

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

**IN THE MATTER OF
SANDY YEH CHANG**

VS B DOCKET NO.: 21-000-121736

**AGREED DISPOSITION MEMORANDUM ORDER
INDEFINITE SUSPENSION**

On Thursday, March 25, 2021, this matter was heard, telephonically, by the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Board (the “Board”) upon the joint request of the parties for the Board to accept the Agreed Disposition signed by the parties and offered to the Board as provided by Part Six, Section IV, Paragraph 13-6.H of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The Board panel consisted of Yvonne S. Gibney, Chair; Sandra L. Havrilak; Donita M. King; T. Tony H. Pham; and Nancy L. Bloom, Lay Member. The Virginia State Bar was represented by Paulo E. Franco, Jr., Assistant Bar Counsel. Respondent Sandy Yeh Chang (“Respondent”) was present and was not represented by counsel. The Chair polled the members of the panel as to whether any of them were aware of any personal or financial interest or bias which would preclude any of them from fairly hearing the matter to which each member responded in the negative. Court Reporter Lisa Wright, Chandler and Halasz, P.O. Box 9349, Richmond, Virginia 23227, telephone (804) 730-1222, after being duly sworn, reported the hearing and transcribed the proceedings.

WHEREFORE, upon consideration of the Agreed Disposition, Rule to Show Cause and Summary Suspension, Respondent’s Disciplinary Record, the arguments of the parties, and after due deliberation,

It is **ORDERED** that the Board accepts the Agreed Disposition and the Respondent shall receive an indefinite suspension, as set forth in the Agreed Disposition, which is attached and incorporated in this Memorandum Order.

It is further **ORDERED** that the sanction is effective **March 25, 2021**.

It is further **ORDERED** that:

The Respondent must comply with the requirements of Part Six, Section IV, Paragraph 13-29 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The Respondent shall forthwith give notice by certified mail of the Indefinite Suspension of her license to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia, to all clients for whom she is currently handling matters and to all opposing attorneys and presiding Judges in pending litigation. The Respondent shall also make appropriate arrangements for the disposition of matters then in her care in conformity with the wishes of her clients. The Respondent shall give such notice within 14 days of the effective date of the Indefinite Suspension, and make such arrangements as are required herein within 45 days of the effective date of the Indefinite Suspension. The Respondent shall also furnish proof to the Bar within 60 days of the effective day of the Indefinite Suspension that such notices have been timely given and such arrangements made for the disposition of matters.

It is further **ORDERED** that if the Respondent is not handling any client matters on the effective date of the Indefinite Suspension, she shall submit an affidavit to that effect within 60 days of the effective date of the Indefinite Suspension to the Clerk of the Disciplinary System at the Virginia State Bar. All issues concerning the adequacy of the notice and arrangements required by Paragraph 13-29 shall be determined by the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Board, which may impose a sanction of Revocation or additional Suspension for failure to comply with the requirements of this subparagraph.

The Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs pursuant to Part Six, Section IV, Paragraph 13-9.E. of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

It is further **ORDERED** that an attested copy of this Order be mailed to the Respondent

by certified, return receipt requested, regular and electronic mail at her last address of record with the Virginia State Bar at Sandy Yeh Chang, Esq., 16207 Hidden Ponds Way, Gaithersburg, MD 20878, and a copy by electronic mail to Paulo E. Franco, Jr., Assistant Bar Counsel, Virginia State Bar, in this matter.

Entered this 25th day of March 2021.

VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

Yvonne S. Gibney

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Gibney
Date: 2021.03.25 14:15:24 -04'00'

Yvonne S. Gibney, Chair

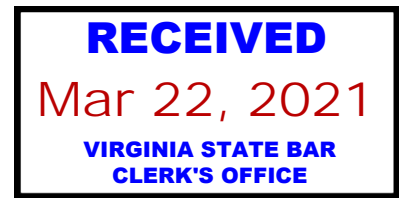


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DaVida M. Davis

DaVida M. Davis

**Clerk of the Disciplinary System
Virginia State Bar**



VIRGINIA :

**BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR**

**IN THE MATTER OF
SANDY YEH CHANG**

VS B Docket No. 21-000-121736

**AGREED DISPOSITION
(Reciprocal Discipline of Indefinite Suspension)**

Pursuant to the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-6.H., the Virginia State Bar, by Paulo E. Franco, Jr., Assistant Bar Counsel and Sandy Yeh Chang, Respondent, *pro se*, hereby enter into the following Agreed Disposition arising out of the referenced matter.

