

APPENDIX TO AMENDED EMERGENCY APPLICATION FOR STAY
(Supreme Court Rule 23)

Margaret J. Lowery, Petitioner

v.

Illinois Supreme Court, et al., Respondents

This Appendix contains contemporaneous correspondence, medical documentation, pleadings, and agency communications demonstrating notice of disability, requests for access, absence of jurisdictional findings, lack of certified record, and escalation to emergency enforcement. The materials are submitted to establish structural defects and irreparable harm, not to litigate the merits.

Exhibit 1

April 27, 2023 ARDC letter

Exhibit 2

May 18, 2023 letter from Dr. Van Schoik

Exhibit 3

June 6, 2023 letter from Margaret J. Lowery to Rachel Miller

Exhibit 4

June 6, 2023 letter from Margaret J. Lowery to A. J. Bronski and Rachel Miller

Exhibit 5

June 27, 2023 St. Louis Holocaust Museum subpoena

Exhibit 6

September 18, 2023 disciplinary complaint

Exhibit 7

July 27, 2023 DOJ receipt re ADA complaint

Exhibit 8

November 14, 2023 DOJ receipt re Holocaust subpoena complaint

Exhibit 9

November 16, 2023 email

Exhibit 10

November 30, 2023 fourteen-day letter (email)

Exhibit 11

December 20, 2023 Petition for Interim Suspension
(INCLUDING ALL ATTACHMENTS THEY FILED — this is where it explodes to 250 pages; LEAVE IT)

Exhibit 12

January 3, 2024 Supreme Court Show Cause Order Referencing a September 18, 2023 Probable Cause Hearing which does not exist

Exhibit 13

DOJ-certified forensic affidavit addressing fraud in the prior discipline relied upon in Exhibit 11

Exhibit 14

February 21, 2024 Motion by Ms. Lowery's requesting a Stay in the Proceedings so she could go inpatient.

Exhibit 15

February 27,, 2024 Order signed by Justice Joy Cunninham denying Ms. Lowery's ADA request without interactive process, by summary denial.

Exhibit 16

February 2024 Letter by Dr. Patrick VanSchoych to the Hearing Board and Court warning them.

Exhibit 17

April 9,, 2024 Hearing Board Order denying Ms. Lowery the right to appear at her hearing, denying CSR transcripts and barring al remote testimony at hearing by X Corp to validate the evidence

Exhibit 18

ISBA note stating Ms. Lowery retired on June 30, 2023; ISBA Mutual stating Ms. Lowery's malpractice insurance is being cancelled and a screen shot of her ARDC status in October of 2023, showing retired.

Exhibit 19

Illinois Supreme Court January 15, 2026 orders

Exhibit 20

January 23, 2026 Letter & Response

Exhibit 21

Statement of Costs & Rejection of Filing Response

Exhibit 22

Notice from Special Counsel Chuck Roberts that no part of Ms. Lowery's complaint will ever be investigated.



ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive, Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6219
(312) 565-2600 (800) 826-8625
Fax (312) 565-2320

3161 West White Oaks Drive, Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
(217) 546-3523 (800) 252-8048
Fax (217) 546-3785

Margaret Jean Lowery
1624 Carlyle Avenue #516
Belleville, IL 62221-4558
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

Springfield
April 27, 2023

Re: Margaret Jean Lowery
Administrator's Investigation
No. 2023IN01374

Dear Ms. Lowery:

The Administrator's attention has been directed to page 35 of your objection to the ARDC's Petition for Taxation of Costs filed in the Supreme Court on April 24, 2023. Specifically, you alleged that Judge Andrew Gleeson made the following statement to you: "I will see to it that you are homeless and living under a bridge." You indicated that you reported this statement to Justice Karmeier. We have determined that the statement may be false and, if false, would violate Rules 8.2(a), 4.1(a), 3.3(a)(1), and 8.4(c).

Pursuant to Commission Rule 53, please write to me and address the above concerns within 14 days. In your letter, please indicate where Judge Gleeson made the statement, as well as when Judge Gleeson made the statement to you. Please also indicate when you reported the statement to Justice Karmeier and whether you have any records related to that report.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Rachel C. Miller
Rachel Miller
Counsel
ARDC Litigation Division

cc: Adrian Vuckovich

HARVARD FAMILY PHYSICIANS, P.C.

7912 E. 31st Court, Suite 220
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74145

18 May 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: Patient Margaret J. Lowery, DOB 14 July 1961

This is an update of a letter I provided previously to the Illinois Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission.

I am Ms. Lowery's Primary Care Physician (PCP). I was her PCP when she lived in Tulsa, Oklahoma in the 1980's through 2000, until she moved to Illinois. I resumed being her PCP in June of 2020 because Ms. Lowery practices law in Oklahoma and it is her desire to return to Tulsa, Oklahoma permanently.

It is my understanding from visiting Ms. Lowery and from reviewing her health records that the following occurred:

Ms. Lowery began experiencing symptoms of fatigue, sore joints and night sweats in the fall of 2018. She had an existing diagnosis of hereditary hemochromatosis and some of these symptoms if mild would be consistent with that diagnosis. However, her symptoms gradually grew worse over a period of time and by the spring of 2020, Ms. Lowery's symptoms consisted of the following:

Lack of energy

Brain fog

Night sweats

Painful joints

Difficulty concentrating & comprehending material

Severe Fatigue

High Blood Pressure

Tachycardia which causes the feeling of severe anxiety

Ms. Lowery saw her PCP at Family Physician of O'Fallon in Illinois several times through 2018-2020 with no diagnosis. Finally in May/June of 2020, Ms. Lowery

ordered her own blood tests (she was a licensed EMT) and sent the results to her PCP in O'Fallon, Illinois who instructed her to take Vitamin C. Ms. Lowery concerned that something was being missed, faxed me her blood test results and requested a second opinion.

Upon my review of her records, my nurse called Ms. Lowery to schedule an immediate appointment the next day.

When Ms. Lowery arrived the next morning at my office, I informed her that something was very wrong.

The preliminary diagnosis was blood cancer, myeloproliferative neoplasm (MPN) subset Polycemia Vera ("PV"). PV is a form of leukemia. As her PCP, I arranged for Ms. Lowery to see the top hematologist/oncologist in Tulsa that afternoon.

More tests were ordered and a treatment plan was devised and implemented. Ms. Lowery was informed that her blood cancer caused the thickening of her blood and in turn, caused the symptoms she was experiencing, especially the anxiety, fatigue which resulted in brain fog. The treatment for those symptoms is generally handled by the assigned specialist. Ms. Lowery fully cooperated with all of the recommendations by all of her providers.

Ms. Lowery underwent a series of treatments in October and November of 2020. She then tried to withdraw from some of the medications since her blood cancer was controlled, however the symptoms returned. A full body scan was then performed in the late summer of 2021 for potential tumors especially bone tumors. The scan identified a serious problem with Ms. Lowery's left kidney which required surgery. Surgery was scheduled for December of 2021, but due to the COVID pandemic was required to be moved to February 2022. Ms. Lowery then contracted COVID in February 2022 while in Tulsa preparing for surgery and the surgery again had to be postponed by eight weeks to comply with current health standards. The kidney surgery and follow up procedures were completed by the renal specialist and Ms. Lowery was discharged from his care.

After the June 2022, kidney surgery, Ms. Lowery contracted another bout of Covid in October of 2022. In the summer of 2022, Ms. Lowery began to experience more symptoms and she underwent cardiac testing which concluded in March of 2023.

Ms. Lowery's cancer is now considered controlled and she has returned to the full time practice of law in March of 2023.

It is my opinion, *within a reasonable degree of medical certainty*, that if Ms. Lowery demonstrated confusion in a sworn statement during the time she suffered from undiagnosed blood cancer (July of 2019), it was directly caused by her blood cancer. Ms. Lowery has always been highly ethical and highly conscientious about her work as an attorney.

Her Polycythemia Vera reduced the amount of circulating oxygen to the body's organs, including the brain, which leads to brain fog and confusion. By taking a sworn statement while Ms. Lowery had untreated blood cancer, I would fully expect the results to be less than stellar, because such a situation would heighten her anxiety and thus exacerbate all of her other symptoms including brain fog.

I have known Ms. Lowery for more than thirty years. She is a competent and conscientious attorney. At all times throughout this process she fully cooperated with her providers, insured that my office and all her specialist received documentation from each other and she has been fully compliant in her health treatment plan. So conscientious is she about insuring her continued fitness to practice law, that she voluntarily has both an annual physical and neurological/mental evaluation to insure that her cancer is not affecting her ability to effectively practice law. While this was not recommended by me or any of her other providers, it demonstrates Ms. Lowery high ethical standards and compliance with her professional duties including her requirement to remain fit to practice law.

Despite her past health challenges, Ms. Lowery has and continues to be fit to practice law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "P Van Schoyck M.D." The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Patrick VanSchoyck, M.D.

The Lowery Law Firm
Margaret J. Lowery, JD, MHA
Email: mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

Licensed in Illinois:
1624 Carlyle Ave, Suite 516
Belleville, IL 62221
(618) 741-6600

Licensed in Oklahoma:
7122 S. Sheridan Road, Suite 1110
Tulsa, OK 74133
(918) 308-5888

6 June 2023

Ms. Rachel C. Miller
3161 West White Oaks Drive. Suite
301 Springfield, IL 62704

Re: 2023 IN 01374

Dear Ms. Miller:

It is my understanding that this request must come from me under my signature and not from my attorney pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

I hereby request that any “sworn statement” with the ARDC be conducted remotely and that any individuals I deem necessary for my health be permitted to attend. Those individuals will be disclosed on the record and in advance if required.

I also request that all questions be displayed in writing by TTD prior to my answering them. .

Very sincerely yours,

ss/Margaret J. Lowery
Margaret J. Lowery

cc: Mr. Mosea Harris

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Email: mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

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6 June 2023

Mr. A.J. Bronsky
Brown & James
800 Market Street
Suite 1100
St. Louis, MO

Ms. Rachel C. Miller
ARDC
3161 West White Oaks Drive
Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704

Re: 2023 IN 01374

Dear Mr. Bronsky & Ms. Miller:

You have requested my appearance for statement on June 21, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in Springfield, Illinois. I will be unable to attend *in person* and I request a reasonable accommodation under the ADA to appear remotely from Mr. Bronsky's office in St. Louis.

As you are aware, I have blood cancer among other issues. Unfortunately I have issues with vomiting, especially in the morning, as a result of the cancer. So a four hour car ride will be impossible for me at this time. If I take medication to control the vomiting, I will be unable to appear to testify. I also doubt you or Mr. Bronsky wants me vomiting all over his car or your conference room. In fact, I doubt Mr. Bronsky wants me vomiting in his conference room either, but I have a much better chance of making it to St. Louis without getting sick via a 15 minute drive than I will have by a two hour drive.

Very sincerely yours,


Margaret J. Lowery



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SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

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3161 West White Oaks Drive, Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
(217) 546-3523 (800) 252-8048
Fax (217) 546-3785

Frank Wolff
One Metropolitan Square
211 North Broadway, Suite 3600
St. Louis, MO 63102
fwolff@bryancave.com

Springfield
June 27, 2023

Re: Margaret Jean Lowery
Administrator's Investigation
No. 2023IN01374

Dear Mr. Wolff:

It is my understanding that you represent the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum ("Museum") in St. Louis. We are engaged in a confidential investigation, referenced above, regarding an Illinois-licensed attorney, Margaret Jean Lowery. We would like to make a request for information related to an event hosted at the Museum, which has been described to us as an Anti-Semitism Seminar ("Seminar").

Please advise our office, in writing, on the following details regarding the June 13 Seminar at the Museum:

- whether Ms. Lowery attended the Anti-Semitism Seminar on June 13, 2023, at the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum;
- whether it was in-person only, livestream, or hybrid event;
- what time the seminar began and ended;
- whether this was a ticketed event;
- whether receiving a ticket required a payment; and
- whether the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum maintained a guest list and/or sign-in procedure for the event.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I may be reached at 217-546-8160.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Rachel C. Miller
Rachel C. Miller
Counsel
ARDC Litigation Division

RCM:kl
_#1638439

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.

Commission No. 2023PR00060

COMPLAINT

Jerome Larkin, Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (“ARDC”), by his attorney, Rachel C. Miller, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 753(b), complains of Respondent, Margaret Jean Lowery (“Respondent”), who was licensed to practice law in Illinois on July 21, 2000, and alleges that Respondent has engaged in the following conduct which subjects her to discipline pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 770:

COUNT I

(false statement in a pleading)

1. On January 17, 2023, the Supreme Court entered an order suspending the Respondent from the practice of law for 30 days and requiring her to successfully complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar within one year of the Court’s final order of discipline. The discipline was effective February 7, 2023.

2. On March 17, 2023, the ARDC sent a letter and Statement of Costs to Respondent’s attorney notifying him that Respondent was responsible for costs in the amount of \$1,500 pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 773.

FILED
9/18/2023 1:20 PM
ARDC Clerk

3. At no time between March 17, 2023 and April 18, 2023 did Respondent pay the \$1,500 in costs pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 773.

4. On April 18, 2023, the ARDC filed a petition for order and judgment for costs in the Illinois Supreme Court.

5. On April 24, 2023, Respondent filed an objection to the petition for order and judgment for costs.

6. In her objection, Respondent stated that Judge Andrew Gleeson “specifically threatened” Respondent by saying “I will see to it that you are homeless and living under a bridge.”

7. Respondent’s statement in paragraph six, above, was false, because Judge Gleeson did not make the statement.

8. Respondent knew at the time that she made the statement in paragraph 6, above, that it was false.

9. By reason of the conduct outlined above, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. knowingly making a false statement of fact or law to a tribunal by filing a false pleading in the Illinois Supreme Court, as described in paragraph six, above, in violation of Rule 3.3(a)(1) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010),
- b. knowingly making a false statement or making a statement with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge, adjudicatory officer or public legal officer, or of a candidate for election or appointment to judicial or legal office, as described in paragraph six, above, in violation of Rule 8.2(a) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010), and
- c. conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation by making the false statement described in paragraph six, above, in violation of Rule 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

COUNT II

(false statement or a statement with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity concerning the integrity of the Supreme Court of Illinois)

10. The Administrator reincorporates and realleges paragraphs one through eight, above.

11. Prior to July 6, 2023, Respondent created an account on Twitter under the name of “Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm.”

12. On July 6, 2023, Respondent created and published a post on the Twitter account described in paragraph 11, above, the said the following:

“Did you know the ARDC & the Illinois Supreme Court has a [sic] history of permitting harassment of women until they comitt [sic] suicide or leave the bar? That’s how they enforce their “anti discrimination and non harassment policy.” How do I know this? I interviewed the affected women.”

13. Respondent’s statement in paragraph 12, above, that the ARDC and Illinois Supreme Court have a history of permitting harassment of women until they commit suicide or leave the bar was false.

14. Respondent made the statement in paragraph 12, above, knowing it was false, or with a reckless disregard for its truth or falsity.

15. By reason of the conduct outlined above, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. knowingly making a false statement or making a statement with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge, by conduct including stating that the Illinois Supreme Court permits harassment of women until they commit suicide, as described in paragraph 12, above, in violation of Rule 8.2(a) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

WHEREFORE, the Administrator requests that this matter be assigned to a panel of the Hearing Board, that a hearing be held, and the panel make findings of fact, conclusions of fact and law, and a recommendation for such discipline as is warranted.

Respectfully submitted,

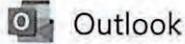
Jerome Larkin, Administrator
Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission

By: /s/ Rachel C. Miller
Rachel C. Miller

Rachel C. Miller
Counsel for Administrator
3161 W. White Oaks Dr., Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
Telephone: (217) 546-3523
Email: ARDCeservice@iadc.org
Email: rmiller@iadc.org

EXHIBIT #12

November 2023 DOJ & AG Receipt for Complaint

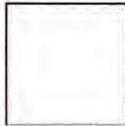


Thank you for submitting a report to the **Civil Rights Division**

From DOJ Civil Rights - Do Not Reply <civilrightsdonoreply@mail.civilrights.usdoj.gov>

Date Thu 7/27/2023 12:54 PM

To Margaret Lowery <mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com>



U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division

civilrights.justice.gov

Please do not reply to this email. This is an unmonitored account.

Thank you for submitting a report to the Civil Rights Division. Please save your record number for tracking. Your record number is: **324143-DXG**.

If you reported an incident where you or someone else has experienced or is still experiencing physical harm or violence, or are in immediate danger, please call 911 and contact the police.

What to Expect

1. We review your report

Our specialists in the Civil Rights Division carefully read every report to identify civil rights violations, spot trends, and determine if we have authority to help with your report.

2. Our specialists determine the next steps

We may decide to:

- Open an investigation or take some other action within the legal authority of the Justice Department.
- Collect more information before we can look into your report.

- Recommend another government agency that can properly look into your report. If so, we'll let you know.

In some cases, we may determine that we don't have legal authority to handle your report and will recommend that you seek help from a private lawyer or local legal aid organization.

3. When possible, we will follow up with you

We do our best to let you know about the outcome of our review. However, we may not always be able to provide you with updates because:

- We're actively working on an investigation or case related to your report.
- We're receiving and actively reviewing many requests at the same time.

If we are able to respond, we will contact you using the contact information you provided in this report. Depending on the type of report, response times can vary. If you need to reach us about your report, please refer to your report number when contacting us. This is how we keep track of your submission.

What You Can Do Next

1. Contact local legal aid organizations or a lawyer if you haven't already.

Legal aid offices or members of lawyer associations in your state may be able to help you with your issue.

- American Bar Association, visit the [www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/flh-home]www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/flh-home or call (800) 285-2221
- Legal Services Corporation (or Legal Aid Offices), to help you find a legal aid lawyer in your area visit [www.lsc.gov/find-legal-aid]www.lsc.gov/find-legal-aid

2. Learn More

Visit civilrights.justice.gov to learn more about your rights and see examples of violations we handle.

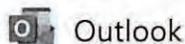
Please Note: Each week, we receive hundreds of reports of potential violations. We collect and analyze this information to help us select cases, and we may use this information as evidence in an existing case. We will review your letter to decide whether it is necessary to contact you for additional information. We do not have the resources to follow-up on every letter.

Contact

civilrights.justice.gov

mail U.S. Department of
Justice
Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania
Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.
20530-0001

phone (202) 514-3847
1-855-856-1247 (toll-free)
Telephone Device for the
Deaf
(TTY) (202) 514-0716



Thank you for submitting a report to the Civil Rights Division

From DOJ Civil Rights - Do Not Reply <civilrightsdonoreply@mail.civilrights.usdoj.gov>

Date Tue 11/14/2023 1:21 PM

To Margaret Lowery <mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com>



U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division

civilrights.justice.gov

Please do not reply to this email. This is an unmonitored account.

Thank you for submitting a report to the Civil Rights Division. Please save your record number for tracking. Your record number is: **371714-RKD**.

If you reported an incident where you or someone else has experienced or is still experiencing physical harm or violence, or are in immediate danger, please call 911 and contact the police.

What to Expect

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Our specialists in the Civil Rights Division carefully read every report to identify civil rights violations, spot trends, and determine if we have authority to help with your report.

