, candor to the tribunal, and misconduct that reflected adversely on his ability to practice law. Petitioner answered each question in the affirmative. Petitioner also candidly admitted that accepting that his actions constituted misconduct under the *Rules of Professional Conduct* did not occur overnight for him, that it was a journey, and that he was very angry about the Revocation for a long time. He also laid responsibility for the Revocation of his license at the feet of Prince Law, LLC for a long time. He is now able to accept responsibility for his own actions that led to the Revocation, including not only his professional failures in the *Repass* case but also his failure to attend hearings on behalf of many clients; his substance abuse; his dishonesty to his clients, family, and friends; his medical issues that impacted his ability to practice law; and his own legal problems that were reflected in the court orders that have now been expunged.

10. The impact upon public confidence in the administration of justice if the Petitioner's license to practice law is restored.

The Board does not believe that the public's confidence in the administration of justice would be undermined if Petitioner's license was restored, and the twenty-five (25) individuals who wrote in support of Petitioner's reinstatement agree. The disciplinary system exists to protect the public, not to punish the lawyer. Holding lawyers accountable for their misconduct protects the public. Providing lawyers with an avenue for reinstatement after revocation that requires lawyers to demonstrate their fitness to rejoin the legal community through legal and ethical study, paid restitution, character and fitness evaluations, and public accountability for the actions that harmed others protects the public. More than seven years have passed since Petitioner's license was revoked, and he did the hard, painful work necessary to prove to this Board that he deserves a second chance to have the privilege of practicing law again.

RECOMMENDATION

Accordingly, the Board finds that the Petitioner has proven by clear and convincing evidence that he is now a person of honest demeanor and good moral character and that he possesses the requisite fitness to practice law. Therefore, the Board respectfully recommends to the Supreme Court of Virginia that the Petition to Reinstate the license of Brent Lavelle Barbour be granted.

As required by Part Six, Section IV, Paragraph 13-25(G), of the Rules of the Supreme Court, the Board finds that the costs of this proceeding are as follows:

Copying Charges:	\$1,443.69
Court Reporter Fees:	\$2,032.75
Mailing Fees:	\$76.26
Medical Records:	\$298.21
Legal Notices:	\$511.22
Administrative Fee:	\$1,500.00
Total:	\$5,862.13

After application of Petitioner's bond for costs, Petitioner currently has a balance due in the amount of \$862.13.

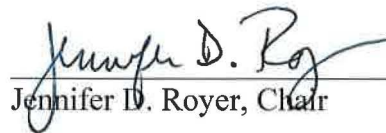
It is further **ORDERED** that the Clerk forward this Order of Recommendation and the record to the Supreme Court of Virginia for its consideration and disposition.

It is further **ORDERED** that the Clerk shall mail an attested copy of this Order to Petitioner, Brent Lavelle Barbour, by certified mail, return receipt requested, at his address of record with the Virginia State Bar, 375 Starlight Drive, Fort Mill, South Carolina, 29715, and hand delivered to Edward J. Dillon, Deputy Bar Counsel, Virginia State Bar, Bank of America

Building, 1111 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219-0026.

ENTERED THE 16TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2025.

VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jennifer D. Royer", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer D. Royer, Chair