I. STIPULATIONS OF FACT

1. At all relevant times, Respondent was licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

2. On March 2, 2021, the Virginia State Bar (“VSB”) Disciplinary Board (“Board”) entered a Rule to Show Cause suspending Respondent’s license to practice law in Virginia effective March 8, 2021 and further requiring Respondent to show cause why the same discipline imposed by the Court of Appeals of Maryland on January 19, 2021 should not be imposed by the Board.

3. The Attorney Grievance Commission of Maryland and Respondent entered into a consent Joint Petition for Imposition of an Indefinite Suspension for violations of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct 5.5, 8.4 (c) and (d) and Maryland Rule 19-742 on January 18, 2021. A copy of the Joint Petition is attached as Exhibit A.

4. A copy of the Maryland Court of Appeals Order approving the Joint Petition for Imposition of an Indefinite Suspension is attached as Exhibit B.

5. By entering into this Agreed Disposition, Respondent consents to have the Board impose the same discipline pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-24.G of the Rules of the Virginia Supreme Court that was imposed by the Court of Appeals of Maryland in the order attached as Exhibit B.

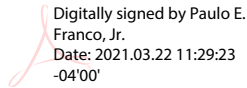
6. If this Agreed Disposition is accepted by the Board, Respondent shall comply with the requirements set forth in Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-29 of the Rules of the Virginia Supreme Court.

II. PROPOSED DISPOSITION


Accordingly, Assistant Bar Counsel and the Respondent tender to the Disciplinary Board for its approval the Agreed Disposition of Indefinite Suspension as set forth in the Court of Appeals of Maryland's Order of January 19, 2021 as representing an appropriate sanction if this matter were to be heard through an evidentiary hearing by a panel of the Disciplinary Board. Assistant Bar Counsel and the Respondent agree that the effective date for the sanction shall be the date of entry of the Disciplinary Board Order approving this Agreed Disposition.

If the Agreed Disposition is approved, the Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-9.E of the Rules of the Virginia Supreme Court.

THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

By: **Paulo E. Franco, Jr.**  Digitally signed by Paulo E. Franco, Jr.
Date: 2021.03.22 11:29:23 -04'00'

Paulo E. Franco, Jr., Assistant Bar Counsel

Sandy Chang  Digitally signed by Sandy Chang
DN: cn=Sandy Chang, o=DC Law Group, ou,
email=sandra@ddlawweb.com, c=US
Date: 2021.03.22 12:08:19 -05'00'

Sandy Yeh Chang, Respondent

ATTORNEY GRIEVANCE COMMISSION
OF MARYLAND

Petitioner,

v.

SANDY YEH CHANG

Respondent.

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IN THE
COURT OF APPEALS
OF MARYLAND

Misc. Docket AG No. 19
September Term, 2020

In the Circuit Court for
Montgomery County, Maryland
Case No. 482796-V

JOINT PETITION FOR INDEFINITE SUSPENSION BY CONSENT

The Attorney Grievance Commission of Maryland, Petitioner, by Lydia E. Lawless, Bar Counsel, and Erin A. Risch, Deputy Bar Counsel, its attorneys, and Sandy Yeh Chang, Respondent, through her attorney Alvin I. Frederick, Esquire, pursuant to Maryland Rule 19-736, jointly petition this Honorable Court to indefinitely suspend the Respondent from the practice of law in the State of Maryland, and in support thereof state:

1. The Respondent, Sandy Yeh Chang, was admitted to the Maryland Bar on December 16, 2003. The Respondent was admitted to the Virginia Bar on September 4, 2008 and the Bar of the District of Columbia on August 10, 2009.

2. On January 23, 2014, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals suspended the Respondent from the practice of law in D.C. for two years for permitting her non-lawyer employee to file false Credit Counseling Certificates in approximately 20 bankruptcy cases. *In re Chang*, 83 A.3d 763 (D.C. 2014). The Respondent has never sought reinstatement to practice law in D.C.

3. On November 7, 2014, this Court suspended the Respondent from the practice of law in Maryland, by consent, for two years *nunc proc tunc* to January 23, 2014,

EXHIBIT A

as reciprocal discipline. *Att’y Griev. Comm’n v. Chang*, 440 Md. 409, 102 A.3d 1188 (2014). The Respondent has never sought reinstatement to practice law in Maryland.