2. Our specialists determine the next steps

We may decide to:

- Open an investigation or take some other action within the legal authority of the Justice Department.
- Collect more information before we can look into your report.

- Recommend another government agency that can properly look into your report. If so, we'll let you know.

In some cases, we may determine that we don't have legal authority to handle your report and will recommend that you seek help from a private lawyer or local legal aid organization.

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We do our best to let you know about the outcome of our review. However, we may not always be able to provide you with updates because:

- We're actively working on an investigation or case related to your report.
- We're receiving and actively reviewing many requests at the same time.

If we are able to respond, we will contact you using the contact information you provided in this report. Depending on the type of report, response times can vary. If you need to reach us about your report, please refer to your report number when contacting us. This is how we keep track of your submission.

What You Can Do Next

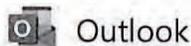
1. Contact local legal aid organizations or a lawyer if you haven't already.

Legal aid offices or members of lawyer associations in your state may be able to help you with your issue.

- American Bar Association, visit the [www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/flh-home]www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/flh-home or call (800) 285-2221
- Legal Services Corporation (or Legal Aid Offices), to help you find a legal aid lawyer in your area visit [www.lsc.gov/find-legal-aid]www.lsc.gov/find-legal-aid

2. Learn More

Visit civilrights.justice.gov to learn more about your rights and see examples of violations we handle.



Complaint

From Margaret Lowery <mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com>

Date Thu 11/16/2023 5:51 PM

To civilrights@ilag.gov <civilrights@ilag.gov>

Bcc Ron Wilkinson <rdavidwilkinson@msn.com>; jconrady@hotmail.com <jconrady@hotmail.com>

4 attachments (2 MB)

LTR- KaplanFeldman Information - Lowery.PDF; Hate_Crime_Complaint_Form_English.pdf; Nondiscrimination Antiharassment Policy.pdf; 11-14-2023 DOJ OCR.pdf;

Your website was acting up. It did not appear to take the complaint. Attached is the documentation for the civil rights complaint.

Since Rachael Miller is engaging in hate across state line, the OCR was also contacted. I have also contacted the Oklahoma AG who told me to first let you review this matter. If you decline, then they will look to criminally charging Ms. Miller in Oklahoma. The federal appeals court has already ruled, this kind of activity is outside of the regulation of the practice of law. State action across state line about religion exceeds the authority of the Court and the State of Illinois. There is no regulation of the practice of religion under the purview of the Court.

I attended the meeting, and I completed the sign in sheet for Illinois MCLE. Illinois did not grant the MCLE credit, but I have my attendance verification form. If you need the verification of attendance, please contact me. You may also contact Attorney Roza Gossage who was also in attendance. Roza is a Holocaust Survivor. I had family murdered in Auschwitz.

I was extremely traumatized by Miller's actions because it was straight out of the Nazi Holocaust, everyone who is Jewish and reads that letter said its reads like something sent from the Third Reich and not an attorney representing our top court, the Illinois Supreme Court. No one at the court will address issues of discrimination, harassment, bullying, and retaliation.

Margaret J. Lowery, JD, MHA
The Lowery Law Firm
7122 South Sheridan Road, Suite 2-1110
Tulsa, OK 74133-2748
(918) 513-2204

Email: mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

Website: www.thelowerylawfirm.com

Licensed to practice law in the State of Illinois & Oklahoma.

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ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

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Fax (312) 565-2320

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Springfield, IL 62704
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Fax (217) 546-3785

Margaret Jean Lowery
MLowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

Springfield
November 30, 2023

Re: Margaret Jean Lowery
Administrator's Investigation
No. 2023IN04158

Dear Ms. Lowery:

The Administrator's attention has been directed to the following social media posts, which are listed below. We have listed the date of the post and what was posted. Copies are also enclosed for your reference. Based on these posts, we have docketed the above referenced investigation. We have determined that the statements may be false and/or reckless and, if false and/or reckless, could violate Rules 8.2(a), 4.1(a), 3.3(a)(1), and 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct.

Pursuant to Commission Rule 53, please write to me and address the above concerns within 14 days. Specifically, in your letter, please provide the factual basis and any explanation for each post below; dates any incident occurred, if so stated; and provide any supporting documents.

On August 11, 2023, you posted the following tweet on X, formerly Twitter. Please state what you are referring to when you state "hit list." Include any supporting documents.

"Wow the Illinois Supreme Court has a hit list of attorneys they want to target because they are outspoken whistleblowers? They target their political opponents? Is this true? I can hardly fathom the most distinguished leaders of the law would send the ARDC out."

On August 14, 2023, you posted the following tweet on X. Please state what specifically you are referring to when you state the bolded portion, and provide any supporting documents.

"Since 2018, I have notified @illinoiscourts of abuse, harassment, retaliation, sex based discrimination (in writing almost a dozen times). Not once have they opened an investigation. not once have the [*sic*] stepped in to stop the abuse. Not once have they acted to

protect against the male harassment, retaliation or discrimination despite having a policy in effect. I've been subject to over 20 harassing complaints by a judge I've never appeared before as single woman. He was going thru a nasty divorce. **The Illinois Supreme Court apparently endorses permits, encourages and sanctions the harassment of women and minorities in the Illinois Bar to the point they must flee the jurisdiction** [emphasis added].”

On August 14, 2023, you posted a tweet on X that stated the following and included a link to a website, “corruptionpediaorg.wordpress.com,” that described Jerome Larkin as a “crony” of Speaker Michael Madigan and “one of the main protectors of rampant judicial corruption.” Please state whether you are adopting this website’s statements as your own, in addition to addressing the accompanying tweet, below.

“One must wonder if the author of this website has mental illness or great insight? IDK, but if any of this is true, why has the Illinois Supreme Court been silent?”

On November 1, 2023, a tweet, below, that you posted was captured. Please explain the basis for the comparison of the Illinois Supreme Court to Nazis.

“Now the Illinois Supreme Court is following attorneys to the Holocaust Museum in Missouri to spy on them. What possible ‘confidential investigation’ can there be for an attorney to attend an event at the Holocaust Museum? Oh no that’s not the point, the point is to let everyone know the government spies on them. This is the behavior of the Third Reich or Nazi’s and the purpose is to make people afraid to associate with you. The purpose is to isolate an individual same as what the SS & Hitler did. I am EMBARRASSED to be a member of the Illinois Bar. This is the kind of conduct on the part of the Illinois Supreme Court should OUTRAGE everyone.”

On November 1, 2023, a tweet, below, that you posted was captured. Please explain the basis for the comparison.

“One is conducting secret investigations of Jews attending a safety seminar in Missouri! Like that’s ever been the function of the Illinois Supreme Court. Should Illinois Jewish attorneys expect Frau Miller to parachute with her Hamas issued AR rifle to their offices outside of Illinois?....The other wishes death on Jews. What a welcoming state!”

On November 8, 2023, you posted a tweet, below, on X. Please explain the basis for the tweet, including what actions you believe the Illinois Supreme Court has taken to increase censorship over your rights.

“And yet the Illinois Supreme Court wants to increase censorship over attorney 1st amendment rights to include election speech, health speech, reporting harassment, all things VOTERS DESPISE. #NOCENSORSHIP.”

On November 14, 2023, you posted the following tweet on X. In your explanation, include what lie you are referring to on the part of Justice Burke, when any lies you are referring to occurred, and what you believe her plan was to destroy your career. Provide any documents supporting your statements. Provide names of any individuals you discussed this with when it happened.

“Today I found out that a person I had admired, profoundly broke my heart and that person was Chief Justice Anne Burke. I attend bar meetings and swam in the pool together talking at bar meetings on the difficulties of women in the bar and the UMPH it took to succeed. 1/2”

I then found out today, that she lied to my face about her kindness. She HATES JEWS. While smiling to me and nodding, behind those kind eyes lied seething JEW HATE. Then she smirked and laid her plan to destroy my career.”

“I am a practicing attorney in the State of Illinois and it is the most CORRUPT system and the most TOXIC SYSTEM in the USA. I would rather pour gasoline over my body than ever step foot in that FUCKING HELLHOLE. So why don't I just leave THE BAR, they won't FUCKING LET ME!”

Very truly yours,

/s/ Rachel C. Miller

Rachel Miller

Counsel

ARDC Litigation Division

RCM:kl
Enclosure



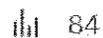
Margaret J Lowery @MargaretJLowery · Aug 11

...

If you believe Illinois attorneys should or should not have free speech, let the court know your opinion by telling them here

Illinois Supreme Court
200 E Capitol Ave
Springfield, IL 62701

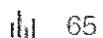
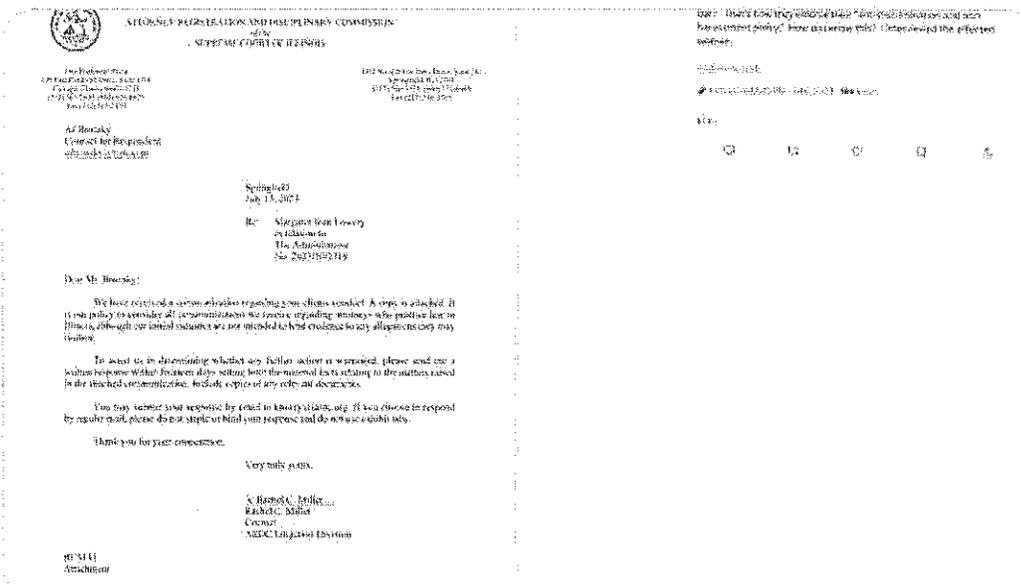
Or @illinoiscourts



Margaret J Lowery @MargaretJLowery · Aug 11

Manage exten

Wow the Illinois Supreme Court has a hit list of attorneys they want to target because they are outspoken whistleblowers? They target their political opponents? Is this true? I can hardly fathom the most distinguished leaders of the law would send the ARDC out after your... Show more





Margaret J Lowery

@MargaretJLowery



Since 2018, I have notified @illinoiscourts of abuse, harassment, retaliation, sex based discrimination (in writing almost a dozen times). Not once have they opened an investigation. Not once have they stepped in to stop the abuse. Not once have they acted to protect against the male harassment, retaliation or discrimination despite having a policy in effect. I've been subject to over 20 harassing complaints by a judge I've never appeared before as a single woman. He was going thru a nasty divorce. The Illinois Supreme Court apparently endorses, permits, encourages and sanctions the harassment of women and minorities in the Illinois Bar to the point they must flee the jurisdiction.
ilcourtsaudio.blob.core.windows.net/antilles-resou... @megynkelly
@RealCandaceO

6:37 AM · Aug 14, 2023 · 31 Views



Margaret J Lowery @MargaretJLowery · 2h



One must wonder if the author of this website has mental illness or great insight? IDK, but if any of this is true, why has the Illinois Supreme Court been silent? @illinoiscourts

Corruptepedia:

	Committee name	Amount	Received
ARDC	Persona PAC Inc	\$510.00	May 15
	Illinois Hospital Assn PAC (IHA PAC)	\$250.00	\$45.00
31st Ward Dem Party	31st Ward Democratic Organization	\$2,500.00	Aug 14
31st Ward Dem Party	31st Ward Democratic Organization	\$3,000.00	Aug 14
	Ameya Pinar for Governor	\$25.00	April 14
	Citizens for Lisa Madigan	\$100.00	Mar 11
	Citizens for Lisa Madigan	\$100.00	Mar 11
	Friends of Cabonargi	\$1,500.00	Mar 14
	Citizens For Dan Paslak	\$1,500.00	Feb 11
	Friends of Cabonargi	\$1,500.00	Mar 11

corruptionpediaorg.wordpress.com

Lawyer Jerome Larkin

Jerome Larkin, the Administrator of the ARDC, Speaker Madigan 's crony and one of the main Protectors of rampant judicial corruption in...



23





Margaret J. Lowery, JD, MHA • 3rd+

General Counsel - External

1mo • Edited •

+ Follow ...

If you think we have not entered a TOTALITARIAN REGIME under our current elected officials, then you need to see the attached.

Now the Illinois Supreme Court is following attorneys to the Holocaust Museum in Missouri to spy on them. What possible 'confidential investigation' can there be for an attorney to attend an event at the Holocaust Museum? Oh no that's not the point, the point is to let everyone know the government spies on Jews?

This is the behavior of the Third Reich or Nazi's and the purpose is to make people afraid to associate with you. The purpose is to isolate an individual same as what the SS & Hitler did. I am EMBARRASSED to be a member of the Illinois Bar.

This kind of conduct on the part of the Illinois Supreme Court should OUTRAGE everyone.



ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

1 of 2

One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive, Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60604-6219
(312) 563-2000 (800) 826-8025
Fax (312) 563-2320

516 West White Oaks Drive, Suite 303
Springfield, IL 62704
(217) 546-3523 (800) 252-8048
Fax (217) 546-1785

Frank Wolff
One Metropolitan Square
211 North Broadway, Suite 3600
St. Louis, MO 63102
fwolff@brancave.com

Springfield
June 27, 2023

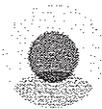
Re: Margaret Jean Lowery
Administrator's Investigation
No. 2023IN01374

Dear Mr. Wolff:

It is my understanding that you represent the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum ("Museum") in St. Louis. We are engaged in a confidential investigation, referenced above, regarding an Illinois-licensed attorney, Margaret Jean Lowery. We would like to make a request for information related to an event hosted at the Museum, which has been described to us as an Anti-Semitism Seminar ("Seminar").

Please advise our office, in writing, on the following details regarding the June 13 Seminar at the Museum:

- whether Ms. Lowery attended the Anti-Semitism Seminar on June 13, 2023, at the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum;
- whether it was in-person only, livestream, or hybrid event;
- what time the seminar began and ended;
- whether this was a ticketed event;
- whether receiving a ticket required a payment; and
- whether the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum maintained a guest list and/or sign-in procedure for the event.



Margaret J. Lowery, JD, MHA • 3rd+

General Counsel - External

1w • Edited •

+ Follow ...

When I said we had a problem with anti-Semitism in Illinois, I am sure many thought, nope not there. Well I will keep showing you my experience and why I left. The anti-Semitism flows through the halls of government. Yes, many great positive people in Illinois and many great attorneys who are wonderful people, but it only takes one or two to create a horrific environment. So make up your own mind about these individuals.

One is conducting secret investigations of Jews attending a safety seminar in Missouri! Like that's ever been the function of the Illinois Supreme Court. Should Illinois Jewish attorneys expect Frau Miller to parachute with her Hamas issued AR rifle to their offices outside of Illinois? I mean the ticket price to a safety seminar at the St. Louis Jewish Federation/Holocaust Museum has always involved the practice of law in Illinois, (not).

The other wishes death on Jews. What a welcoming state!
snared with ner employer.

Here is a sampling.

Here is a sampling.

sauage

Vermis should have all been killed decades ago

All you zionists will pay

Talk dirty to me

Hopefully someone sends you anthrax or poison and you die a slow terrible death

Praying to god for it actually

Fucking jew

I got it, you wanna fuck this Jew
Sorry sweetheart, you're not my type

I'd rather put you in a gas chamber
but you'd like that

06/26/2023 10:04:13 AM
06/26/2023 10:04:13 AM
06/26/2023 10:04:13 AM

06/26/2023 10:04:13 AM
06/26/2023 10:04:13 AM

Frank Wolff
The Museum of the South
211 North Broadway, Suite 3000
St. Louis, MO 63102
fwolff@brs.com

Springfield
June 27, 2023

Re: Marjorie Lee Lowery
Administrative Information
No. 2023061174

Dear Mr. Wolff:

It is my understanding that you represent the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum ("Museum") in St. Louis. We are engaged in a confidential investigation, referred to above, regarding an Illinois-based attorney, Marjorie Lee Lowery. We would like to make a request for information related to an event held at the Museum, which has been described to us as an Anti-Semitism Seminar ("Seminar").

Please advise our office in writing, on the following details regarding the June 13 Seminar at the Museum:

- whether Mr. Lowery attended the Anti-Semitism Seminar on June 13, 2023, at the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum;
- whether it was in-person only, live stream, or hybrid event;

No. 2023061174

Dear Mr. Wolff:

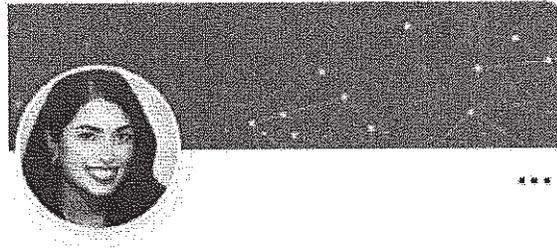
It is my understanding that you represent the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum ("Museum") in St. Louis. We are engaged in a confidential investigation, referred to above, regarding an Illinois-based attorney, Marjorie Lee Lowery. We would like to make a request for information related to an event held at the Museum, which has been described to us as an Anti-Semitism Seminar ("Seminar").

Please advise our office in writing, on the following details regarding the June 13 Seminar at the Museum:

- whether Mr. Lowery attended the Anti-Semitism Seminar on June 13, 2023, at the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum;
- whether it was in-person only, live stream, or hybrid event;
- what time the seminar began and ended;
- whether this was a hybrid event;



2 comments



Sarah Chowdhury

Attorney | President of the South Asian Bar Association of Chicago (SABA Chicago) | Web3 curious

Illinois State Comptroller · Indiana University School of Law—Indianapolis
Chicago, Illinois, United States

2K followers · 500+ connections

AS Bar/ILC Affiliates
Rural C. Miller
Council
AREC Litigation Division

RECEIVED
7/17/23



Margaret J. Lowery מרגרט לורי

Follow

1,030 posts



Margaret J. Lowery מרגרט לורי @lowerylawfirm · Nov 8

And yet the Illinois Supreme Court wants to increase censorship over attorney 1st Amendment rights to include election speech, health speech, reporting harassment, all things VOTERS DESPISE. #NOCENSORSHIP

EXCLUSIVE Let him speak! Voters by wide margins say court gag orders against Trump violate his right to free speech - even Democrats say the 2024 front-runner shouldn't be muzzled

By James Reel, Social Affairs Correspondent, For DailyMail.com
Updated at 1:32 PM on 8 November 2023

Let Trump speak! Voters oppose gag orders

Response	Percentage
Let him speak	56%
Not sure	12%
Trump should be gagged	32%

By Party:

Party	Let him speak	Not sure	Trump should be gagged
Democrat	67%	11%	22%
Republican	40%	4%	56%
Independent	60%	1%	39%

124



Margaret J. Lowery מרגרט לורי @lowerylawfirm · 11h



Today I found out that a person I had admired, profoundly broke my heart and that person was Chief Justice Anne Burke. I attend bar meetings and we swam in the pool together talking at bar meetings on the difficulties of women in the bar and the UMPH it took to succeed. 1/2



1



49



Margaret J. Lowery מרגרט לורי @lowerylawfirm · 11h



I then found out today, that she lied to my face about her kindness. She HATES JEWS. While smiling to me and nodding, behind those kind eyes lied seething JEW HATE. Then she smirked and laid her plan to destroy my career.



