Supreme Court of Wisconsin

NO. 2016AP563-D **OFFICE OF LAWYER REGULATION V. MICHAEL D. PETERSEN**

June 17, 2026

The Court has entered the following order:

This case is before the court following referee Valerie Bailey-Rihn's report recommending that Michael D. Petersen's license to practice law be reinstated and that he be monitored by an attorney who will oversee his practice of law. The referee also recommends that the costs of this proceeding not be assessed against the petitioner.

The court has concerns that the recommendation may not address information material to determining whether Petersen has met his burden of proof under Supreme Court Rules 22.305 and 22.29. Accordingly, the court directs that the parties shall submit written answers to the questions set forth below within 20 days from the date of this order.

Question 1: Why did the Office of Lawyer Regulation change its position from opposing the petition for reinstatement to joining the petition for reinstatement?

Question 2: Why did the Office of Lawyer Regulation not initiate disciplinary proceedings against Peterson for his conduct involving his client J.E., which was the basis of the charges issued in *State v. Petersen*, Outagamie County Circuit Court Case No. 2018CF167? What weight, if any should the court assign to Petersen's alleged misconduct involving J.E. and why?

Question 3: What weight, if any, should the court assign to Petersen's alleged misconduct involving client M.K. and why?

Question 4: What weight, if any, should the court assign to Petersen's alleged misconduct involving client V.H. and why?

Question 5: Why did Petersen testify at the 2025 reinstatement hearing that there was "not a final decision" regarding allegations that he failed to have his clients sign the forms required as a condition of probation when he previously admitted at the 2016 re-sentencing in *State v. Petersen*, Outagamie County Circuit Court Case No. 2015CM878, that three clients did not sign the forms? What weight, if any, should the court assign to these statements?

Question 6: What weight, if any, should the court assign to Petersen's admission that he lied to the Office of Lawyer Regulation in 2016 regarding client J.E. and why?

IT IS ORDERED that the parties shall provide written responses to the above questions within 20 days of the date of this order;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that said responses shall be filed with the clerk of this court in the form of letter briefs or legal memoranda not to exceed 2000 words;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that petitioner Michael D. Petersen is directed to file a copy of his August 22, 2025 pre-hearing brief with the clerk of this court within 20 days of the date of this order.

Samuel A. Christensen
Clerk of Supreme Court

Distribution List:
Valerie Bailey-Rihn, Referee (U.S. Mail)
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