4. On or about June 1, 2015, the Respondent was suspended from the practice of law in Virginia for two years *nunc pro tunc* to January 23, 2014, as reciprocal discipline for the misconduct that was the subject of the D.C. disciplinary matter. On May 16, 2019, the Respondent was reinstated to practice law in Virginia.

5. On July 1, 2020, the Petitioner filed a Petition for Disciplinary or Remedial Action in this Court alleging that the Respondent had engaged in the unauthorized practice of law in Maryland. By Order dated July 7, 2020, this Court, transmitted the matter to the Circuit Court for Montgomery County to be heard and determined by the Honorable Jeannie E. Cho.

6. A hearing before Judge Cho is currently scheduled for January 26-27, 2020.

7. The Respondent submits her consent to an indefinite suspension with the knowledge that, if a hearing were held, sufficient evidence would be produced to establish the following facts:

In 2008, the Respondent formed the Chang Law Firm and established an office for the practice of law in Montgomery County, Maryland. In 2014, after the Respondent was suspended from the practice of law in Maryland, another attorney took over the Respondent’s law practice and changed the firm’s name to the DC Law Group (the “Firm”). Between 2014 and 2019, the Respondent worked as a non-attorney assistant for the Firm. After her reinstatement to the Virginia State Bar in 2019, the Respondent continued working for the Firm handling Virginia cases.

In 2018, a Maryland client sought representation from the Firm in connection with multiple traffic citations that were pending

in Montgomery County District Court. The Respondent engaged in the unauthorized practice of law in Maryland when she signed the retainer agreement on behalf of the Firm and communicated with the client regarding his cases.

In 2019, the Respondent engaged in the unauthorized practice of law in Maryland when a member of the Firm sought and obtained special admission, *pro hac vice*, for the Respondent in two cases pending in the Circuit Court for Montgomery County. In those matters, the Respondent failed to disclose her suspension and by failing to advise the court, misrepresented to the circuit court that she was not a Maryland attorney. The Respondent incorrectly believed that the 2-year term of her suspension in Maryland ended in January 2016, and that she was eligible for special admission as an “out-of-state attorney” after she was reinstated to practice law in Virginia.

8. The Respondent submits her consent to an indefinite suspension with the knowledge that, if the hearing were held, sufficient evidence would be produced to establish that the Respondent violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct: 5.5 (a) and (b) (unauthorized practice of law; multi-jurisdictional practice of law), 8.4 (c) and (d) (misconduct), and Maryland Rule 19-742.

9. The Respondent acknowledges that if a hearing were held the following aggravating factors would be established by clear and convincing evidence: (1) multiple rule violations; and (2) prior discipline. On September 9, 2010, this Court reprimanded the Respondent for violating Rules 1.1 and 8.4(d) of the Maryland Lawyers’ Rules of Professional Conduct in connection with a bankruptcy filing in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. *Att’y Griev. Comm’n v. Chang*, 415 Md. 605, 4 A.3d 510 (2010).

10. Bar Counsel acknowledges that the Respondent has demonstrated remorse.

11. Bar Counsel and the Respondent have conferred on an appropriate disposition and have agreed that an appropriate disposition here is an indefinite suspension from the practice of law. *Att’y Griev. Comm’n of Maryland v. Tanko*, 427 Md. 15, 53, 45 A.3d 281, 304 (2012) (indefinite suspension where attorney did not believe he had an affirmative obligation to seek reinstatement before resuming the practice of law after 60-day suspension); *Att’y Griev. Comm’n v. Robertson*, 400 Md. 618, 929 A.2d 576 (2007) (attorney with a prior reprimand was indefinitely suspended for failing to advise a client of his 90-day suspension, filing a motion for summary judgment on behalf of the client while suspended and failing to withdraw from the client’s case); *Att’y Griev. Comm’n v. Brisbon*, 422 Md. 625, 31 A.3d 110 (2011) (continuation of indefinite suspension for attorney who engaged in the unauthorized practice of law by acting as an immigration consultant while suspended). *See also Att’y Griev. Comm’n v. Steinhorn*, 462 Md. 184, 198 A.3d 821 (2018) (indefinite suspension where attorney, who had previously been disbarred, submitted false information to the court but lacked the intent to deceive).

12. The Respondent’s consent to an indefinite suspension is freely and voluntarily rendered, pursuant to the provisions of Maryland Rule 19-736(b)(2) without coercion or duress.