1



31



Margaret J. Lowery מרגרט לורי @lowerylawfirm · 11h



I am a practicing attorney in the State of Illinois and it is the MOST CORRUPT system and the most TOXIC SYSTEM in the USA. I would rather pour gasoline over my body than ever step foot in that FUCKING HELLHOLE. So why don't I just leave THE BAR, they won't FUCKING LET ME!

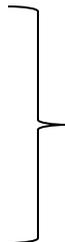
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

In the matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.



Supreme Court No. M.R.

Commission No. 2023PR00060

PETITION FOR INTERIM SUSPENSION
PURSUANT TO SUPREME COURT RULE 774(a)(2)

Lea S. Gutierrez, Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, by her attorney, Peter L. Rotskoff, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 774(a)(2), respectfully requests that this Court issue a rule requiring Respondent, Margaret Jean Lowery, to show cause why she should not be suspended from the practice of law until further order of the Court, effective immediately, for having engaged in conduct that threatens irreparable injury to the public, her clients or the orderly administration of justice. In support, the Administrator states:

I. SUMMARY

1. Respondent is 62 years old and was licensed to practice law in Illinois on July 21, 2000. She is currently registered to practice law in Illinois. She is also licensed to practice law in the state of Oklahoma.

2. On January 17, 2023, this Court suspended Respondent for 30 days and required her to complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar for intentionally making false statements, in violation of Rule 8.4(c), during a sworn statement about her involvement in a website entitled “firetheljarjudge.com” that was intended to defeat St. Clair County Chief Judge Andrew Gleeson in his retention campaign and that she made a false statement impugning Judge Gleeson’s qualifications or integrity, in violation of Rule 8.2(a). *In re Lowery*, M.R. 31506, 2020PR00018, (January 17, 2023).

FILED

December 20, 2023

ARDC CLERK

E-FILED
12/20/2023 1:53
CYNTHIA A. GRANT
SUPREME COURT CLERK

3. Following imposition of discipline, Respondent filed, in this Court, a lengthy objection to the Administrator's petition for the imposition of \$1,500 in costs. In that pleading, she took issue with the Hearing and Review Board's findings, and she made additional false and/or reckless statements about Judge Gleeson, and about this Court. The statements contained in Respondent's pleading formed the basis of a second disciplinary complaint which was filed on September 18, 2023, charging her with making false statements and dishonesty. *In re Lowery*, 2023PR00060. That case is pending before the Hearing Board. More details are set forth in Section II, B of this petition.

4. Since the imposition of discipline, Respondent has posted numerous false and/or reckless statements on social media about this Court, Judge Gleeson and the disciplinary system, all of which appear to be intended to cast doubt on the qualifications and integrity of the Justices of this Court or to call into questions the efficacy and fairness of the disciplinary system it oversees. These statements include allegations that:

- a. "The Illinois Supreme Court apparently endorses, permits, encourages and sanctions the harassment of women and minorities in the Illinois Bar to the point they must flee the jurisdiction."
- b. "[T]he Illinois Supreme Court has a hit list of attorneys they want to target because they are outspoken whistle blowers[.]"
- c. "[Former Chief Justice Ann Burke] HATES JEWS. While smiling to me and nodding, behind those kind eyes lied [*sic*] seething JEW HATE. Then she smirked and laid her plan to destroy my career." (Emphasis in original)
- d. "Isn't 'it ironic that the new SCC [St. Clair County] associate judge signed off on the majority of Chief Judge Andrew Gleeson's DIVORCE and in return gets appointed to a new judgeship? I wonder what the paid rate of exchange was for services rendered in that divorce. All above board I'm sure." (Emphasis in original.)

Copies of these social media entries and others are set forth in Exhibits 6 through 14 of this petition.

5. Respondent has also filed pleadings in the current disciplinary case which contain false and/or reckless statements about this Court and the volunteer Hearing Board Chair who was assigned to the case, Sonni Choi Williams. More details about this conduct are set forth in section II, D, below.

6. There is persuasive evidence to support this petition as required by Supreme Court Rule 774(a)(2). In the first disciplinary case, both the Hearing Board and the Review Board found violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct which were upheld by this Court. In addition, the 15 exhibits attached to this petition include recent false pleadings filed by Respondent, social media posts by Respondent, and Judge Gleeson's affidavit, which provide further persuasive evidence of Respondent's continuing misconduct.

7. Especially troubling is the fact that the pleadings and social media posts which Respondent made following her first disciplinary case, and which have continued during the pending case, show a continuing attempt to damage the judiciary and reflect Respondent's complete lack of remorse for, or recognition of, the proven misconduct. Unfounded accusations of corruption and dishonesty by judges and attorneys bring the legal profession and the judiciary into disrepute. See e.g. *In re Walker*, M.R. 28453, 2014PR00132 (March 20, 2017). In *Walker*, the attorney made numerous false statements about three appellate court justices and showed no remorse for his misconduct. In this case, Respondent's conduct and her continuing false statements about the judiciary, including this Court, threaten the orderly administration of justice and meet the requirements for an interim suspension under Supreme Court Rule 774(a)(2).

II. DESCRIPTION OF MISCONDUCT

A. *In re Lowery*, M.R. 031506, 2020PR00018 (January 17, 2023)

8. On November 10, 2021, the Hearing Board issued its report and recommendation, finding that Respondent made false statements under oath during a sworn statement conducted by the Administrator's counsel. The Hearing Board recommended that Respondent be suspended for 60 days and be required to complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar within one year after entry of the Court's final order of discipline. The Hearing Board's report and recommendation is attached as Exhibit 1.

9. The Hearing Board found that in 2018, Respondent was involved in setting up, designing, and purchasing from GoDaddy, a website domain name of "firetheljarjudge.com" as part of an anti-retention campaign against St. Clair County Chief Judge Andrew Gleeson. She later purchased a second website domain name, "firejudgegleeson.com" (Exhibit 1 at 5). She used a fictional name, Madeline Dinmont, and an email address she created, madeline.dinmont@charter.net, when interacting with GoDaddy. In her sworn statement, Respondent falsely testified, *inter alia*, that:

- a. She did not know who set up the "firetheljarjudge.com" website;
- b. She had no involvement in setting up the website and did not manage it;
- c. She did not know when the website was set up;
- d. She did not set up the domain name;
- e. She did not set up or have control over the account at GoDaddy; and
- f. She did not know what email address was used when the website was set up or if the address used was Madeline Dinmont's email address.

(*Id.*, at 19). The Hearing Board found that Respondent's statements under oath, as described above, were false and that she knew they were false at the time she made them. (*Id.*, at 20-21). The Hearing Board found that Respondent violated Rule 8.1(a) by making a false

statement of material fact in connection with the disciplinary matter and Rule 8.4(c), by engaging in dishonest conduct. (Exhibit 1 at 20 -22).

10. On October 13, 2022, the Review Board affirmed the findings of the Hearing Board as it related to the false statements in violation of Rule 8.1(a) and 8.4(c), but it also found that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a), by knowing or recklessly making a false statement about Judge Gleeson which impugned his integrity. The Review Board's report and recommendation is attached as Exhibit 2.

11. The Review Board found that Respondent's false statement about Judge Gleeson occurred on September 17, 2018, during a recorded conversation Respondent had with a GoDaddy customer service operator. During the conversation, Respondent used a fictitious name, Madeline Dinmont, and she used an untraceable "burner" phone to make the call. A portion of the conversation is set forth below:

OPERATOR: Thanks for calling email sales and support. This is Donna. Who am I speaking with please?

CALLER: Donna, this is Madeline Dinmont...I keep trying to get the email to work on this website and it keeps saying that I put in the wrong password...

OPERATOR: Okay...This is for the administrator@firetheliarjudge.com?

CALLER: Yes, ma'am.

[discussion of website's duration]

CALLER Because the election will be over on the 5th.

OPERATOR: Yeah. And you hope these people read it and do the right thing, right?

CALLER: If only you knew.

OPERATOR: I was glancing through the website, so I hear you.

CALLER: No, I mean, it's [sic] not a very nice person. And he's [Judge Gleeson] done a lot of things to hurt a lot of people. So that's part of the reason that we're getting all the crank calls.

OPERATOR: That's too bad.

CALLER: You know, this part of the United States, politics is a blood sport.

OPERATOR: True.

CALLER: I mean, I will tell you have [sic] evil it is. They've attempted to set up another judge of a different political party for murder if that tells you anything.

OPERATOR: Wow.

CALLER: And this is the guy [Judge Gleeson] who orchestrated it.

(Exhibit 2, at 17 – 18). At the hearing, Respondent acknowledged that the judge she was referring to in the conversation with the GoDaddy operator was Judge Andrew Gleeson. (*Id.*, at 4-5).

12. The Review Board found that Respondent's statements about Judge Gleeson in the conversation set forth above, violated Rule 8.2(a), finding that:

“Respondent's false assertion that a judge, acting with blatant disregard for the law, was orchestrating an attempt to illegally frame an innocent person for murder is an extraordinarily serious accusation that directly attacks the integrity of the judiciary. Respondent's false statement had the potential to tarnish the legal system's reputation and unfairly undermine the public's confidence in the administration of justice.” (*Id.*, at 20)

13. The Review Board recommended that Respondent be suspended for 30 days and complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar. On January 17, 2023, this Court denied petitions by Respondent and the Administrator for leave to file exceptions to the Review Board's report and

recommendation and entered an order suspending Respondent for 30 days and requiring her to complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar, as recommended by the Review Board.

B. Respondent's Objection to the Administrator's Petition for Costs

14. On April 18, 2023, the Administrator filed a petition for order and judgment for costs after Respondent failed to pay the \$1,500 in costs assessed against her in the disciplinary case. This amount had been reduced from the total actual costs of \$5,951.95, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 773(c). Instead of paying the costs, Respondent filed, in this Court, a 970-page objection to the petition on April 24, 2023. The objection, without the 927 pages of exhibits, is attached as Exhibit 3. On September 15, 2023, the Court denied her objection and ordered her to pay her costs.

15. In her objection, Respondent falsely claimed that the ARDC and this Court had engaged in systematic gender and racial bias. (Exhibit 3, at 22–36) Specifically, Respondent stated:

“...the female is targeted relentlessly unlike her male counterparts to the point that many women leave the profession or attempt suicide, so great was the perceived wrong committed against them by this Court.” (*Id.*, at 26)

16. On July 6, 2023, Respondent then posted on social media:

“Did you know the ARDC & the Illinois Supreme Court has a history of permitting harassment of women until they comitt [*sic*] suicide or leave the bar? That's how they enforce their “anti discrimination[*sic*] and non harassment[*sic*] policy.” (Exhibit 12)

17. Respondent also falsely stated in her objection that Judge Andrew Gleeson threatened her by telling her that “I will see to it that you are homeless and living under a bridge.” (Exhibit 3, at 35) Judge Gleeson has attested to the fact that he has never made such a statement to Respondent and, in fact, he has never had a substantive conversation with Respondent other

than possibly saying hello to her at a bar association meeting. The affidavit of Judge Andrew Gleeson is attached as Exhibit 4.

18. In the objection, Respondent also attacked the “all male” Review Board panel who reviewed her disciplinary case, comprised of Charles Pinkston, Bradley Pollock, and Michael T. Reagan. She claimed that the panel “made factual findings which do not exist in the record” and suggested that their decision was a “prima facie case of harassment and gender discrimination.” (Exhibit 3 at 25 -27) She also stated:

“Was the Review Board’s conduct a mistake? Or was it so gender biased it felt emboldened to make up facts about a woman to justify its harsh legal findings?”
(*Id.*, at 26-27)

19. Based on the false statements about this Court, Judge Gleeson, and others described in paragraphs 15 through 18, above, the Inquiry Board directed the Administrator to file a second complaint against Respondent, *In re Lowery*, 2023PR00060. That complaint, which is currently pending before the Hearing Board, is attached as Exhibit 5.

C. Respondent’s Social Media Posts Following the Imposition of Discipline and the Filing of the Second Disciplinary Case

20. Over the past several months, Respondent has posted dozens of messages on the social media website X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn, which contain false statements about this Court, its former members, and the ARDC. A few examples are set forth below:

a. November 13, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery @lowerylawfirm [X]

“Today I found out that a person I had admired, profoundly broke my heart and that person was Chief Justice Anne Burke. I attend bar meetings and we swam in the pool together talking at bar meetings on the difficulties of women in the bar and the UMPH it took to succeed. (Emphasis in original.)

I then found out today, that she lied to my face about her kindness. She HATES JEWS. While smiling to me and nodding, behind those kind eyes

lied [*sic*] seething JEW HATE. Then she smirked and laid her plan to destroy my career. (Emphasis in original)

I am a practicing attorney in the State of Illinois and it is the MOST CORRUPT system and the most TOXIC SYSTEM in the USA. I would rather pour gasoline over my body than ever step foot in that FUCKING HELLHOLE. So why don't I just leave THE BAR, they won't FUCKING LET ME!" (Emphasis in original)

These posts are attached as Exhibit 6.

b. November 9, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery @lowerylawfirm [X]

"ONLY in ILLINOIS do you see a retired CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE COURT walking into the courthouse with her DEFENDANT attorney husband for his CORRUPTION trial. Same person who spewed JEW HATE all over the FBI tape airwaves. This is HOW the State of Illinois demonstrates FAIRNESS!" (Emphasis in original)

This post is attached as Exhibit 7.

c. November 13, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery @lowerylawfirm [X]

"Every single day I am going to ask the tough questions. Why? Because women and minority attorneys deserve better treatment than they are receiving from this entity IMHO.

The Illinois Supreme Court espouses that it does NOT tolerate workplace abuse, such as bullying, retaliation and discrimination, so when will the justices produce a complete list of all the whistleblowers they have hired to demonstrate this statement?" (Emphasis in original)

This post is attached as Exhibit 8.

d. August 11, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery @MargaretJLowery [X]

"Wow the Illinois Supreme Court has a hit list of attorneys they want to target because they are outspoken whistleblowers? They target their political opponents? Is this true? ..."

This post is attached as Exhibit 9.

e. November 9, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery, JD, MHA [LinkedIn]

“If you think we have not entered a TOTALITARIAN REGIME under our current elected officials, then you need to see the attached.

Now the Illinois Supreme Court is following attorneys to the Holocaust Museum in Missouri to spy on them. What possible “confidential investigation” can there be for an attorney to attend an event at the Holocaust Museum? Oh no that’s not the point, the point is to let everyone know the government spies on Jews?

This is the behavior of the Third Reich or Nazi’s [sic] and the purpose is to make people afraid to associate with you. The purpose is to isolate an individual same as what the SS & Hitler did. I am EMBARRASSED to be a member of the Illinois Bar.

This kind of conduct on the part of the Illinois Supreme Court should OUTRAGE everyone.” (Emphasis in original.)

This post is attached as Exhibit 10.

f. March 24, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm @MargaretJLowery [X]

“When female attorneys are persecuted by professional licensure boards with false charges, made up evidence & testimony by a convicted perjurer, it represents a system out of control. They hold you down, shove it up your ass and then tell you to enjoy it. IT’S CAREER RAPE. (Emphasis in original.)

This post is attached as Exhibit 11.

g. January 17, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm @MargaretJLowery [X]

“Effective today, the ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ruled no attorney in the State of Illinois has ANY FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS. If an attorney expresses ANY opinion about a judge, it will subject the attorney to immediate discipline.” (Emphasis in original.)

This post is attached as Exhibit 11.

h. July 19, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm @MargaretJLowery [X]

“Isn’t it ironic that the new SCC [St. Clair County] associate judge signed off on the majority of Chief Judge Andrew Gleeson’s DIVORCE and in return gets appointed to a new judgeship? I wonder what the paid rate of exchange was for services rendered in that divorce. All above board I’m sure.” (Emphasis in original.)

This post is attached as Exhibit 12.

D. Respondent’s conduct in the current disciplinary case

21. On November 7, 2023, Respondent filed a motion to remove the Hearing Board Chair, Sonni Choi Williams, purportedly “for cause”. *In re Lowery*, 2023PR00060. Ms. Williams was randomly assigned to chair the proceeding as a volunteer member of the ARDC Hearing Board. A copy of the motion is attached as Exhibit 15.

22. In the motion, Respondent claimed that Chair Williams entered an order “barring Respondent from conducting *any discovery* in the above matter” (Emphasis in original.) (*Id.*, at 2) Respondent’s allegation is completely false, and Respondent has been conducting discovery in the case since its inception.

23. In the motion, Respondent also claimed, without evidence, that Chair Williams “conspired” with ARDC Counsel to obstruct her access to evidence because Chair Williams is a “partisan Democrat” and Respondent is an “ethnic Jew.” (*Id.*, at 1) In addition, without any factual support, Respondent accused Chair Williams of engaging in “ex parte[sic] statements and relying on “extra judicial[sic] events” during the case. (*Id.*, at 4)

24. Finally, in the motion, Respondent again made false statements about this Court:

“So in summary, the Illinois Supreme Court ignores anti-Semitism within its ranks when it involves the Chief Justice and her spouse, ignores his public corruption for more than 5 years, ignores threats reported to the Court, ignores written reports of harassment even though there are more than 20 harassing complaints, conducts Gestapo investigations of Jews and then puts a partisan democrat [sic] on the case who publicly comments on the credibility of witnesses in advance of hearing?” (Exhibit 15 at 4)

III. ARGUMENT

25. Supreme Court Rule 774(a)(2) provides in pertinent part that:

- (a) During the pendency of a disciplinary proceeding or disciplinary investigation, the Court, or on the Administrator’s petition for a rule to show cause, may suspend an attorney from the practice of law until further order of the court following the filing of a petition alleging.
- (2) a complaint has been voted by the Inquiry Board; the attorney has committed a violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct which involves fraud or moral turpitude or threatens irreparable injury to the public, his or her clients, or to the orderly administration of justice; and there appears to be persuasive evidence to support the charge.

