

**VIRGINIA:**

**BEFORE THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD**

**IN THE MATTER OF  
ALICIA ELLEN ROWEDDER**

**VS  
VS B DOCKET NO. 20-033-119016**

**AGREED DISPOSITION MEMORANDUM ORDER  
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

On Monday, March 29, 2021 this matter was heard, telephonically, by the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary 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 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-6.H of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The panel consisted of Carolyn V. Grady, Chair, David J. Gogal, Jennifer D. Royer, John D. Whittington, and Tambera D. Stephenson, Lay Member. The Virginia State Bar was represented by Renu M. Brennan, Bar Counsel. Alicia Ellen Rowedder was present and was not represented by counsel. The Chair polled the members of the Board 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 Beverly Lukowsky, 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, the Certification, Respondent's Disciplinary Record, the arguments of the parties, and after due deliberation,

It is **ORDERED** that the Disciplinary Board accepts the Agreed Disposition and the Respondent shall receive a Public Reprimand, 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 29, 2021.

The Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-9.E. of the Rules.

It is further ORDERED that an attested copy of this Order be mailed to the Respondent by certified mail/return receipt requested, regular and electronic mail to the Respondent, at her last address of record with the Virginia State Bar at 5821 Lakeside Avenue, Henrico, VA 23228, and a copy by electronic mail to Renu M. Brennan, Bar Counsel.

Enter this Order this 29th day of March, 2021

VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

**Carolyn V. Grady**

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Carolyn V. Grady  
First Vice Chair

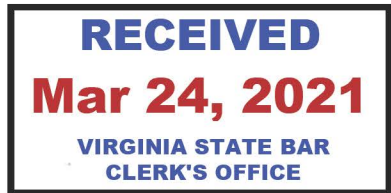


**A COPY TESTE**

**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 ALICIA ELLEN ROWEDDER

VSB Docket No. 20-033-119016

AGREED DISPOSITION (PUBLIC REPRIMAND)

Pursuant to the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-6.H., the Virginia State Bar, by Renu M. Brennan, Bar Counsel, and Alicia Ellen Rowedder, Respondent, hereby enter into the following Agreed Disposition for a Public Reprimand arising out of the referenced matter.

I. STIPULATIONS OF FACT

- 1. On April 14, 2017, Respondent was licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
2. At the time of the Misconduct, Respondent's practice consisted primarily of domestic relations and some criminal defense work.
3. On March 13, 2020, Respondent's license was administratively suspended because she had not complied with her Mandatory Continuing Legal Education ("MCLE") obligations.

The March 13, 2020 letter to Respondent stated as follows:

"Your license to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia was suspended on March 13, 2020 for failure to comply with the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education requirement. Notice of your suspension has been given to Chief Judges and Clerks of the Circuit, District and Juvenile and Domestic Relations courts as well as to the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

Suspended members can be reinstated only following receipt of an end-of-year report (Form #1) and/or applicable delinquency and reinstatement fees. We sent the required notice of your delinquency to you approximately 60 days ago. The names of all members suspended for MCCLE noncompliance will be published in the "Virginia Lawyer Register" and posted on our website."

The March 13, 2020, email to Respondent contained an attachment which stated as follows:

**Urgent Notice**  
**Notice of Suspension effective March 13, 2020**

According to our records, you are noncompliant with your 2019 MCLE requirements. Therefore, your license is suspended effective March 13, 2020. You may not practice law under an administrative suspension. To reinstate from the suspension, you must satisfy all MCLE requirements including the appropriate reinstatement fees. A certified letter confirming this information has also been mailed. All outstanding fees may be paid online at the Virginia State Bar website with a Visa or Mastercard.

Contact the MCLE Department at (804) 775-0577 or [mcle@vsb.org](mailto:mcle@vsb.org) for assistance with reinstating your license.

4. Prior to administratively suspending Respondent's license, the VSB sent Respondent the following notices:
  - a. On January 10, 2020, prior to suspending Respondent's license, the VSB sent Respondent an email with an attachment. The attachment stated as follows:

**Subject:** 2019 MCLE Noncompliance

**Mandatory Continuing Legal Education**

As of January 6, 2020, our records indicate you have not met all required 2019 MCLE compliance requirements. You may need additional hours and/or owe delinquency fees.

A 60-day Notice of Impending Suspension will be mailed to you on January 10, 2020. You may also [log-in to your Member Portal](#) to review your record.

Failure to report all CLE hours by 4:45pm EST February 1, 2020 will result in an additional \$100 late filing fee.

Form 1 End of Year Reports are not accepted by email or fax.

