

2020 WI 76

SUPREME COURT OF WISCONSIN

CASE No. : 2019AP1696-D

COMPLETE TITLE: In the Matter of Disciplinary Proceedings
Against Jean M. Robinson, Attorney at Law:

Office of Lawyer Regulation,
Complainant,

v.

Jean M. Robinson,
Respondent.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS AGAINST ROBINSON

OPINION FILED: September 29, 2020
SUBMITTED ON BRIEFS:
ORAL ARGUMENT:

SOURCE OF APPEAL:
COURT:
COUNTY:
JUDGE:

JUSTICES:
Per Curiam
NOT PARTICIPATING:

ATTORNEYS:

2020 WI 76

NOTICE

This opinion is subject to further editing and modification. The final version will appear in the bound volume of the official reports.

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STATE OF WISCONSIN

:

IN SUPREME COURT

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FILED**SEP 29, 2020**

Sheila T. Reiff
Clerk of Supreme Court

ATTORNEY disciplinary proceeding. *Attorney's license suspended.*

¶1 PER CURIAM. The Office of Lawyer Regulation (OLR) and Attorney Jean M. Robinson have filed a stipulation pursuant to Supreme Court Rule (SCR) 22.12 that Attorney Robinson's license to practice law in Wisconsin should be suspended for a period of 18 months, as discipline reciprocal to that imposed by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

¶2 After reviewing the matter, we approve the stipulation and impose the stipulated reciprocal discipline. In addition, we grant Attorney Robinson's unopposed motion to make the effective

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date of the Wisconsin suspension coterminous with the imposed date of suspension of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, i.e. June 3, 2019. The OLR did not request and we impose no restitution. Finally, because Attorney Robinson entered into a comprehensive stipulation prior to the appointment of a referee, we do not impose costs.

¶3 Attorney Robinson was admitted to practice law in Wisconsin in 1985. She was admitted to practice law in the District of Columbia in 2004. Her professional disciplinary history in Wisconsin consists of a one-year suspension imposed in 1987. See In re Disciplinary Proceedings Against Robinson, 140 Wis. 2d 538, 411 N.W.2d 137 (1987).

¶4 In 2008, Attorney Robinson obtained a corporate counsel certificate from the Virginia State Bar which enabled her to practice as in-house counsel for SourceAmerica, Inc., which is headquartered in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

¶5 On October 30, 2018, Attorney Robinson and the District of Columbia Office of Disciplinary Counsel filed an amended petition for negotiated discipline in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. The petition stated that in the course of her attorney-client relationship with SourceAmerica, Attorney Robinson intentionally prejudiced her client by revealing client confidences or secrets and she acted with dishonesty by concealing her assistance to government agents from her client. The petition stated that Attorney Robinson was remorseful, had accepted responsibility for her misconduct, and admitted that her conduct violated the Virginia Rules of Professional Conduct. The petition

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also stated that Attorney Robinson had cooperated with the Office of Disciplinary Counsel during its investigation. In addition, the petition stated that although Attorney Robinson made disclosures in violation of the Virginia Rules of Professional Conduct, those disclosures appear to have been largely grounded in a sincere belief that she was correcting what she perceived to be inappropriate conduct by certain SourceAmerica representatives, rather than out of any personal or pecuniary interest.

¶6 On May 2, 2019, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals suspended Attorney Robinson from the practice of law in the District of Columbia for 18 months, effective June 3, 2019. The court's order stated that Attorney Robinson's reinstatement is conditioned upon her demonstration of fitness to resume the practice of law.

¶7 On September 10, 2019, the OLR filed a disciplinary complaint alleging that Attorney Robinson should be subject to reciprocal discipline due to the suspension imposed by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. On May 22, 2020, the OLR and Attorney Robinson entered into a stipulation whereby Attorney Robinson agreed that the facts alleged in the OLR's complaint supported the imposition of reciprocal discipline.

¶8 Under SCR 22.22(3), this court shall impose the identical discipline imposed in another jurisdiction, unless one or more of three exceptions apply. In the stipulation, Attorney Robinson states that she does not claim any of the exceptions. She agrees that this court should impose the level of discipline

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sought by the OLR director, a suspension of her license to practice law in Wisconsin for 18 months.

¶9 Attorney Robinson further states that the stipulation was not the result of plea-bargaining, that she fully understands the allegations against her, that she fully understands the ramifications should this court impose the stipulated level of discipline, that she fully understands the right to contest the matter, that she understands her right to consult with counsel, that her entry into the stipulation is made knowingly and voluntarily, that she has read the OLR's complaint and the SCR 22.12 stipulation, and that her entry into the stipulation represents her decision not to contest the allegations regarding reciprocal discipline in the OLR's complaint or the level and type of discipline sought by the OLR's director.

¶10 On June 30, 2020, Attorney Robinson filed a motion asking that the court impose a date of suspension that runs coterminous with the imposed date of suspension of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, that being an 18-month suspension beginning June 3, 2019. On July 7, 2020, the OLR filed a response saying it does not oppose Attorney Robinson's motion. The OLR notes that it has no reason to dispute Attorney Robinson's statement that she has not practiced law since 2014, following her misconduct, and her District of Columbia law license was suspended in June 2019 following a process that took years. The OLR points out that if this court were to grant Attorney Robinson's request to make her 18-month Wisconsin suspension coterminous with the onset of her District of Columbia suspension, the Wisconsin public would remain

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adequately protected since if she should ever wish to pursue reinstatement of her Wisconsin law license, she will be required to file a formal reinstatement petition and prove her fitness to resume practice here. See SCR 22.28(3).

¶11 Having reviewed the matter, we accept the stipulation and impose an 18-month suspension of Attorney Robinson's license to practice law in Wisconsin, as discipline reciprocal to that imposed by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. We further grant Attorney Robinson's motion to make the Wisconsin suspension coterminous with the District of Columbia suspension. In light of the SCR 22.12 stipulation, we do not impose costs.

¶12 IT IS ORDERED that the license of Jean M. Robinson to practice law in Wisconsin is suspended for a period of 18 months, effective June 3, 2019.

¶13 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Jean M. Robinson shall comply with the provisions of SCR 22.26 concerning the duties of a person whose license to practice law in Wisconsin has been suspended.

¶14 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that compliance with all conditions of this order is required for reinstatement. See SCR 22.28(3).