26. Respondent’s conduct warrants an interim suspension under Supreme Court 774(a)(2). Respondent’s conduct in the prior disciplinary case, the nature of the allegations made against her in her current disciplinary proceedings, and Respondent’s continuing false statements in pleadings and on social media about judicial officials, including this Court, threatens the orderly administration of justice. These statements include:

- a. Former Chief Justice Burke hates Jews and laid plans to destroy Respondent’s career;
- b. This Court encourages the harassment of women and minorities and targets whistleblowers and political opponents;
- c. Judge Andrew Gleeson provided a judgeship in exchange for favorable treatment in his own divorce case;

- d. The ARDC Review Board engaged in harassment and gender bias in her case and made up facts in their ruling to justify their findings; and
- e. ARDC Hearing Board Chair Sonni Choi Williams relied on improper extra-judicial events and engaged in improper *ex-parte* communications concerning Respondent's pending disciplinary case;

27. In *In re Denison*, M.R. 27522, 2013PR00001 (September 21, 2015) this Court suspended an attorney during the pendency of a disciplinary proceeding pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 774. The Hearing Board found that Ms. Denison had made false or reckless statements concerning the integrity of a judge and others. Some of the statements were made on a blog Ms. Denison had published. As in this case, Ms. Denison continued to make posts while her disciplinary case was pending, which evidenced that she was a continuing danger to the orderly administration of justice and a continuing risk to harm to the public's perception of the judicial system.

28. This Court also imposed an interim suspension during the pendency of disciplinary proceedings in the case of *In re Amu*, M.R. 26545, 2011PR00106 (May 16, 2014), where the attorney made unfounded accusations about the integrity of judges and expressed no remorse for his conduct. As in *Denison* and *Amu*, Respondent has made no effort to curtail her conduct. If anything, the frequency of her comments, and their virulence, have increased. Her recent pleadings before the Hearing Board and her posts on social media demonstrate a continuing effort to falsely disparage the integrity of Judge Gleeson, this Court, and those involved in the disciplinary system.

29. This is also not a case where Respondent has a First Amendment right to engage in this conduct. Although attorneys retain First Amendment rights and may express opinions, they must do so within ethical bounds, and they are not free to impugn the character or integrity of judges with no basis to do so. *In re Hoffman*, M.R. 24030, 2008PR00065 (September 22, 2010). Illinois attorneys have been unsuccessful in their attempts to avoid discipline for making false or

improper statements about judges based upon the First Amendment. For example, in *In re Betts*, M.R. 9296, 1990PR00049 (September 27, 1993), the Hearing Board held that the attorney's false allegations about an attorney and a judge were not protected by the First Amendment. The Hearing Board noted, "A lawyer does not enjoy the same freedoms as a private citizen when it comes to professional discipline," citing *In re Sarelas*, 50 Ill. 2d 87, 98 (1971).

30. The totality of Respondent's conduct in this case warrants her interim suspension. In her first disciplinary case, Respondent was found to have lied under oath about her involvement on an anti-retention website concerning St. Clair County Chief Judge Andrew Gleeson. The Boards also found that Respondent falsely accused Judge Gleeson of orchestrating an attempt to frame an innocent person for murder. In the pending case, Respondent is charged with making false statements about this Court and Judge Gleeson concerning the character and integrity of these judicial officials, and there is persuasive evidence to support the charges that these accusations are completely baseless. Following the imposition of discipline, Respondent has made numerous false statements about the judiciary and the ARDC on social media, and on LinkedIn. In addition, she has made false statements about the ARDC Review Board, and Hearing Board Chair Soni Choi Williams. This conduct adversely affects the public's perception of the judiciary, this Court's disciplinary system, and the legal profession and negatively affects the administration of justice.

WHEREFORE, the Administrator respectfully requests that the Court issue a rule to show cause as to why Respondent, Margaret Jean Lowery, should not be suspended from the practice of law, effective immediately and until further order of the Court, pursuant to Rule 774(a)(2).

Respectfully submitted,

Lea S. Gutierrez, Administrator
Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission

By: /s/ Peter L. Rotskoff
Peter L. Rotskoff

VERIFICATION

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this petition for interim suspension are true and correct, except as to any matters therein stated to be on information and belief, and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that he verily believes the same to be true.

/s/ Peter L. Rotskoff
Peter L. Rotskoff

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EXHIBIT ONE

In re Margaret Jean Lowery
Attorney-Respondent

Commission No. 2020PR00018

Synopsis of Hearing Board Report and Recommendation
(November 2021)

Respondent was charged with making statements impugning a judge's integrity, which she knew were false or with reckless disregard for their truth. The statements were made on a website, on a Facebook page and during a telephone conversation with a customer service representative. Respondent was also charged with making false statements to the ARDC.

The Hearing Board found that Respondent knowingly made false statements to the ARDC about her involvement in setting up the website. However, the Hearing Board found that the evidence did not clearly and convincingly establish that it was Respondent who made the statements on the website or the Facebook page. The Hearing Board declined to find misconduct based on the statement during the telephone conversation, as Respondent's comment was made in a very limited context, unrelated to any court proceeding, and did not identify anyone by name

The Hearing Board recommended that Respondent be suspended for sixty days and required to complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar within one year after entry of the Court's final order of discipline.

**BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION**

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.

Commission No. 2020PR00018

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE HEARING BOARD

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Respondent was charged with making statements impugning a judge's integrity which she knew were false or with reckless disregard for their truth. The statements were made on a website, on a Facebook page and during a telephone conversation with a customer service representative. Respondent was also charged with making false statements to the ARDC.

The Hearing Board found that Respondent knowingly made false statements to the ARDC about her involvement in setting up the website. However, the Hearing Board found that the evidence did not clearly and convincingly establish that it was Respondent who made the statements on the website or the Facebook page. The Hearing Board declined to find misconduct based on the statement during the telephone conversation, as Respondent's comment was made in a very limited context, unrelated to any court proceeding, and did not identify anyone by name.

The Hearing Board recommended that Respondent be suspended for sixty days and required to complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar within one year after entry of the Court's final order of discipline.

FILED

November 10, 2021

ARDC CLERK

INTRODUCTION

The hearing in this matter was held on July 21 and 22, 2021 at the Springfield office of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (ARDC) before a Panel of the Hearing Board consisting of Janaki H. Nair, Chair, Stephen R. Pacey and Peggy Lewis LeCompte. Peter L. Rotskoff represented the Administrator. Respondent appeared at the hearing and was represented by Adrian M. Vuckovich.

PLEADINGS AND ALLEGED MISCONDUCT

The Administrator filed a four-count Complaint alleging that Respondent made statements which she knew were false or with reckless disregard for their truth about a judge's qualifications or integrity, in violation of Rule 8.2(a) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010), and made false statements to the ARDC, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c) of the Rules. The charges are based on online posts accusing a judge of racism, a telephone conversation in which Respondent suggested that the judge was involved in a conspiracy to falsely accuse another judge of a crime and Respondent's statements to the ARDC about her involvement in the matter.

EVIDENCE

The Administrator presented testimony from three witnesses, including Respondent as an adverse witness. Administrator's Exhibits 1 through 16 were admitted into evidence. (Tr. 8, 43-47). Respondent testified on her own behalf and presented testimony from six additional witnesses. Respondent's Exhibits 1 through 4, 6 through 9, 11 through 13, 15 through 19, 21 through 27, 29 through 30, 33 through 42, and 46 through 48 were admitted into evidence. Respondent's Exhibits 5, 10, 14, 20, 28, 31, 32, 43 – 45 and 49 were withdrawn. (Tr. 107-108, 439-41).

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

In an attorney disciplinary proceeding, the Administrator has the burden of proving the misconduct charged by clear and convincing evidence. In re Thomas, 2012 IL 113035, ¶ 56. Clear and convincing evidence requires a high level of certainty, which is greater than a preponderance of the evidence, but less stringent than proof beyond a reasonable doubt. In re Santilli, 2012PR00029, M.R. 26572 (May 16, 2014). The Hearing Board determines whether the Administrator has met that burden. In re Edmonds, 2014 IL 117696, ¶ 35.

BACKGROUND

Hon. Andrew Gleeson is the Chief Judge of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit. Judge Gleeson has been a judge since 2003 and chief judge since November 2016. (Tr. 111-12).

Former judge Ronald Duebbert was elected as a circuit judge for the Twentieth Judicial Circuit in November 2016. On December 30, 2016, police questioned Duebbert in connection with a murder investigation in which a close friend of Duebbert's was a suspect. As a result of Duebbert's allegedly deceptive responses to police, Judge Gleeson reported the matter to the Judicial Inquiry Board (JIB) and, in early January 2017, placed Duebbert on administrative duties. The JIB investigated the matter and later filed charges against Duebbert. Following a full hearing, the Illinois Courts Commission concluded that Duebbert had been dishonest with police, lied to the JIB and testified falsely before the Courts Commission. The Courts Commission removed Duebbert from the bench in January 2020. (Tr. 42, 60-67, 99, 138-40; Resp. Ex. 3).

These circumstances also form the basis for a pending ARDC complaint against Duebbert and Duebbert's interim suspension from the practice of law. In a prior, unrelated matter, Duebbert was censured for knowingly making false statements about an opponent in a campaign mailer, distributed when Duebbert ran for judicial office in 2012. (Tr. 96-98; Resp. Exs. 4, 46).

Respondent is an attorney with an office in Belleville, who was acquainted with Duebbert over time. Based on Respondent's testimony, she gave Duebbert a statement to use in connection with the JIB investigation, but he published the statement instead. The published statement described comments Respondent reportedly overheard, which suggested that court personnel were involved in a conspiracy to falsely accuse Duebbert of murder. Respondent has had limited interaction with Judge Gleeson, although he has reported Respondent to the ARDC a number of times, including allegations that she improperly circulated rumors of a conspiracy against Duebbert. (Tr. 29, 112-15, 152-54, 184-85, 218, 258-59, 311-13; Resp. Exs. 13, 36, 37).

In fall 2018, Judge Gleeson was seeking to be retained as a circuit judge. Duebbert opposed Judge Gleeson's retention, but could not publicly engage in political activity as he was still a judge at the time. Other individuals were actively working to oppose Judge Gleeson, in part because of their views about Duebbert's removal from office. Duebbert communicated constantly with members of that group, which included Guy Don Carlos, Donna Ayers, Respondent and others. (Tr. 69-70, 77-79, 105-106, 112, 393-94). Later, friction developed between Duebbert and Respondent. In March 2021, Respondent told the ARDC that Duebbert had killed her dog and threatened violence against her and others. Duebbert denied the accusations. Respondent and Duebbert have not communicated since March 2020. (Tr. 47-49, 218-25, 302-303, 318-23; Adm. Ex. 9).

Respondent got involved in the anti-retention group in summer 2018. While she denied extensive participation, Respondent attended two group meetings, one of which was held at Respondent's home in August or September 2018. During those meetings, the group decided to set up a website and communicate through Facebook. (Tr. 260-63, 275).

Respondent had experience purchasing domain names and setting up websites for herself and others. She agreed to perform those tasks for the anti-retention group. In September 2018,

Respondent contacted GoDaddy and purchased firetheliarjudge.com (Fire the Liar website), the domain name the group chose. Respondent paid for the purchase through her PayPal account, using funds the group supplied. Respondent testified that, in obtaining the domain name, setting up the website and communicating with GoDaddy, she was acting on behalf of the group, not herself. (Tr. 186-89, 191, 262-67, 274-75, 300).

When she set up the GoDaddy account, and purchased the Fire the Liar website, Respondent used the email address madeline.dinmont@charter.net. This email address belonged to Respondent, as did a Dinmont terrier named Madeline. Respondent used the name Madeline Dinmont in all her communications with GoDaddy. According to Respondent's testimony, whenever she set up a website or purchased a domain name for someone else, she used whatever name was on the account. (Tr. 104, 189, 209, 274-75, 283; Adm. Exs. 1-5, 15).

Thereafter, Respondent designed and built the Fire the Liar website, using a GoDaddy web builder. According to Respondent's testimony, this entailed creating a structure where text or images could be put in later. Respondent put in some basic content, such as information about the group, and links to articles about Judge Gleeson. She also purchased a second domain name, firejudgegleeson.com for the group and worked with GoDaddy representatives to ensure that anyone who clicked on a post on that domain would automatically be directed to the Fire the Liar website. This was done, at the request of group members, as Facebook had blocked access to the Fire the Liar website. Respondent testified that, otherwise, she did not write any of the Fire the Liar website's content or post any pictures on the site. After she built the frame, she turned the website over to others. Respondent was actively involved with the website from September 2018 until early October 2018. (Tr. 187-88, 196-200, 212, 236, 262-63, 268-71, 277-78, 301; Adm. Exs. 2, 3).

Based on Respondent's testimony, she also gave the anti-retention group a Facebook page she was no longer using. Respondent had set up this Facebook page in 2012, under the name Madeline Dinmont, to post pictures of her dog. That Facebook page was linked to the madeline.dinmont@charter.net email account. A comment posted on the Madeline Dinmont Facebook complained about Facebook blocking access to the Fire the Liar website. Respondent denied posting that comment. (Tr. 209, 212-13, 275-76, 279; Adm. Ex. 10).

The login information was the same for the Fire the Liar website and the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page. When Respondent turned the website over to the group, the group set up its own email, madeline.dinmont@icloud.net, which Respondent did not control. The email address for the website was changed on October 6, 2018. (Tr. 276-79, 283-85; Resp. Ex. 38 at 4).

A separate group, Justice for Kane, opposed retention of a different local judge, Judge Zina Cruse, based on a ruling by Judge Cruse in a criminal case. Lori Friess organized this group. On October 4, 2018, Lori Friess posted a message on the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page, in response to posts on that page inviting Justice for Kane supporters to join an upcoming protest against Judge Gleeson. Respondent denied posting that invitation or the accompanying pictures, but she had taken photographs similar to those pictures. In her post, Friess asked Respondent to stop including Justice for Kane in her campaign against Judge Gleeson. (Tr. 36-37, 130-31, 215-16, 303-304; Adm. Exs. 13, 14). A response followed, from Madeline Dinmont, stating "Lori Friess is on a rant about me..." (Adm. Ex. 13 at 1-2). Respondent denied writing those words or knowing who did so. Respondent had responded to other online comments from Friess on Respondent's own Facebook page and using her own name. (Tr. 207-209; Adm. Ex. 13 at 3-5).

I. Respondent is charged with posting two entries on a website which falsely indicated that Judge Gleeson was behind the campaign against Judge Cruse and that his efforts were motivated by Judge Cruse's race and gender, in violation of Rule 8.2(a).

A. Summary

Material posted on a website falsely accused Judge Gleeson of being part of a white supremacy group and opposing another judge's retention due to her race and gender. While there was no basis for these allegations, the evidence did not establish that Respondent made the posts. Therefore, the Administrator did not prove that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a).

B. Admitted Facts and Evidence Considered

We consider the following admitted facts and evidence, in addition to the background outlined above.

On or about October 4, 2018, the following statements were posted on the Fire the Liar website:

"A FAILURE TO VOTE IS A YES VOTE ON RETENTION!

Kane's founder has a vendetta against a judge who followed the law.

Why Judge Gleeson Must Go!

Judge Zina Cruse is a female African American judge from East St. Louis. The Justice For Kane anti-retention campaign is the brain child of Gleeson & others to run a female minority judge off the bench in order to preserve their white male privilege."

(Adm. Ex. 12).

After various negative comments about Friess, the post continued:

"JFK is a WHITE SUPREMACIST GROUP!

JFK is a front for a WHITE SUPREMACIST GROUP called the National Association for Majority Equality which Judge Gleeson supports. That is why they are targeting judge of color and that is why their members are exclusively white."

(Adm. Ex. 12).

JFK referred to Justice for Kane (Tr. 92). These statements, particularly the allegations that Judge Gleeson was involved with white supremacy groups and acted against other judges due to racial or gender bias, were false. (Tr. 126, 129-32).

Judge Gleeson believed that Duebbert and Respondent were responsible for these posts. As to Respondent, this belief stemmed from Judge Gleeson's understanding that Respondent had improperly circulated information about the alleged conspiracy against Duebbert. Judge Gleeson had no personal knowledge or direct evidence that Respondent posted these statements. (Tr. 114-15, 128, 137, 167-68).

Duebbert denied creating or posting these statements. According to Duebbert, Respondent, and others, had sent him that material and, at some point, Respondent showed it to Duebbert on her iPad. (Tr. 34-38, 54-55).

Respondent denied making those posts or showing Duebbert their content as if she had written it. According to Respondent's testimony, she never posted any content about Judge Gleeson on the Fire the Liar website and all substantive content on the site was written or posted by other people. Based on Respondent's testimony, as of October 4, 2018, anybody in the anti-retention group could have posted material on the Fire the Liar website. Two-factor authentication was not required. Anyone who had the pass code or log-in information for the Fire the Liar site could write or post content on the site. That information was shared through an app. Don Carlos, Ayers and, according to Respondent, Duebbert, all had that information. (Tr. 188-89, 198, 205-206, 268-73, 276-82, 288, 293-94, 301-302). It is not uncommon for third parties to have access to, and be able to post content on, campaign websites and campaign Facebook pages. (Tr. 59-60, 147-52, 285-86).

Respondent also testified that she did not control the content on the Fire the Liar website and that items posted on the site did not have to be submitted through her. Given her concerns

about content that others might post, on September 19, 2018, Respondent asked a GoDaddy representative whether the website administrator could review comments before they were posted. Respondent was told that was not possible through the GoDaddy website builder. (Tr. 187-89, 200, 238, 277-78, 297-98; Adm. Ex. 3 at 22-25).

On October 5, 2018, Respondent called GoDaddy and arranged to link two domain names related to Justice for Kane to the Fire the Liar website. According to Respondent, she did this at the request of Duebbert and other anti-retention group members to get greater visibility for the Fire the Liar website. This process required two-factor authentication. Respondent received the authentication code in a text message sent to the phone from which Respondent had called GoDaddy. Based on Respondent's testimony, that was a "burner" phone, which was circulated among anti-retention group members so anyone using the account would have the phone with the number connected to the website. (Tr. 190, 194, 200-202; Adm. Ex. 4).

Don Carlos was very active in opposing Judge Gleeson. Among other things, in October 2018, Don Carlos made false accusations about Judge Gleeson to the Judicial Inquiry Board. Don Carlos routinely posted his views online, regardless of whether the material was caustic or inflammatory and typically without hiding his identity. Given the nature of some of his posts, at times Facebook suspended Don Carlos's ability to use Facebook. Don Carlos continued posting anyway, by sharing material with someone who could post, posting anonymously, or setting up a Facebook page using an alias. (Tr. 70-76, 79-80, 104-105, 168-73, 178, 392, 407-410; Adm. Ex. 16; Resp. Ex. 11 at 1-2; Resp. Ex. 12 at 1; Resp. Exs. 15, 19, 41).

Ayers also frequently and openly posted her political views online. Ayers likewise would post "almost anything" and had a very negative view of Judge Gleeson. (Tr. 78-80). Ayers had accused Judge Gleeson of being a white supremacist more than once and had suggested Justice for

Kane was connected to a racist group in an online post on October 10, 2018. (Tr. 92-93, 165-66; Adm. Ex. 13 at 2; Resp. Exs. 16, 18).

Respondent is a person who “plays it by the book.” (Tr. 76). Comments such as those posted on the Fire the Liar website were not characteristic of Respondent. (Tr. 80, 93, 431).