See [Instructions for Compliance after 60-Day Notice of Impending Suspension](#).

Your timely compliance is important to us.  
Please contact the MCLE department at (804) 775-0577 if you have any questions.

- b. On January 10, 2020, the VSB also mailed Respondent, to her address of record via regular mail, a 2019 MCLE Notice of Noncompliance Form 1, End of Year Report which stated at the top in bold "**MCLE Suspension Deadline March 10, 2020**" and advised her of her MCLE hours and further stated: "TO AVOID

SUSPENSION, THIS FORM WITH ALL CORRECTIONS, ATTACHMENTS AND FEES MUST BE **RECEIVED BY** THE MCLE OFFICE **NO LATER THAN 4:45 PM, MARCH 10, 2020."**

- c. Additionally, the VSB mailed to Respondent's address of record by regular mail Respondent's 2019 MCLE Form 1 End of Year Report which stated her MCLE Deadline was December 15, 2019.
  - d. On September 13, 2019, by email to Respondent's email address of record, the VSB reminded Respondent that her MCLE compliance deadline was October 31, 2019, and that she should check her online record (with the link provided) and complete her 2018 CLE requirement by October 31, 2019. The VSB also reminded Respondent to log into her account and report her CLE hours online.
5. Notwithstanding the numerous reminders and notices to her addresses of record, Respondent did not take any action to address her MCLE noncompliance or the suspension. Accordingly, Respondent's license to practice law was administratively suspended, as stated, effective March 13, 2020.
  6. In early June 2020, the VSB received a bar complaint from a client who retained Respondent to represent her in a child custody and visitation dispute. The complainant retained Respondent on March 24, 2020, after Respondent's license was administratively suspended. The complainant was unaware of Respondent's suspension.
  7. Respondent did not address the administrative suspension in her July 8 response to the bar complaint.
  8. On July 31, 2020, bar counsel called Respondent regarding the administrative suspension. Respondent reinstated her license that date.
  9. Respondent advised the bar's investigator that she did not review her mail or emails because her financial, legal, and tax correspondence is sent to her father's address in Georgia, and he then alerts her to be on the lookout for this correspondence. As for the VSB emails, Respondent stated she receives dozens of emails to the email account she provided the VSB and does not attend to those emails as she should. Respondent stated that in late June 2020 she became aware that she may have a problem when she logged on to the membership portal on the VSB website to pay her dues and saw that she had penalty and late compliance fees. At that point, Respondent realized she was missing one hour of ethics credit. Respondent had not previously realized that she had not recorded her CLE hours. Respondent paid the late fees and took the missing hour of ethics in late June or early July 2020 but did not contact the VSB to ensure that she had satisfied her requirements and was in good standing. As stated, Respondent reinstated her status upon the July 31 call from bar counsel.

10. During the time Respondent was administratively suspended from March 13, 2020 to July 31, 2020, she represented 27 clients in family law and criminal matters in Chesterfield, Hanover, Richmond, Hopewell, Brunswick, Sussex, Goochland, Surry, Prince Edward, and Petersburg courts.
11. Respondent did not notify the foregoing courts, her clients, or opposing counsel of her administrative suspension at the time of the suspension or as of the date of conclusion of the bar's investigation.
12. Respondent has no disciplinary history, and she did not have any dishonest or selfish motive. She also cooperated fully in the bar's investigation of this matter. She had only been licensed three, fewer than four years, as of the time of her suspension. Respondent has expressed strong remorse for her failure to comply with her MCLE obligations, the resultant administrative suspension of her license, and her failure to address the suspension from March to July 2020. Respondent asserts that her suspension did not result in harm to her clients. While Respondent does not offer the following in mitigation, as a result of this situation, Respondent is moving out of state to care for her elderly father.

## II. NATURE OF MISCONDUCT

Such conduct by the Respondent constitutes misconduct in violation of the following provision of the Rules of Professional Conduct:

### **RULE 5.5     Unauthorized Practice Of Law; Multijurisdictional Practice of Law**

- (c) A lawyer shall not practice law in a jurisdiction in violation of the regulation of the legal profession in that jurisdiction, or assist another in doing so.

## III. PROPOSED DISPOSITION

Accordingly, Bar Counsel and the Respondent tender to the Disciplinary Board for its approval the agreed disposition of a Public Reprimand as representing an appropriate sanction if this matter were to be heard through an evidentiary hearing by a panel of the Disciplinary Board. 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 ¶ 13-9.E of the Rules.

THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

By: *Renu M. Brennan*  
Renu M. Brennan, Bar Counsel

*A Ellen Rowedden*  
Alicia Ellen Rowedder, Respondent