13. The Respondent is fully aware of the implications and effects of submitting her consent to an indefinite suspension.

14. The Respondent agrees that while she is indefinitely suspended from the practice of law in Maryland, she will not: (1) associate with any Maryland attorney; (2) obtain employment with any Maryland attorney or law firm; or (3) perform any law-related

activity on behalf of any Maryland client or associated with any Maryland client matter.

15. The Respondent agrees to pay the costs of these proceedings totaling \$1,365.00 and consents to the entry of a judgment in that amount in favor of the Petitioner if these costs are not paid within thirty days of the effective date of the indefinite suspension.

16. The Respondent agrees to comply with Maryland Rule 19-742.

WHEREFORE, the parties pray this Honorable Court:

- A. Order the Respondent indefinitely suspended from the practice of law in Maryland, effective immediately; and
- B. Grant such other and further relief as the Court deems warranted.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Lydia E. Lawless

Sandy Yeh Chang
1 Research Court, Suite 140
Rockville, Maryland 20850
CPF ID No. 0312160127

Respondent

Lydia E. Lawless
Bar Counsel
Attorney Grievance Commission
of Maryland
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lydia.lawless@agc.maryland.gov
CPF ID No. 0712110441

activity on behalf of any Maryland client or associated with any Maryland client matter.

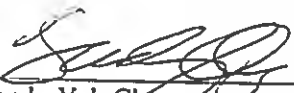
15. The Respondent agrees to pay the costs of these proceedings totaling \$1,365.00 and consents to the entry of a judgment in that amount in favor of the Petitioner if these costs are not paid within thirty days of the effective date of the indefinite suspension.

16. The Respondent agrees to comply with Maryland Rule 19-742.

WHEREFORE, the parties pray this Honorable Court:

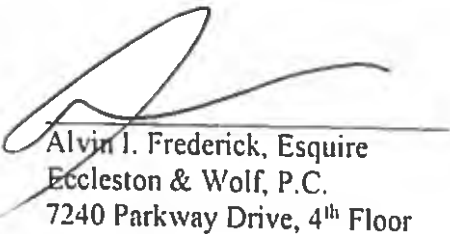
- A. Order the Respondent indefinitely suspended from the practice of law in Maryland, effective immediately; and
- B. Grant such other and further relief as the Court deems warranted.

Respectfully submitted,


Sandy Yeh Chang
1 Research Court, Suite 140
Rockville, Maryland 20850
CPF ID No. 0312160127

Respondent

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Bar Counsel
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Attorney for Respondent

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erin.risch@agc.maryland.gov
CPF ID No. 0612120162

Attorneys for the Petitioner

I solemnly affirm under the penalties of perjury that the contents of the forgoing Joint Petition for Indefinite Suspension by Consent are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.



Sandy Yeh Chang

1/18/21
Date

/s/ Erin A. Risch

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Attorney for Respondent

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erin.risch @agc.maryland.gov
CPF ID No. 0612120162

Attorneys for the Petitioner

I solemnly affirm under the penalties of perjury that the contents of the forgoing Joint Petition for Indefinite Suspension by Consent are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Sandy Yeh Chang

Date

**ATTORNEY GRIEVANCE COMMISSION
OF MARYLAND**

* **IN THE**
* **COURT OF APPEALS**
* **OF MARYLAND**
* **Misc. Docket AG No. 19**
* **September Term, 2020**

v.

SANDY YEH CHANG

ORDER

Upon consideration of the Joint Petition for Indefinite Suspension by Consent of the Attorney Grievance Commission of Maryland and the Respondent, Sandy Yeh Chang, to indefinitely suspend the Respondent from the practice of law, it is this 19th day of January, 2021

ORDERED, by the Court of Appeals of Maryland, that the Respondent, Sandy Yeh Chang, be, and hereby is, immediately suspended from the practice of law in the State of Maryland for violations of Rules 5.5 and 8.4(c) and (d) of the Rules of Professional Conduct, and Maryland Rule 19-742; and it is further

ORDERED, that the Clerk of this Court shall remove the name of Sandy Yeh Chang from the register of attorneys in this Court, and certify that fact to the Trustees of the Client Protection Fund of the Bar of Maryland and all Clerks of all judicial tribunals in this State in accordance with Maryland Rule 19-761.

/s/ Mary Ellen Barbera
Chief Judge

EXHIBIT B