C. Analysis and Conclusions

A lawyer shall not make a statement that the lawyer knows is false or with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge. Ill. Rs. Prof'l Conduct R. 8.2(a). The statements posted on the Fire the Liar website on October 4, 2018 impugned Judge Gleeson's integrity, falsely and without any basis. Those statements clearly are within the scope of Rule 8.2(a).

However, the Administrator must prove the elements of the specific misconduct charged, by clear and convincing evidence. See In re Harris, 2013PR00114, M.R. 27935 (May 18, 2016). Clear and convincing evidence requires a high degree of certainty, a firm and abiding belief that it is highly probable that the proposition at issue is true. In re Czarnik, 2016PR00131, M.R. 29949 (Sept. 16, 2019). The Administrator's burden is not met merely because the evidence raises suspicious circumstances. In re Winthrop, 219 Ill. 2d 526, 550, 848 N.E.2d 961 (2006).

In our role as trier of fact, we determine the sufficiency of the evidence, weigh the credibility of the witnesses and resolve evidentiary conflicts. In re Wick, 05 CH 66, M.R. 23942 (Sept. 22, 2010). We consider circumstantial evidence, draw reasonable inferences and need not be naïve or impractical in assessing the evidence. In re Isaacson, 2011PR00062, M.R. 25805 (Mar. 15, 2013).

The Complaint charged Respondent with violating Rule 8.2(a) by making the October 4, 2018 statements on the Fire the Liar website. Before and after that date, Respondent had access to the Fire the Liar website and took substantive actions related to that website. However, no

evidence directly connected Respondent with these posts. Significantly, the Administrator did not present any evidence which established that Respondent was the only person able to post material on the website.

Respondent testified that anyone with the username and password could post material on the Fire the Liar website and that other members of the anti-retention group had the username and password. We considered this testimony as part of the evidence, mindful that Respondent does not have the burden of proof, (In re Landis, 05 CH 69, M.R. 22970 (Mar. 16, 2009)), and that we do not automatically reject testimony because it came from an interested party, particularly if the testimony is not inherently improbable. See In re Geleerd, 07 CH 31, M.R. 24359 (Mar. 21, 2011).

Respondent's testimony, that only the username and password were required to post content on the website, seemed reasonable, and there was no evidence that anything more was required. Similarly, Respondent's testimony, that other members of the anti-retention group had the username and password, seemed reasonable, particularly given the purpose of the website and the aims of the group for which the site was created. We weighed the evidence that tended to contradict this aspect of Respondent's testimony but remained unconvinced. The fact that some individuals opposed to Judge Gleeson's retention did not have the log-in information did not eliminate the possibility that some persons, other than Respondent, had that information. There is some inconsistency between Respondent's testimony that she shared the log-in information and the concerns she expressed to GoDaddy over what might get posted. Despite that inconsistency, we still found it quite plausible that, since Respondent had set up a website for the anti-retention group at that group's request, group members would have the means to post material on that website. Further, in context, Respondent's statements to the GoDaddy representative seemed to presuppose that others already could post on the site.

We also considered other circumstances, including the content of the October 4, 2018 posts, the comments made around the same time by and about Friess, and Respondent's actions on October 5 to link Justice for Kane sites with the Fire the Liar site, as well as Respondent's comment, during one call with GoDaddy, describing herself as "the storm." These circumstances raised our suspicions but did not demonstrate that it was Respondent who posted the material at issue. This was particularly true because some members of the anti-retention group had a proven track record of making false accusations against Judge Gleeson and accusations of racial bias.

Respondent set up a structure in which negative comments could be made, regardless of their truth or falsity, about the integrity of a judge. She knew or should have anticipated the type of material that might be posted, yet Respondent allowed persons she had no basis to expect would exercise any restraint to have access to the website. We found that behavior extremely troubling and the posts themselves highly offensive.

However, the Complaint charged that Respondent made the posts herself. The clear and convincing standard applicable in these proceedings does not allocate the risk of error equally between the parties, but requires greater proof, qualitatively and quantitatively, from the Administrator. In re Lucas, 2016PR00103 (Hearing Bd. Sept. 29, 2017) (complaint dismissed). The evidence indicated that Respondent might have posted the material which appeared on the Fire the Liar website on October 4, 2018, but did not demonstrate, clearly and convincingly, that it was Respondent who posted these comments. Therefore, the Administrator did not prove that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a), as charged in Count I.

II. Respondent is charged with posting material on a Facebook page which falsely suggested that Judge Gleeson was a member of racist groups, in violation of Rule 8.2(a).

A. Summary

Material posted on a Facebook page falsely suggested that Judge Gleeson was a member of racist groups, including the Ku Klux Klan. While there was no basis for these suggestions, the evidence did not establish that Respondent posted that material. The Administrator did not prove that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a).

B. Admitted Facts and Evidence Considered

We consider the following admitted facts and evidence, in addition to those discussed in Section I B.

On or about October 23, 2018, text and a picture were posted on the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page.¹ The text read:

“Gleeson is part of the St. Clair County Secret Order of the Hibernians. That’s why he uses the Irish clover. Wanna guess how many of its members are persons of color? None. Wanna see Gleeson in his ‘chief’ regalia?”

(Adm. Ex. 11 at 1).

The picture depicted a person in a Ku Klux Klan type white robe and hood, with a clover and the name Gleeson on the robe, standing near a Confederate flag and a noose. The words “Vote No Retention!” appeared over the picture. (Tr. 133-34; Adm. Ex. 11 at 3).

A meme, posted separately, depicted Judge Gleeson at a St. Patrick’s Day celebration, in front of a sign bearing the words “Gleeson Clan,” with red marks around the word Clan and the words “More Proof!” above the picture. A meme is a picture to which something is added to change the meaning. (Tr. 162-64, 405-406; Adm. Ex. 11 at 2).

Judge Gleeson is not, and never has been, a member of the Ku Klux Klan. There is no such thing as the Secret Order of the Hibernians. Judge Gleeson does belong to the Ancient Order of the Hibernians, which is a Catholic charitable organization, not a racist group. (Tr. 133-34).

Judge Gleeson believed that Respondent was responsible for the posts made on the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page on or about October 23, 2018. That belief was based in part on Judge Gleeson's view of Respondent's involvement in circulating allegations of a conspiracy against Duebbert. He also understood that Respondent was connected to the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page given, among other things, the presence of a post on that page, from September 2015, directed to Respondent's niece. Further, posts made over time on that page related to legal matters and included attacks on court personnel. Judge Gleeson did not have any direct personal knowledge that Respondent made the posts at issue. (Tr. 114-16, 167-68; Adm. Ex. 8 at 9).

Respondent denied creating or posting the material at issue. Respondent testified that she did not see that material until after it was posted and denied previously showing any such material to Duebbert. Respondent denied intentionally using the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page except to play games and post pictures of her dog. She usually used her own Facebook page to communicate with relatives and believed she had acted inadvertently when she posted the message to her niece on the Madeline Dinmont page, rather than on her own Facebook page. (Tr. 209-12, 216-18, 289, 293-94).

Duebbert denied making the October 23, 2018 posts and denied ever posting anything on the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page. According to Duebbert, Respondent and other people often showed him content from the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page, including the October 23, 2018 posts. (Tr. 30-31). According to Duebbert, Respondent spoke with him about those posts multiple times and stated, in relation to them: "(d)on't I do good work?" (Tr. 32-33). Duebbert did not

know when that conversation occurred. Respondent did not tell Duebbert she had created those posts, and Duebbert did not see Respondent post any of that material. (Tr. 52-54).

According to Respondent's testimony, anyone with the log-in information could post on the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page. People in the anti-retention group, including Don Carlos and Ayers, had the username and password for that Facebook page. While he denied it, Respondent testified that Duebbert also had the log-in information for the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page. Respondent also testified that, when she turned the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page over to the anti-retention group, in September 2018, the madeline.dinmont@charter.net email address was deleted. Group members then set up and used a different email address for the Facebook page, madeline.dinmont@icloud.net, which Respondent did not control. (Tr. 31, 209, 278-84). According to Respondent's testimony, as of October 23, 2018, everyone but her had access to the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page. (Tr. 289).

Respondent had limited, if any, familiarity with the Ancient Order of the Hibernians before October 23, 2018. In contrast, Don Carlos had a particular aversion to that group, which he considered racist and corrupt. He frequently shared those views with others. Don Carlos showed a friend material similar to the posts at issue, before October 23, 2018. Don Carlos also had sent Duebbert a list of Ancient Order of the Hibernians members, on which some members' names were circled in red. (Tr. 83-89, 290-91, 398-405, 435-36; Resp. Ex. 39).

Don Carlos was skilled in creating memes and periodically posted altered photographs online. The material in Adm. Ex. 11 was of a type that Don Carlos might have created. (Tr. 82, 90, 216-17, 406-407; Resp. Ex. 8).

C. Analysis and Conclusions

Rule 8.2(a) prohibits a lawyer from making a statement the lawyer knows is false or with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity about the qualifications or integrity of a judge. The text

and picture at issue falsely suggest that Judge Gleeson belongs to racist organizations. Clearly, this impugns Judge Gleeson's character and integrity, and there was no reason for Respondent, or anyone else, to think such suggestions were true. The posts are highly offensive and well within the scope of Rule 8.2(a).

However, the Administrator must prove the misconduct charged, by clear and convincing evidence. Harris, 2013PR00114 (Hearing Bd. at 3). We incorporate the discussion in Section I C as to the law applicable to that standard of proof and to our consideration of the evidence. The Complaint charged that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a) by posting the text and picture at issue.

As was true in relation to Count I, the only evidence of what was required to post on the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page came from Respondent's testimony. Respondent testified that this required only the username and password. That testimony seemed quite plausible, and no evidence was presented that indicated otherwise.

The next issue became who had access to that information. Based on the evidence, at some point, Respondent did control the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page and did post material on that page. However, according to Respondent's testimony, as of October 23, 2018 when the posts at issue were made, other persons were able to post on the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page. By then, Respondent had turned over the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page to the anti-retention group and group members had set up a new email for the page. Limited, if any, evidence was presented to contradict that testimony. Even if everyone who opposed Judge Gleeson's retention did not have the log-in information for the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page, it is entirely possible that some members of the anti-retention group did have the username and password. This aspect of Respondent's testimony seemed plausible, for the same reasons discussed above regarding the Fire the Liar website. That testimony is also consistent with the evidence that, as of October 6, 2018,

the email for the Fire the Liar website was changed to the same email address that Respondent identified as the new email address for the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page.

According to Respondent's testimony, as of October 23, 2018, she no longer had the log-in information for the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page. We question that portion of Respondent's testimony, particularly as Respondent knew that the Facebook page used the same log-in information as the Fire the Liar website and Respondent was later able to access the website. However, Respondent does not bear the burden of proof. See Landis, 05 CH 69 (Review Bd. at 11). Even discounting this aspect of Respondent's testimony, the evidence left open a genuine possibility that someone other than Respondent had the information needed to make posts to the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page and posted the material at issue here.

Testimony from Duebbert, that Respondent showed him the content posted on October 23 and characterized it as her work, tended to connect Respondent to these two posts. However, we did not find Duebbert's testimony in these proceedings credible. The fact that Duebbert made multiple false statements which led to his removal from the bench and the potential bias arising from his history with Respondent were among the factors which led us to that conclusion.

We also considered the posts themselves. The text reflected a view that the "Secret Order of the Hibernians" was a racist group. Don Carlos viewed the Ancient Order of the Hibernians as a racist group. The picture, of the person in Ku Klux Klan attire, represents a clear accusation of racism. Don Carlos had shown a friend similar material, months before these posts were made. Don Carlos often created memes. The meme, posted around the same time as the text and picture, was designed to further the suggestion of racism and contained markings similar to those on documents Don Carlos had sent Duebbert.

Respondent was charged with posting the text and picture at issue, not with taking action that enabled this material to be posted. Respondent might have made these posts. However, the evidence did not leave us with a clear and abiding conviction that it was Respondent who did so.

Therefore, the Administrator did not prove that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a) as charged in Count II.

III. Respondent is charged with making false statements concerning her involvement with the Fire the Liar website during her sworn statement to the Administrator, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c).

A. Summary

During Respondent's sworn statement, counsel for the Administrator inquired about the Fire the Liar website. Respondent denied any involvement with setting up the site and denied knowledge of specifics concerning the site. Given her activity in relation to that website, Respondent's answers were false, and Respondent knew they were false. The Administrator proved Respondent violated Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c).

B. Admitted Facts and Evidence Considered

We consider the following admitted facts and evidence, in addition to those discussed in Sections I B and II B.

On July 2, 2019, Respondent appeared at the Administrator's office, with counsel, to give a sworn statement in relation to the online posts about Judge Gleeson. (Tr. 232; Adm. Ex. 6). During the sworn statement, counsel for the Administrator inquired about the Fire the Liar website. In response to counsel's questions, Respondent acknowledged helping people in the anti-retention group set up the website and purchase the domain name, but characterized her role as responding to questions from group members, directing them to work with GoDaddy, showing group members how to do tasks and assisting them in setting up the GoDaddy account. (Ans. at pars. 18, 23; Adm. Ex. 6 at 39, 47, 52). Respondent also stated that:

- a) she did not know who set up the Fire the Liar website;
- b) she had no involvement in setting up the website and did not manage it;
- c) she did not know when the website was set up;
- d) she did not set up the domain name;
- e) she did not set up or have control over the account at GoDaddy; and
- f) she did not know what email address was used when the website was set up or if the address used was Madeline Dinmont's email address.

(Ans. at pars. 18, 23).

Respondent spoke with GoDaddy customer service representatives about the Fire the Liar website at least four separate times in September and October 2018. During those conversations, GoDaddy representatives assisted Respondent in determining the correct log-in information for the Fire the Liar website, resetting the password, upgrading the website to a business version and arranging when the site would expire. GoDaddy representatives also assisted Respondent in linking other domain names to the Fire the Liar website. When the Fire the Liar website was set up, GoDaddy assigned Respondent a default administrator email address for the website. Respondent made conflicting statements as to whether she or GoDaddy was the website administrator. (Tr. 186-88, 196-97, 294-96; Adm. Exs. 1, 2, 3, 4).

On November 13, 2018, Respondent contacted GoDaddy and asked GoDaddy to take the Fire the Liar website down. Before proceeding, GoDaddy sent a verification code to the number of a mobile phone which was in Respondent's possession at that time. Once Respondent confirmed her receipt of the code, GoDaddy deleted the website at Respondent's request. Based on Respondent's testimony, at that time, the group had changed the website password and she could no longer access the website as administrator. However, she obtained the new password from

Duebbert and was able to get into inside the web page before contacting GoDaddy that day. (Tr. 202-204, 302-303, 327-28; Adm. Ex. 5).

Respondent denied any intent to deceive counsel for the Administrator. Based on Respondent's testimony, during her sworn statement, she focused on the inappropriate posts and content identified in the request for investigation and answered counsel's questions from that perspective. Respondent found some of those questions confusing. Respondent answered questions as to what she knew about the Fire the Liar website, who set it up and who managed it in the context of who prepared the content on the site. (Tr. 233-36, 305-309, 398; Adm. Ex. 8).

C. Analysis and Conclusions

We incorporate our discussion from Section I C as to the Administrator's burden of proof, the implications of that burden and how evidence is assessed.

A lawyer shall not knowingly make a false statement of material fact in connection with a lawyer disciplinary matter. Ill. Rs. Prof'l Conduct R. 8.1(a). A lawyer who appears for a sworn statement in the Administrator's investigation of the lawyer's conduct and knowingly testifies falsely about matters pertinent to the investigation violates Rule 8.1(a). In re Field, 2018PR00015, M.R. 30536 (Jan. 21, 2021). In addition to proof that an attorney's statement was false, Rule 8.1(a) also requires the Administrator to prove that, when the attorney made the statement, the attorney knew the statement was false. Rule 8.1(a). Knowledge denotes actual knowledge, but knowledge can be inferred. Field, 2018PR00015 (Hearing Bd. at 8).

It is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation. Ill. Rs. Prof'l Conduct R. 8.4(c). A lawyer who violates Rule 8.1(a) also violates Rule 8.4(c). Field, 2018PR00015 (Hearing Bd. at 17).

The Complaint charged that Respondent violated Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c) based on certain statements she made during her sworn statement. The statements clearly fall within the scope of

Rule 8.1(a). Respondent made them at a sworn statement, in the context of the Administrator's investigation into her conduct, and her statements were pertinent to the investigation. The issue is whether the Administrator proved the statements were false and that Respondent knew they were false when she made them.

Respondent was extensively involved in setting up the Fire the Liar website, as is clear from her conversations with GoDaddy in fall 2018 and her testimony at the hearing. Respondent contacted GoDaddy to arrange for the website. Respondent obtained the domain name, set up the log-in information, determined specifics for the site and knew the email address connected with the website when it was set up. Respondent built the website, even if that only involved setting up the frame. She was actively engaged in that process during September and early October 2018.

Respondent's conversations with GoDaddy likewise established that GoDaddy communicated with and took direction from Respondent on significant matters concerning the Fire the Liar website. Those matters included password and log-in information, linking other domain names to the website and, ultimately, deleting the website.

Count III alleged that Respondent violated Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c) based in part on her statements that she: a) did not know who set up the Fire the Liar website; b) did not know when the website was set up; and c) did not set up the website. The evidence outlined above clearly established that Respondent's contrary statements were false, and Respondent knew they were false when she gave her sworn statement in July 2019.

Count III also alleged that Respondent violated Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c) by her statements that she did not manage or have control over the website. However, the nature of Respondent's dealings with GoDaddy and the substantive matters on which GoDaddy dealt with her demonstrated that she had, and knew she had, at least some decision-making authority and control over the website itself. This is true even if Respondent did not control the content on the website

and even allowing for a possibility of some misunderstanding as to what “managing” the website meant in terms of the site’s content.

Respondent asserts that she did not intend to mislead counsel for the Administrator and did not knowingly respond to counsel’s questions in an inaccurate way. We are not required to accept this testimony if it is not credible given the circumstances. See In re Forrest, 2011PR00011, M.R. 26358 (Jan. 17, 2014). We did not find that portion of Respondent’s testimony credible.

Respondent suggests that she understood counsel’s questions restrictively. The questions, however, were posed in simple, ordinary language. Respondent, an experienced lawyer, could have asked for clarification if the questions truly had been confusing or seemed to require a more technical response. Further, as Respondent’s statements were made in the course of the ARDC’s investigation into her conduct, she clearly should have recognized the need to respond accurately and completely. Forrest, 2011PR00011 (Hearing Bd. at 13). Instead, Respondent’s answers sought to inaccurately minimize her involvement with the Fire the Liar website. Her claims of ignorance as to when the website was set up or what email address was used exemplify that effort. Respondent may have acknowledged giving the anti-retention group some help, but her responses suggested, very inaccurately, that this “help” was limited to only very basic advice.

The Administrator proved that Respondent violated Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c).²

IV. Respondent is charged with making false statements about Judge Gleeson’s integrity based on a comment during a telephone conversation with a GoDaddy customer service representative, in violation of Rule 8.2(a).

A. Summary

While speaking with a GoDaddy customer service representative about the Fire the Liar website, Respondent stated that the subject of the website orchestrated an attempt to set up another judge for murder. While false and baseless, Respondent’s comment was made in a very limited

context, unrelated to any court proceeding, and did not identify anyone by name. Given these circumstances, the statement did not violate Rule 8.2(a).

B. Admitted Facts and Evidence Considered

We consider the following admitted facts and evidence, in addition to those described in Sections I B and II B.

On September 17, 2018, Respondent called GoDaddy for customer service assistance. She spoke with a GoDaddy operator about such things as the password and log-in information, payment details and how long the website should remain active. Thereafter, a conversation ensued, in which the GoDaddy operator mentioned that she had glanced through the website and Respondent mentioned that she practiced law. (Ans. at par. 29; Tr. 309-310; Adm. Ex. 1).

During that conversation, Respondent made negative comments about politics in her area and negative, but general, comments about the subject of the website. She did not mention Judge Gleeson by name. (Adm. Ex. 1). Respondent continued: "I will tell you how evil it is. They've attempted to set up another judge of a different political party for murder if that tells you anything... And this is the guy who orchestrated it." (Ans. at par. 31).

Judge Gleeson never attempted to set up another judge for a murder charge and never orchestrated any attempt to do so. (Tr. 127-29). Respondent did not point to any evidence that Judge Gleeson had done so. Respondent attributed her comment to sarcasm, based on Judge Gleeson's report about her to the ARDC in April 2017. (Tr. 193, 311-13).

Other than what appears to be an internal code, the transcript of the call identifies the GoDaddy operator only by first name and does not specify her location. (Adm. Ex. 1). There was no evidence that the transcript of the call was disseminated to anyone. (Tr. 179-80).

C. Analysis and Conclusions

A lawyer shall not make a statement that the lawyer knows is false or with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge. Ill. Rs. Prof'l Conduct R. 8.2(a). We incorporate our discussion in Section I C of the Administrator's burden of proof and the implications of that burden.

The Complaint charges that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a) based on her statements suggesting that Judge Gleeson was involved in an attempt to set up another judge for murder. Those statements were false, and Respondent had no reasonable basis to believe they were true.

Respondent described her statements as sarcastic commentary on Judge Gleeson's report against her to the ARDC in 2017. Even if that was how Respondent saw things, this does not excuse her statements, as no such intent would have been apparent at the time.

In considering whether Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a), however, we consider the purpose of Rule 8.2(a), the statement itself and the context in which the statement was made. The public tends to rely on statements by lawyers about the integrity of persons within the judicial system. In re Amu, 2011PR00106, M.R. 26545 (May 16, 2014). Lawyers' expressions of honest opinions on the integrity and qualifications of judges and candidates for judicial office can contribute to improving the administration of justice, while false and unfounded attacks unfairly undermine public confidence in the judicial system. See Rule 8.2(a), Comment [1]. Judges are not exempt from just criticism, but there is a significant public interest in seeing that the courts have the confidence and respect of the people. See In re Mann, 06 CH 38, M.R. 23935 (Sept. 20, 2010). Rule 8.2(a) is designed to avoid the undermining of public confidence that results from false and baseless allegations about the character or integrity of members of the judiciary. See Amu, 2011PR00106 (Review Bd. at 11-12).

Cases in which violations of Rule 8.2(a) have been found typically involve statements made publicly, (e.g. In re Duebbert, 2013PR00127, M.R. 27475 (Sept. 21, 2015) (campaign mailer, sent to 75,000 people); In re Denison, 2013PR00001, M.R. 27522 (Sept. 21, 2015) (statements in an online blog)), or disseminated widely. E.g. In re Ditekowsky, 2012PR00014, M.R. 26516 (Mar. 14, 2014) (numerous emails, sent over time, including emails to news media and law enforcement personnel). Rule 8.2(a) violations also have been found based on statements made in connection with a court proceeding. E.g. Amu, 2011PR00106 (pleadings and on a website); see also In re Hoffman, 08 CH 65, M.R. 24030 (Sept. 22, 2010) (correspondence with the court and phone call with the judge and opposing counsel). This is consistent with the purpose of Rule 8.2(a).

In contrast, the statements here were made during a single one-on-one telephone conversation that did not involve a court proceeding or Respondent's role as an attorney. This is a significant factor differentiating this case from other cases in which statements not broadly disseminated were found to violate Rule 8.2(a). Compare e.g. Hoffman, 08 CH 65 (Hearing Bd. at 23-25). Respondent referred to the fact that she practiced law, but was not acting as an attorney in making this call. She was seeking customer service in relation to setting up a website. Further, despite its clearly inappropriate content, Respondent's comment was not made for the purpose of influencing anyone. The person to whom Respondent made the statement had no apparent connection to the State of Illinois, St. Clair County, the local judiciary or the local public. In addition, during the call, Respondent never specifically named the person about whom she was speaking and would not have expected that the call might later become public, such that the subject of her statement could be identified later. We know in hindsight that Respondent was referring to Judge Gleeson, but the evidence does not indicate that the person to whom Respondent was speaking would have had that information. The fact that the GoDaddy representative had viewed

the website does not change this situation as, at the time of this call, Respondent was just setting up the Fire the Liar website and had not yet purchased the firejudgegleeson.com domain name.

These factors all tend to dilute the rationale for applying Rule 8.2(a) to this situation. For these reasons, we decline to find that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a).

EVIDENCE IN AGGRAVATION AND MITIGATION

Respondent was licensed to practice law in Oklahoma in 1987 and in Illinois in 2000. Most of Respondent's practice involves corporate legal work. (Tr. 185-86, 256).

Respondent has been active in bar association work and civic organizations. Respondent has served on the Illinois Character and Fitness Committee, the Oklahoma Professional Responsibility Commission and the Oklahoma equivalent of the Lawyers' Assistance Program. She has provided *pro bono* legal services, contributed articles to professional journals and taught undergraduate and graduate level courses in healthcare, healthcare law, and business law. Respondent's character witnesses described her as a very honest person, who always dealt with others in a respectful manner. (Tr. 246-48, 315-18, 373-74, 381-85, 420-21, 429-31).

Respondent testified that, in retrospect, she would not have gotten involved in the anti-retention campaign. When Respondent first got involved, she did not know how other group members behaved or how they would use the website and Facebook page. Respondent testified that she first learned about the October 23, 2018 Facebook posts after she received a text from Duebbert later that day. She had not yet seen the posts. After looking at them, she expressed dismay, told Duebbert to take everything down and left the anti-retention group. (Tr. 290-91, 314, 435).

Prior discipline

Respondent has no prior discipline. (Tr. 186, 496).

RECOMMENDATION

In determining the sanction to recommend, we consider the proven misconduct, as well as any aggravating and mitigating factors. In re Gorecki, 208 Ill. 2d 350, 360-61, 802 N.E.2d 1194 (2003). We also consider the purpose of discipline, which is not to punish the attorney, but to protect the public, maintain the integrity of the profession and protect the administration of justice from reproach. In re Edmonds, 2014 IL 117696, ¶ 90. While the system seeks some consistency in sanctions for similar misconduct, each case is unique, and the sanction must be based on the circumstances of the specific case at issue. Edmonds, 2014 IL 117696 at ¶ 90.

The sanction requested by the Administrator, a suspension for two years and until further order of the Court, is not commensurate with the misconduct which was proven here. Compare e.g. In re Denison, 2013PR00001, M.R. 27522 (Sept. 21, 2015). Respondent requested minimal discipline, but most of the cases she cited to support that request did not involve false statements to the ARDC. E.g. In re Harrison, 06 CH 36, M.R. 22839 (Mar. 16, 2009); but see In re Stroth, 2019PR00065, M.R. 30839 (Sept. 23, 2021).

We found that Respondent intentionally made false statements of material fact during the ARDC's investigation in her matter. This is serious misconduct. In re Field, 2018PR00015, M.R. 30536 (Jan. 21, 2021). That said, suspensions for short terms, with a requirement that the attorney complete the professionalism seminar, have been imposed in some cases involving a violation of Rule 8.1(a) and other misconduct that would not warrant harsh discipline. In re Cooper, 2014PR00166, M.R. 28490 (Mar. 20, 2017) (ninety days); In re Haime, 2014PR00153, M.R. 28532 (Mar. 20, 2017) (sixty days); Stroth, 2019PR00065 (thirty days). Despite some distinguishing features, these cases provide guidance as to the range of discipline appropriate in this case.

Respondent has no prior discipline, which is mitigating. Stroth, 2019PR00065 (Hearing Bd. at 19-20). Other mitigating evidence was presented, which included favorable character testimony, *pro bono* legal services and Respondent's involvement in organizations designed to assist lawyers. We considered that evidence, but it did not cause us to recommend a different sanction. We did not consider Respondent's service on the Illinois Character and Fitness Committee or as a volunteer adjudicator in Oklahoma in mitigation. That service, while commendable, should have given Respondent greater awareness of the need to comply with ethical obligations, particularly those relating to candor with the ARDC. See In re Hall, 09 SH 23, M.R. 25193 (May 18, 2012).

In aggravation, we considered the fact that Respondent facilitated individuals gaining access to online sites, even though she knew or should have known that those individuals might post inappropriate material. Subsequently, posts made on those sites falsely and baselessly maligned a sitting judge's character and integrity. Respondent did not take actual corrective action to ensure that the sites were down until November 13, 2018, after the election had occurred.

We considered the Administrator's arguments concerning additional factors in aggravation, but those factors did not cause us to recommend a harsher sanction. While harm resulting from an attorney's misconduct can be considered in aggravation, we did not consider, in aggravation, harm to Judge Gleeson as the evidence did not connect that harm to Respondent's proven misconduct. See In re Czarnik, 2016PR00131, M.R. 29949 (Sept. 16, 2019). A failure to accept responsibility for one's misconduct or display remorse can be considered in aggravation. In re Kowalski, 2015PR00032, M.R. 28804 (Sept. 22, 2017). We are troubled by Respondent's continued insistence in claiming that her responses at her sworn statement were true. They very clearly were not. Otherwise, we viewed Respondent's position as a good faith assertion of a

defense, which should not be treated as a lack of remorse. See In re Grosky, 96 CH 624, M.R. 15043 (Sept. 28, 1998).

The other factors identified by the Administrator did not significantly affect our decision as to the sanction. Respondent did not disclose that Steve Korris was with her, while she observed Judge Gleeson's deposition, conducted over Zoom. If the deposition had been conducted in person, all parties would have known who was present. The same considerations should apply even though the deposition was conducted over Zoom. However, it was not clear whether Respondent had a genuine opportunity to disclose Korris's presence. Somehow, Don Carlos acquired, and published, an excerpt from the deposition transcript, but the evidence did not show that Respondent was responsible for that publication. The Administrator suggested that Respondent's accusations against Duebbert to the ARDC reflected a pattern of baseless accusations. We did not see it that way, particularly given our impression of Duebbert. It did seem odd that Respondent belatedly told the ARDC of Duebbert's alleged violence and threats, rather than promptly informing law enforcement officials. However, even if they may have been overstated, it was not at all clear that Respondent's accusations were baseless.

Respondent's misconduct is serious. She lied to the ARDC about the manner in which she assisted the anti-retention group in setting up the website, on which some of the false accusations against Judge Gleeson were made. Given all the circumstances, Respondent's misconduct deserves some period of suspension, to impress upon Respondent and the bar as a whole the need for honesty in responding to the ARDC. That said, a short suspension, with the requirement that Respondent successfully complete the ARDC's Professionalism Seminar, should suffice to serve those purposes.

After considering Respondent's proven misconduct, the aggravating and mitigating factors present in this case, and the range of discipline reflected in the case law, we concluded that a

suspension for sixty days is appropriate. While this is longer than the suspension in Stroth, Respondent presented less mitigating evidence than Stroth, for whom the particularly extensive mitigation was a significant factor in the sanction. Stroth, 2019PR00065 (Hearing Bd. at 20).

For these reasons, we recommend that Respondent, Margaret Jean Lowery, be suspended for sixty days and required to successfully complete the ARDC's Professionalism Seminar within one year after entry of the Court's final order of discipline.

Respectfully submitted,

Janaki H. Nair
Stephen R. Pacey
Peggy Lewis LeCompte

CERTIFICATION

I, Michelle M. Thome, Clerk of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission of the Supreme Court of Illinois and keeper of the records, hereby certifies that the foregoing is a true copy of the Report and Recommendation of the Hearing Board, approved by each Panel member, entered in the above entitled cause of record filed in my office on November 10, 2021.

/s/ Michelle M. Thome

Michelle M. Thome, Clerk of the
Attorney Registration and Disciplinary
Commission of the Supreme Court of Illinois

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¹ During the hearing, the Panel granted the Administrator's oral motion to amend the Complaint by interlineation, to change the date these posts were allegedly made from October 5, 2018 to October 23, 2018. (Tr. 8-9).

² The Complaint also charged that Respondent violated Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c) based on statements denying that she posted anything on the Fire the Liar website, made any entries on the website or owned the domain name. However, as discussed in Section I C, the evidence did not establish that Respondent posted any substantive content on the website. She also may have legitimately understood that the group owned the domain name, as group funds were used to purchase it. While the evidence did not meet the Administrator's heavy burden of proof as to those statements, this does not detract from our finding that the Administrator proved a violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c) based on Respondent's other statements.

EXHIBIT TWO

In re Margaret Jean Lowery
Respondent-Appellant

Commission No. 2020PR00018

Synopsis of Review Board Report and Recommendation
(October 2022)

The Administrator brought a four-count complaint against Respondent, charging her with knowingly making material false statements to the ARDC, which conduct involved dishonesty, and knowingly or recklessly making false statements impugning the integrity of a judge, in violation of Rules 8.1(a), 8.2(a), and 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct. The complaint alleged that Respondent knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC during a sworn statement, and that Respondent knowingly or recklessly made false statements impugning the integrity of a judge during a recorded phone conversation, and on a website and a Facebook page.

The Hearing Board found that Respondent engaged in misconduct by knowingly making material false statements to the ARDC, which involved dishonesty, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c). The Hearing Board also found that Respondent knowingly or recklessly made a false statement, during a phone conversation, impugning the integrity of a judge, but concluded that Respondent did not violate Rule 8.2(a) by doing so. Finally, the Hearing Board found that Respondent did not make false statements impugning the integrity of a judge on a website or Facebook page.

Respondent appealed, challenging the Hearing Board's finding that she knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC, and challenging the sanction recommendation. Respondent asked that this matter be dismissed, or that the sanction be limited to a reprimand or censure. The Administrator cross-appealed challenging the Hearing Board's legal conclusion that Respondent did not violate Rule 8.2(a) by knowingly or recklessly making a false statement, during a phone conversation, impugning a judge's integrity.

The Review Board affirmed the Hearing Board's finding that Respondent knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC, which conduct involved dishonesty, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c). The Review Board also concluded that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a) by knowingly or recklessly making a false statement, during a phone conversation, impugning the integrity of a judge. The Review Board recommended that Respondent be suspended for 30 days, instead of 60 days, and that Respondent complete the ARDC's Professionalism Seminar within one year.

**BEFORE THE REVIEW BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION**

FILED

October 13, 2022

ARDC CLERK

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Respondent-Appellant,

No. 6271777.

Commission No. 2020PR00018

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE REVIEW BOARD

SUMMARY

The Administrator filed a four-count complaint, charging Respondent with making false statements to the ARDC, which conduct involved dishonesty, and making false statements impugning the integrity of a judge, in violation of Rules 8.1(a), 8.2(a), and 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct.

Following a hearing at which Respondent was represented by counsel, the Hearing Board found that Respondent knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC, which involved dishonesty, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c), as charged in Count III of the complaint.

The Hearing Board also found that Respondent knowingly or recklessly made a false statement, during a phone conversation, impugning the integrity of a judge, but concluded that Respondent's statement did not violate Rule 8.2(a), as charged in Count IV of the complaint.

The Hearing Board found that the Administrator failed to prove Counts I and II of the complaint, which charged Respondent with posting false information and materials on the internet concerning the integrity of a judge. The Hearing Board's findings relating to Counts I and

II are not challenged on appeal, and the issues pertaining to those counts will not be addressed herein.

The Hearing Board recommended that, based on Respondent's false statements to the ARDC, Respondent be suspended for 60 days, and that she complete the ARDC's Professionalism Seminar within one year after the Court's final order of discipline.

Respondent appealed, challenging the Hearing Board's findings that Respondent made false statements to the ARDC, and asking that the complaint be dismissed, or in the alternative, that Respondent be reprimanded or censured. The Administrator cross-appealed, challenging the Hearing Board's legal conclusion that Respondent did not violate Rule 8.2(a) by knowingly or recklessly making a false statement impugning a judge's integrity.

For the reasons that follow, we affirm the Hearing Board's finding that Respondent knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC, which conduct involved dishonesty, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c), as charged in Count III of the complaint. We also conclude that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a) by knowingly or recklessly making a false statement impugning the integrity of a judge, as charged in Count IV of the complaint. We recommend that Respondent be suspended for 30 days, instead of 60 days, and that Respondent complete the ARDC's Professionalism Seminar within one year.

FACTS

The facts are fully set out in the Hearing Board's report and are summarized only to the extent necessary here.

Respondent

Respondent was licensed to practice law in Illinois in 2000 and was licensed to practice law in Oklahoma in 1987. At the time of the disciplinary hearing, she was practicing law

in Belleville, Illinois, with a focus on corporate law and healthcare law. Respondent previously worked as a corporate lawyer and was general counsel for a hospital. She has no prior discipline.

Respondent Set Up the Website “Fire the Liar Judge.com”

In the summer of 2018, Respondent got involved in a political campaign opposing Judge Andrew Gleeson’s attempt to retain his judicial position in an election. Respondent had interactions with a group of people opposing the judge’s retention. In approximately September 2018, the group decided to set up a website, and to communicate through Facebook. Respondent agreed to set up the website for the anti-retention group, which she did.

In September 2018, Respondent contacted GoDaddy and purchased the domain name “firetheliarjudge.com,” which was the name chosen by the group. Respondent paid for the purchase through her PayPal account, using funds the group supplied. Respondent also purchased a GoDaddy web builder and designed and built the website.

When she set up the GoDaddy account and purchased the website, Respondent used the email address madeline.dinmont@charter.net. That email address belonged to Respondent. (She had a Dinmont terrier named Madeline). Respondent used the name Madeline Dinmont, and used a burner phone, in connection with the website. When she spoke to GoDaddy representatives, she identified herself as being Madeline Dinmont, instead of using her own name.

Respondent was actively involved with the website from September 2018 until early October 2018. Respondent testified that she did not write any of the content or post any pictures on the website. She testified that after she built the frame, she turned the website over to others. Respondent shut down the website in November 2018, after the election was over.

The anti-retention group also asked Respondent to establish a second website, which she did. Respondent purchased the domain name “firejudgegleeson.com” and linked the

two websites. She linked in two other websites as well. Respondent also gave the anti-retention group a Facebook page that she was no longer using. Former Judge Ronald Duebbert was in contact with the group.

Respondent was concerned about the information that members of the anti-retention group might post. Therefore, Respondent asked a representative of GoDaddy whether Respondent, as the website administrator, could review comments from other people before they were posted on the website. The GoDaddy representative said the platform was not set up to do so.

Respondent spoke with customer service representatives at GoDaddy about the website on at least four separate occasions. They helped her log-in, reset the password, upgrade the website to a business version, make payments, and establish an expiration date. GoDaddy assigned a default administrator's email address to Respondent, which she used.

In October 2018, statements and materials posted on the website and the Facebook page falsely accused Judge Gleeson of being part of racist white supremacy groups, including the Ku Klux Klan. Respondent testified that she did not post those statements or materials.

According to Respondent, she saw the offensive materials at the end of October 2018. Although she told someone else to take everything down, she did not take any other action for three weeks, until after the election was over, when she told GoDaddy to close the website.

Respondent's False Statement About a Judge

In September 2018, Respondent called GoDaddy for assistance, and spoke with a customer service representative at GoDaddy about the website. During the conversation, Respondent falsely stated: "I will tell you how evil it is. They've attempted to set up another judge

of a different political party for murder if that tells you anything And this is the guy who orchestrated it.” (Adm. Ex. 6 at 14-15.) Respondent was referring to Judge Gleeson.

Respondent’s 2019 ARDC Testimony

In July 2019, Respondent gave a sworn statement to the ARDC, with counsel present, and Respondent was asked questions about the website. Respondent testified that she did not set up the website; she did not know who set it up; and she did not control or manage it. Respondent testified that she provided basic information to people in the anti-retention group so that they could set up the website, but Respondent indicated that her role was very limited.

At the disciplinary hearing, Respondent testified that she did not intend to mislead counsel for the Administrator and did not knowingly respond to counsel’s questions in an inaccurate way. The Hearing Board found that testimony was not credible.

HEARING BOARD’S FINDINGS AND SANCTION RECOMMENDATION

Misconduct Findings

The Hearing Board found that Respondent violated Rule 8.1(a), which provides that an attorney shall not knowingly make a false statement of material fact in connection with a disciplinary matter. Specifically, the Hearing Board found that Respondent knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC concerning her involvement in setting up and managing the Fire-the-Liar-Judge.com website, as charged in Count III of the complaint.

The Hearing Board also found that by making those false statements, Respondent violated Rule 8.4(c), which prohibits an attorney from engaging in conduct that involves dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation. The Hearing Board noted that by violating Rule 8.1(a), Respondent also violated Rule 8.4(c).

The Hearing Board found that Respondent did not violate Rule 8.2(a), which states that a lawyer shall not knowingly or recklessly make a false statement concerning the integrity of a judge. The Hearing Board found that Respondent knowingly or recklessly made a false statement impugning the integrity of a judge, but concluded that Respondent did not violate Rule 8.2(a), because Respondent did not name the judge, the statement was made in a limited context, and it was not related to a court proceeding.

Aggravation and Mitigation Findings

In mitigation, the Hearing Board found that Respondent was active in bar association work and civic organizations, provided *pro bono* services, taught college courses, contributed to professional journals, was involved in organizations designed to assist lawyers, and presented favorable character testimony. Respondent also had no prior discipline.

In aggravation, the Hearing Board found that Respondent facilitated individuals gaining access to online sites, even though she knew or should have known that those individuals might post inappropriate material. Subsequently, although Respondent saw the offensive posts made on those sites, Respondent did not take actual corrective action to ensure that the sites were down for three weeks, until the election was over. The Hearing Board was also troubled by Respondent's continued insistence that her responses in her 2019 ARDC testimony were true.

Recommendation

The Hearing Board recommended a 60-day suspension, with the condition that Respondent complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar within one year.

ANALYSIS

On appeal, Respondent argues that the Hearing Board erred in finding that she knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c).

Specifically, Respondent argues that she did not intentionally provide false answers; her statements were not material; the Hearing Board's findings were based on uncharged conduct; and the Hearing Board shifted the burden of proof to Respondent.

Respondent must establish that Hearing Board's findings of fact are against the manifest weight of the evidence. *In re Timpone*, 208 Ill. 2d 371, 380, 804 N.E.2d 560 (2004). A factual finding is against the manifest weight of the evidence where the finding appears unreasonable, arbitrary, or not based on the evidence. *Leonardi v. Loyola University*, 168 Ill. 2d 83, 106, 658 N.E.2d 450 (1995). That the opposite conclusion is reasonable is not sufficient. *In re Winthrop*, 219 Ill. 2d 526, 542, 848 N.E.2d 961 (2006). We ordinarily give substantial deference to the Hearing Board's factual determinations and, in particular, those determinations concerning the credibility of witnesses, because the Hearing Board is able to observe the testimony of witnesses, and therefore is in a superior position to assess their demeanor and judge their credibility. *In re Wigoda*, 77 Ill. 2d 154, 158, 395 N.E.2d 571 (1979). The Hearing Board's legal conclusions, including the interpretation of disciplinary rules, are reviewed under a *de novo* standard. *In re Thomas*, 2012 IL 113035, ¶ 56; *In re Morelli*, 01 CH 120 (Review Bd., March 2, 2005) at 10, *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 20136 (May 20, 2005).

As an initial matter, Respondent argues that the appropriate standard of review is *de novo* concerning the Hearing Board's findings that Respondent made false statements to the ARDC. Respondent contends those findings are legal conclusions because they are based solely on the transcript of Respondent's 2019 ARDC testimony. That argument is unpersuasive.

The Hearing Board's findings on this issue were not based solely on the transcript of the 2019 ARDC testimony, they were also based on witness testimony at the disciplinary hearing, including Respondent's testimony, and therefore *de novo* review does not apply. Indeed,

the Hearing Board made factual findings concerning Respondent's intent, state of mind, credibility, and knowledge. *See In re Denison*, 2013PR00001 (Review Bd., May 28, 2015) at 3, *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 27522 (Sept. 21, 2015) (“[A] Hearing Board's finding as to whether a respondent knew his or her statements were false ... is a finding of fact to which we must give deference.”). Specifically, the Hearing Board found that Respondent knowingly made false statements during her 2019 ARDC testimony; Respondent made those false statements with the intention of misleading the ARDC; Respondent knew her statements were false; Respondent was not confused when she made those false statements; and Respondent's testimony to the contrary at the 2021 disciplinary hearing was not credible. Consequently, the standard of review is the manifest weight of the evidence. We find no basis to overturn the Hearing Board's findings that Respondent knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC, which conduct involved dishonesty, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c).

1. The Hearing Board did not err in finding that Respondent knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC, which conduct involved dishonesty, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c), as charged in Count III.

Respondent's testimony during her 2019 ARDC sworn statement included the following:

- Q. Okay. What do you know about the website firetheliarjudge.com?
- A. It was a website set up for the anti-retention campaign.
- Q. And who set it up?
- A. I don't know.
- Q. What role did you have in creating either the website or the domain name?
- A. I was asked how you go about setting up a domain name and I suggested that they go through GoDaddy.
- Q. When you say you were asked, who asked you
- A. Judge Duebbert.

Q. Okay. So did Judge Duebbert set up this website firetheljarjudge.com?

A. I don't know if he did it or if he had somebody else do it.

Q. You had no involvement in setting up the site?

A. No, and I didn't manage it either.

Q. Okay. So my question is with regard to these entries on firetheljarjudge.com, did you have anything to do with creating, making, or responding to these entries?

A. No. I tried to help them set it up and then it was taken over by somebody who was a non-lawyer.

Q. Okay. And when you said you tried to help them set it up, who are you talking about?

A. Well, the people that were involved in the anti-retention campaign by telling them you can go to GoDaddy and they have templates, that kind of thing.

Q. Okay. And who was that? Who specifically are you talking about?

A. It was Judge Duebbert and his web person.

Q. Who was that?

A. I don't know. I don't even know when this was set up.

Q. Were you the domain -- did you own the domain name firetheljarjudge.com?

A. No.

Q. Did you set it up?

A. No, but I tried to help them set it up.

Q. Well, specifically what does that mean?

A. To get into GoDaddy and set up an account.

Q. But you didn't set up the account at GoDaddy?

A. No, nor did I have control over it.

Q. Do you know what e-mail address they used when they set up the firetheljarjudge.com?

A. I don't.

Q. Do you know if they used Madeline Dinmont's e-mail address?

A. I don't know.

Q. But you didn't have anything to do with setting up this website firetheliasjudge.com?

A. Peter, I told you I helped them. I showed them how to do it and then I told them I didn't want to be a party to it.

Q. Who paid for the GoDaddy, when they register a domain like firetheliasjudge.com, somebody has to pay for that registration. Who did that?

A. I don't recall.

Q. Was it you?

A. It may have been. I don't recall. It was done one evening.

Q. What do you recall about that evening?

A. It was the whole evening where we switched over the Facebook page and they set up the account.

Q. The firetheliasjudge.com account?

A. Yes, or thereabouts.

Q. [By Respondent's attorney]: [You deleted the e-mail address in the] Fall of 2018?

A. Yeah. I mean, Peter, I'm not a fan of Judge Gleason Yeah, I did help them try to set stuff up.

Q. [By Respondent's attorney]: And as far as this GoDaddy setting up, you assisted these people in setting up this account because you had some knowledge about that and they did not?

A. That's correct.

(Adm. Ex. 6 at 35-41, 46-47, 52.)

The Hearing Board Correctly Found That Respondent Knowingly Made False Statements

Respondent argues that the Hearing Board erred in finding that Respondent knowingly made false statements during her 2019 ARDC testimony. Respondent asserts that she testified truthfully; she did not understand the questions; and she was confused. Those arguments fail.

The Hearing Board found that Respondent intentionally falsely represented that she did not set up the website; she did not know who set up the website; she did not know when the website was set up; she did not manage or have control over the website; and she did not know what email address was used to set up the website. The Hearing Board concluded that the evidence “clearly established that Respondent’s ... statements were false, and Respondent knew they were false when she gave her sworn statement in July 2019.” (Hearing Bd. Report at 21.) We agree.

Respondent also argues that the questions were unclear. The Hearing Board correctly rejected that argument, noting the questions were posed in simple, ordinary language.

Respondent further argues that three terms – “set up”, “manage,” and “control” – were imprecise and called for legal conclusions. That argument is unpersuasive. Respondent was the first one to use the term “set up.” Respondent was asked what she knew about the website, and she said: “It was a website set up for the anti-retention campaign”; Respondent was then asked: “And who set it up”, and she said: “I don’t know.” (Adm. Ex. 6 at 35.) There was nothing imprecise about that exchange, and it did not call for a legal conclusion. Additionally, Respondent was the only one who used the terms “manage” and “control.” (*Id.* at 36, 38.)

Respondent next argues that her answers to two of the questions were true because she was disagreeing with the statements in the questions. We reject that argument based on the

plain language and the context of those questions and answers. Specifically, Respondent was asked the following question and gave the following answer:

Question: You had no involvement in setting up the site?

Answer: No, and I didn't manage it either.

(Adm. Ex. 6 at 36.) Respondent had just finished testifying that she did not know who set up the website, and she subsequently claimed that other people set up the website. Respondent's argument ignores the second half of her answer, in which she used the word "either." Respondent's answer was that she had no involvement in setting up the website and she did not manage it either.

Respondent was also asked the following question and gave the following answer:

Question: But you didn't set up the account at GoDaddy?

Answer: No, nor did I have control over it.

(*Id.* at 38.) In this testimony, Respondent denied she set up the website account. Respondent's argument again ignores the second half of her answer, in which she used the word "nor." Respondent's answer was that she did not set up the account, nor did she have control over it. Respondent's argument offers a twisted version of her testimony, where "no" means "yes." We do not accept that argument.

Thus, we conclude that, in her 2019 testimony, Respondent falsely testified that she did not set up the website; she did not control or manage the website; she did not know who set up the website; she did not know when the website was set up; other people set up the website; she did not know what email address was used when someone else set up the website; and her role was limited to helping other people set up the website by giving them basic advice. None of that was true. The Hearing Board did not err in finding that Respondent knowingly made false statements.

The Hearing Board properly found that Respondent's statements were material

Respondent argues that her statements were not material to the ARDC's investigation. That argument is unpersuasive. The Hearing Board found that Respondent's false statements were material. Specifically, the Hearing Board stated that "Respondent's answers sought to inaccurately minimize her involvement with the Fire the Liar website." (Hearing Bd. Report at 22.) We agree.

False statements "are material if they are important or of consequence to an issue in the matter." *In re Woller*, 2016PR00089 (Hearing Bd. May 8, 2017) at 17, *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 028809 (Sept. 22, 2017); *see also In re Field*, 2018PR00015 (Hearing Bd., Sept. 3, 2020) at 16, *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 30536 (Jan. 21, 2021) ("A lawyer who appears for a sworn statement in the Administrator's investigation of the lawyer's conduct and knowingly testifies falsely about matters pertinent to the investigation violates Rule 8.1(a).").

Respondent asserts that the "material issue during the investigation, at the time of the sworn statement, was who made the negative posts about Judge Gleeson." (Respondent's Brief at 5.) We note that in order to determine who posted the negative materials, it was necessary to determine who had access to the website and could have posted the offensive materials on that site. Respondent's false testimony essentially established that she did not have access to the website and therefore could not have posted the offensive materials. Her false testimony supported her claim that she did not post the offensive materials on the website. *See In re Haime*, 2014PR00153 (Hearing Bd., March 9, 2016) at 25, *affirmed*, (Review Bd., Nov. 29, 2016), *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 28532 (Mar. 20, 2017) (attorney's "false statements were material, because they arguably supported [his] claim that he did not intentionally mislead" his clients). Respondent's false statements concerning the website were material.¹

Additionally, Respondent also effectively misdirected the investigation by testifying that someone else set up the website. Respondent testified that it was the anti-retention group, or former Judge Duebbert and his web person that set up the website. Specifically, when asked who it was that she helped to set up the website, Respondent stated, “Well, the people that were involved in the anti-retention campaign [and specifically] Judge Duebbert and his web person I showed them how to do it and then I told them I didn't want to be a party to it [and] they set up the account.”) (Adm. Ex. 6 at 37, 39, 41.) Those false statements were also material.

In setting up the website, Respondent used a fictitious name (Madeline Dinmont), rather than her own name; she used a burner phone that was not associated with her; she used an email address in the name of Madeline Dinmont; and when she spoke to GoDaddy representatives, she falsely identified herself as being Madeline Dinmont. Consequently, Respondent had reason to believe that her role in setting up the website would not be discovered, since the name, phone number, and email address that she used would not lead directly back to her.

The Hearing Board did not err in finding that Respondent’s false statements were material

The Hearing Board Did Not Base Its Findings on Uncharged Conduct

Respondent argues that the Hearing Board based its findings of misconduct on uncharged conduct, namely, based on Rule 8.1(b), which prohibits a lawyer from failing to disclose a fact necessary to correct a misapprehension which has arisen in a matter; and Rule 3.3, which requires candor to a tribunal by an attorney who is representing a client. Respondent argues that because she did not make any false statements, the Hearing Board improperly found instead that she had failed to provide additional information, which does not violate Rule 8.4(c). That argument fails.

As stated above, the Hearing Board correctly found that Respondent intentionally made false statements. The Hearing Board's findings were based on Respondent's false answers, as the Hearing Board clearly explained. The Hearing Board found that Respondent violated Rules 8.1(a) (making a false statement) and 8.4(c) (dishonesty), as charged in the complaint, and the Hearing Board did not need to look further than those two rules to find misconduct.

The Hearing Board Did Not Shift the Burden of Proof to Respondent

Respondent next argues that the Hearing Board shifted the burden of proof to Respondent. That argument has no merit. The Hearing Board stated, "Respondent suggests that she understood counsel's questions restrictively. The questions, however, were posed in simple, ordinary language. Respondent, an experienced lawyer, could have asked for clarification if the questions truly had been confusing or seemed to require a more technical response." (Hearing Bd. Report at 22.) Respondent argues the Hearing Board shifted the burden of proof to Respondent by stating that Respondent could have asked for clarification.

The Hearing Board did not shift the burden. The Hearing Board was simply explaining that, when Respondent testified falsely, her testimony did not show that she was confused or misunderstood the questions. If Respondent had truly been confused, there were a number of things Respondent could have done – or was likely to have done – that may have indicated that she did not understand the questions. For example, Respondent could have asked to have the questions rephrased or repeated; she could have stated that she did not understand the questions; she could have asked for time to speak to her attorney; or, as the Hearing Board stated, she could have asked for clarification. The Hearing Board was commenting on the evidence, not shifting the burden.

Additionally, the Hearing Board did not impose any obligation on Respondent to ask for clarification or to take any other action. The Hearing Board said Respondent could have asked for clarification, not that she should have done so or was required to do so.

Moreover, the Hearing Board very clearly stated that “the Administrator has the burden of proving the misconduct charged by clear and convincing evidence” (Hearing Bd. Report at 3), and that “Respondent does not have the burden of proof.” (*Id.* at 11.) Thus, the Hearing Board did not shift the burden of proof.

In sum, the Hearing Board did not err in finding that Respondent knowingly made material false statements to the ARDC, which conduct involved dishonesty, in violation of Rules 8.1(a) and 8.4(c), as charged in Count III of the complaint.

2. Respondent Violated Rule 8.2(A) by Knowingly or Recklessly Making a False Statement Concerning the Integrity of a Judge.

The Administrator argues that the Hearing Board erred as a matter of law in finding that Respondent did not violate Rule 8.2(a), which prohibits a lawyer from knowingly or recklessly making a false statement concerning the integrity of a judge. Respondent contends that the Hearing Board’s ruling was correct and should be affirmed. This issue raises questions of law which we review under a *de novo* standard. *See In re Thomas*, 2012 IL 113035, ¶ 56 (2012); *In re Morelli*, 01 CH 120 (Review Bd., March 2, 2005) at 10, *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 20136 (May 20, 2005). Applying the *de novo* standard, we conclude that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a).

Rule 8.2(a) states: “A lawyer shall not make a statement that the lawyer knows to be false or with reckless disregard as to its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge.” The purpose of Rule 8.2(a) is to prevent unfairly undermining the public’s confidence in the administration of justice. *See* Rule 8.2, Comment 1.

On September 17, 2018, Respondent (the Caller) spoke to a GoDaddy customer service representative (the Operator) about the Fire-the-Liar-Judge website, and the conversation, which was recorded, included the following:

OPERATOR: Thanks for calling email sales and support. This is Donna. Who am I speaking with, please?

CALLER: Donna, this is Madeline Dinmont I keep trying to get the email to work on this website and it keeps saying that I put in the wrong password. . . .

OPERATOR: Okay This is for the administrator@firetheliarjudge .com?

CALLER: Yes, ma'am.

CALLER: There's a lot of activity on it [the website], as you can see.

OPERATOR: Yeah. That's good. So are you going beyond October with this?

CALLER: we will go ahead – we wanted to see how it went. And there's been so much activity, yes, we're going to pay to extend it.

CALLER: Because we're just needing this through like December.

OPERATOR: That's why you want to go month to month?

CALLER: Yeah.

OPERATOR: Makes sense.

CALLER: Because the election will be over the 5th.

OPERATOR: Yeah. And you hope these people read it and do the right thing, right?

CALLER: If only you knew.

OPERATOR: I was glancing through the website, so I hear you.

CALLER: No. I mean, it's not a very nice person. And he's done a lot of things to hurt a lot of people. So that's part of the reason that we're getting all the crank calls.

OPERATOR: That's too bad.

CALLER: You know, this part of the United States, politics is a blood sport.

OPERATOR: True.

CALLER: I mean, I will tell you how evil it is. They've attempted to set up another judge of a different political party for murder if that tells you anything.

OPERATOR: Wow.

CALLER: And this is the guy who orchestrated it.

OPERATOR: That's crazy.

CALLER: So we had the Department of Justice in here. No, I'm not kidding you.

OPERATOR: You wonder how people like that stay elected.

CALLER: Well, that's what we're working on. And frankly, I've never practiced law in a jurisdiction where it was like this.

CALLER: You can look at the website. It's not controversial. It just basically says we want to have integrity in the judicial system. Wow, what a novel concept.

OPERATOR: Well, that's what it's supposed to be about. So I wish you great luck with it. (inaudible).

CALLER: Well, all you can do is try. And you know, it's – I don't think I've ever seen anything so vicious. But I appreciate it.

(Adm. Ex. 1 at 1, 12, 14-15, 17-18.)

During the conversation set forth above, Respondent stated, "They've attempted to set up another judge of a different political party for murder And this is the guy who orchestrated it." (*Id.* at 14-15.) The Hearing Board found that Respondent was talking about Judge Andrew Gleeson when she said, "this is the guy who orchestrated it." The Hearing Board also found that the statement was false, and Respondent knew, or recklessly disregarded, that it was false.

The Hearing Board, however, found that Respondent did not violate Rule 8.2(a), stating, “While false and baseless, Respondent’s comment was made in a very limited context, unrelated to any court proceeding, and did not identify anyone by name. Given these circumstances, the statement did not violate Rule 8.2(a).” (Hearing Bd. Report at 22-23.) For the reasons set forth below, we conclude that Respondent did violate Rule 8.2(a).

The Evidence Established a Violation of Rule 8.2(A)

Respondent argues that she did not violate Rule 8.2(a) because she did not specifically identify the judge by name. That argument is not persuasive.

There was sufficient evidence at the disciplinary hearing to identify Judge Gleeson as the judge being accused of unethical behavior. The Hearing Board stated, “We know in hindsight that Respondent was referring to Judge Gleeson.” (Hearing Bd. Report at 25.) The Hearing Board also found that Respondent’s statements about Judge Gleeson “were false, and Respondent had no reasonable basis to believe they were true.” (*Id.* at 24.) Because the evidence established the identity of the judge, it was possible to prove that Respondent’s statement was false, and Respondent knew, or recklessly disregarded, that it was false, as required by Rule 8.2(a). This is not a case where the identity of the judge could not be determined based on the evidence at the disciplinary hearing, or where the falsity of the statement could not be established because the identity of the judge was unknown.

Rule 8.2(a) requires only two things: (1) that the lawyer made a false statement concerning the integrity of a judge; and (2) that the lawyer knew, or recklessly disregarded, that the statement was false. The Rule 8.2(a) requirements were satisfied in this case because the evidence at the disciplinary hearing showed, and the Hearing Board found, that: (1) Respondent made a false statement concerning the integrity of a judge – the judge was Judge Gleeson, and the statement was false because Judge Gleeson did not attempt to frame an innocent person; and (2)

Respondent knew, or recklessly disregarded, that her statement was false, since there was no reasonable basis to believe the statement was true. Thus, Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a), even though she did not identify the judge by name.²

Respondent also argues that she was joking and being sarcastic when she said that Judge Gleeson had orchestrated the attempt to frame someone for murder. Respondent testified as follows:

Question: When you spoke to the operator, was it your intention to damage or impugn the integrity of Judge Gleeson?

Answer: No. I actually made the – he was – it was a joke in bad form because I was referring back to his original complaint against me, and it was completely sarcastic.

(Tr. at 310-11) (acknowledging that she was talking about Judge Gleeson).

The Hearing Board properly rejected the argument that Respondent was joking, stating that “no such intent would have been apparent at the time.” (Hearing Bd. Report at 24.) We agree. As noted above, Respondent said, “They’ve attempted to set up another judge of a different political party for murder And this is the guy who orchestrated it.” (Adm. Ex. 1 at 14-15.) Based on the plain language of that false statement, and the context in which it was made, there is not even the slightest hint that Respondent was joking or being sarcastic.

Respondent’s false assertion that a judge, acting with blatant disregard for the law, was orchestrating an attempt to illegally frame an innocent person for murder is an extraordinarily serious accusation that directly attacks the integrity of the judiciary. Respondent’s false statement had the potential to tarnish the legal system’s reputation and unfairly undermine the public’s confidence in the administration of justice.

Rule 8.2(A) Does Not Require That the False Statement be Made to More Than One Person

Respondent next argues that she did not violate Rule 8.2(a) because she made the statement to only one person, and the statement was not broadly published. Rule 8.2(a), however, does not require that the statement be made to multiple people or widely published. The Rule applies even if the false statement is made to only one other person. *See In re Garringer*, 626 N.E.2d 809, 812 (Ind. 1994) (“Violation does not require that such statements be dispersed among the general public. It is enough that the statements are publicized to another individual.”); *Attorney Grievance Commission v. Hermina*, 842 A.2d 762, 771-72 (Md. 2004) (attorney violated Rule 8.2(a) by sending a letter to opposing counsel falsely accusing the judge of having *ex parte* communications with opposing counsel).

Respondent also argues she was not trying to influence anyone. Again, Rule 8.2(a) does require proof that the attorney who made the false statement was attempting to influence someone.

By making the false statement to another person, Respondent exposed the judiciary to distrust, disdain, and criticism by that person. Moreover, nothing prevented the GoDaddy representative from repeating Respondent’s false accusation to others.

Rule 8.2(A) Does Not Require That the False Statement be Made in Connection With a Court Proceeding or in a Professional Capacity

Respondent further argues that she did not violate Rule 8.2(a) because she did not make the false statement in connection with a judicial proceeding or while she was acting in a professional capacity. That argument fails.

Rule 8.2 does not include language limiting the misconduct to statements that involve court proceedings, representing clients, or acting in a professional capacity. Other Rules do explicitly identify such requirements, including the following: Rule 1.3 (diligence in

representing a client); Rule 3.1 (making frivolous claims in a proceeding); Rule 3.3 (candor toward a tribunal, including during a proceeding); Rule 3.4 (fairness to opposing party and counsel); Rule 3.5(b) (ex parte communications during a proceeding); Rule 4.1(a) (truthfulness in statements in the course of representing a client); Rule 4.2 (while representing a client, communicating with a person represented by counsel); and Rule 4.4 (respect for the rights of third persons, while representing a client). *See also Notopoulos v. Statewide Grievance Committee*, 890 A.2d 509, 519 (Conn. 2006) (“Neither the language of rule 8.2(a) nor the commentary associated with it clearly suggests that the rule should apply only to attorneys’ professional, as opposed to personal or pro se, statements.”); Preamble to the Rules of Professional Conduct (2010) (“A lawyer’s conduct should conform to the requirements of law, both in professional service to clients and in the lawyer’s business and personal affairs A lawyer should demonstrate respect for the legal system and for those who serve it, including judges.”).

In sum, we conclude that Respondent violated Rule 8.2(a) even though she did not identify the judge by name; she made the false statement to only one person; she was not trying to influence anyone; she did not make the false statement in connection with a judicial proceeding; and she was acting in her personal capacity. We conclude that Rule 8.2(a) does not require that those factors be proven in order to establish a violation, as long as the evidence shows, as it did in the instant case, that the attorney made a false statement concerning the integrity of a judge, and the attorney knew or recklessly disregarded that the statement was false.

Respondent’s False Statement is Not Protected by the First Amendment

Finally, Respondent argues that her false statement concerning the judge is protected by the First Amendment. That argument is not supported by the law.

It is well-established that lawyers have no first amendment protection from discipline for knowingly or recklessly making false statements impugning the integrity of a judge.

See In re Sides, 2020PR00047 (Review Bd., March 29, 2022) at 10, *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 031287 (Sept. 21, 2022) (“[I]t is well-established in Illinois that lawyers have no First Amendment protection from discipline for making baseless accusations impugning the integrity of judges.”); *In re Cohn*, 2018PR00109 (Hearing Bd., Oct. 9, 2020) at 12-13, *affirmed*, (Review Bd., Oct. 9, 2020), *petitions for leave to file exceptions allowed*, M.R. 030545 (Jan. 21, 2021) (“[A] long line of cases holds that Rule 8.2(a) does not violate the Constitution.”); *In re Hoffman*, 08 SH 65 (Review Bd., June 23, 2010) at 17, *petition for leave to file exceptions denied*, M.R. 24030 (Sept. 22, 2010) (“It has long been established that attorneys’ first amendment rights do not extend to false statements made with knowledge of their falsity or with reckless disregard for the truth.”). Thus, the First Amendment does not protect Respondent’s statement impugning the integrity of a judge, which Respondent knew or recklessly disregarded was false.

SANCTION RECOMMENDATION

The Hearing Board recommended that Respondent be suspended for 60 days, and that she complete the ARDC’s Professionalism Seminar within one year. Respondent argues that a 60-day suspension is too harsh. The Administrator argues that the Hearing Board’s recommendation is appropriate.

We review the Hearing Board’s sanction recommendations based on a *de novo* standard. *See In re Stormont*, 2018PR00032 (Review Bd., Jan. 23, 2020) at 15, *petition for leave to file exceptions denied*, M.R. 30336 (May 18, 2020). In making our recommendation, we consider the nature of the proved misconduct, and any aggravating and mitigating circumstances shown by the evidence, *In re Gorecki*, 208 Ill. 2d 350, 360-61, 802 N.E.2d 1194 (2003), while keeping in mind that the purpose of discipline is not to punish but rather to protect the public, maintain the integrity of the legal profession, and protect the administration of justice from

reproach. *In re Timpone*, 157 Ill. 2d 178, 197, 623 N.E.2d 300 (1993). We also consider the deterrent value of attorney discipline and whether the sanction will help preserve public confidence in the legal profession. *Gorecki*, 208 Ill. 2d at 361. Finally, we seek to recommend a sanction that is consistent with sanctions imposed in similar cases, *Timpone*, 157 Ill. 2d at 197, while considering the case's unique facts. *In re Witt*, 145 Ill. 2d 380, 398, 583 N.E.2d 526 (1991).

For the reasons set forth below, and in light of the substantial mitigating evidence presented, we conclude that a 30-day suspension is the appropriate sanction in this matter, and that a 60-day suspension is longer than necessary.

Respondent argues that a reprimand or censure should be imposed. We disagree based on the serious nature of Respondent's misconduct, and the aggravating factors in this matter. As discussed above, Respondent intentionally made false statements of material fact during the ARDC's investigation in order to mislead the ARDC, and she knowingly or recklessly made a false statement impugning the integrity of a judge, in which she accused the judge of attempting to frame an innocent person of murder. We agree with the Hearing Board that "Respondent's misconduct deserves some period of suspension, to impress upon Respondent and the bar as a whole the need for honesty in responding to the ARDC." (Hearing Bd. Report at 29.)

Respondent also failed to acknowledge that she intentionally made false statements to the ARDC. The Hearing Board stated, "We are troubled by Respondent's continued insistence in claiming that her responses at her sworn statement were true. They very clearly were not." (*Id.* at 28.) The Hearing Board also found that Respondent's testimony at the disciplinary hearing concerning her intent was not credible, stating, "Respondent asserts that she did not intend to mislead counsel for the Administrator and did not knowingly respond to counsel's questions in an inaccurate way We did not find that portion of Respondent's testimony credible." (*Id.* at 22.)

Respondent's failure to accept responsibility and express remorse for making false statements to the ARDC is an aggravating factor. *See In re Stroth*, 2019PR00065 (Hearing Bd., April 12, 2021), at 19, *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 30839 (Sept. 23, 2021) ("A failure to recognize one's own wrongdoing is appropriately considered in aggravation.").

The Hearing Board also pointed out that Respondent facilitated access to online sites for individuals in the anti-retention group, even though Respondent was concerned that members of that group would post inappropriate materials on the website, which they did. Additionally, after Respondent saw the offensive materials, Respondent allowed the website to remain active for three weeks, until after the election was over, before she directed GoDaddy to shut down the website. The Hearing Board found these actions to be an aggravating factor. We agree.

Finally, the Hearing Board found it aggravating that Respondent served as a Hearing panel judge for disciplinary cases in Oklahoma, and served on the ARDC's Character and Fitness Committee, because Respondent should have been extremely aware of the need to be honest with the ARDC. *See In re Hall*, 09 SH 23 (Review Bd., Jan. 4, 2012) at 21-22, *petitions for leave to file exceptions allowed*, M.R. 25193 (May 18, 2012) (attorney's service as an ARDC Hearing Board member was an aggravating factor because it should have given him a heightened awareness of the need to avoid dishonest behavior, and his misconduct may negatively impact the public's view of the disciplinary system).

In light of the serious nature of the misconduct, and the aggravating factors, we believe that a suspension is warranted, rather than a censure or reprimand. We do not believe, however, that the suspension needs to exceed 30 days, given the extensive and compelling mitigation that was presented in this matter, which includes the following:

- Respondent has practiced law for more than 30 years, without any prior discipline, and has had a distinguished and unblemished legal career.
- The Hearing Board identified numerous mitigating factors, including that Respondent was active in bar association work and civic organizations; she provided *pro bono* services; she taught undergraduate and graduate courses; she contributed to professional journals; and she was involved in organizations designed to assist other lawyers.
- There are additional mitigating factors, not specifically identified by the Hearing Board, including that Respondent provided legal services to a charitable organization that protects children; she served on various health boards; she acted as a foster parent; she was appointed by the court to perform guardianship work for children and adults in at least fifty cases; and she worked as a licensed EMT during the pandemic.
- Five individuals testified on Respondent's behalf concerning her good character. Those witnesses included the former General Counsel for the Oklahoma Bar Association; the former Emergency Room Director at Memorial Hospital, where Respondent worked as General Counsel for 13 years; a former administrator at Lindenwood University where Respondent taught as an adjunct professor; and two attorneys. The witnesses described Respondent as being a dedicated hard-working attorney with a reputation for honesty and integrity.
- Respondent's misconduct did not relate to a court proceeding, did not involve the representation of clients, and did not harm any clients.
- Respondent's misconduct was not financially motivated; she did not receive any attorney's fees in connection with her misconduct; and she did not benefit financially by working with the anti-retention group or setting up the website.
- The nature, scope, and duration of Respondent's misconduct was very limited. Respondent got involved with the anti-retention group for a short period of time, and she expressed regret for doing so. Respondent's false statements to the ARDC pertained solely to one issue, namely, the website. Respondent made the false statement impugning the integrity of a judge during the time she was working with the anti-

retention group, and she made that statement in a very limited context, to only one person, on one occasion, and unrelated to any judicial proceeding. Respondent has acknowledged that she should not have made that statement.

We give significant weight to the factors set forth above in determining the appropriate sanction. We conclude, however, that the mitigating factors here are insufficient to avoid a period of suspension. We believe a 30-day suspension is sufficient, but not longer than necessary, to serve the purposes of discipline, including preserving public confidence in the legal profession and deterring other attorneys.

In considering the appropriate sanction, the Hearing Board cited two cases involving false statements to the ARDC. *See In re Haime*, 2014PR00153 (Review Bd., Nov. 29, 2016), *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 28532 (Mar. 20, 2017) (60-day suspension where the attorney made false statements to the ARDC, failed to act diligently, failed to communicate with a client, and prejudiced the administration of justice); *In re Cooper*, 2014PR00166 (Review Bd., Nov. 4, 2016), *approved and confirmed*, M.R.28490 (March 20, 2017) (90-day suspension where the attorney made false statements to the ARDC, engaged in the unauthorized practice of law, and failed to acknowledge his misconduct). Although *Haime* and *Cooper* are similar in some ways to the instant matter, the nature, scope, and duration of Respondent's misconduct in this case was more limited than the misconduct in those cases. Moreover, unlike the misconduct in those cases, Respondent's misconduct did not relate to the representation of a client or a court proceeding. Consequently, we believe Respondent's conduct was less egregious than the misconduct in those cases.

The Hearing Board also cited *In re Stroth*, 2019PR00065 (Hearing Bd., April 12, 2021), *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 30839 (Sept. 23, 2021), in which the attorney was suspended for 30 days. In *Stroth*, the attorney failed to pursue a client's personal injury case and made false

representations to the client, including that the case was settled. The attorney gave the client \$100 as a loan in anticipation of the settlement, and then gave the client \$1,000 as purported settlement funds. The attorney made false statements to the ARDC, falsely describing his contacts with the insurance company, and falsely describing the purpose of the funds he gave his client. The attorney did not fully accept responsibility or fully acknowledge his wrongdoing.

In *Stroth*, as in the instant matter, the attorney's misconduct in making false statements to the ARDC was serious; there was also additional misconduct; and there were aggravating factors. In that case, as in this one, the attorney failed to fully acknowledge his wrongdoing, particularly the dishonest elements of the misconduct; and the Administrator proposed a 60-day sanction. In *Stroth*, there was substantial mitigating evidence, as in this case, which included extensive community service, *pro bono* work, a lack of prior discipline, very favorable character testimony, and the misconduct related to only one matter.

Given the similarity between the two cases, we believe that a 30-day suspension is appropriate in the instant matter. *See also In Re Allen*, 2018PR00023 (Oct. 17, 2018) *discipline on consent approved*, M.R.029564 (Dec. 6, 2018) (30-day suspension for failing to act diligently; lying to a client concerning the status of her immigration application; and making a false statement to immigration authorities; in mitigation, the attorney expressed remorse, cooperated with the ARDC, had no prior discipline, had a death in the family at the time, and made restitution).

We believe that *In re Mellonig*, 2011PR00142 (Hearing Bd., April 13, 2013), in which the attorney was reprimanded, also provides guidance, although we believe that Respondent's conduct in this matter was more serious. In *Mellonig*, the attorney made false statements to a court on two separate occasions, falsely representing that he was co-counsel for a party. The attorney also made false representations to the ARDC concerning that matter.

Mitigating evidence included community service, donations to conservation groups, no client was harmed, the attorney had no prior discipline, and there was testimony from character witnesses. Unlike the instant matter, the attorney acknowledged the wrongfulness of his conduct and expressed remorse, and there were no aggravating factors or additional misconduct. Consequently, we believe that Respondent's misconduct is more serious than the misconduct in that case and therefore warrants a suspension. However, given that the attorney in *Mellonig* was reprimanded for similar conduct, we believe that the suspension in this case should not exceed 30 days.

In recommending a 30-day suspension, we have also taken into consideration Respondent's false statement concerning a judge. Cases in which attorneys have made false statements impugning the integrity of a judge, which are similar to the instant matter, have resulted in a reprimand or a censure. *See In re Harrison*, 06 CH 36 (Review Bd., Oct. 14, 2008), *approved and confirmed*, M.R. 22839 (March 16, 2009) (attorney was censured for falsely accusing a judge and an Assistant State's Attorney of obstruction of justice, malicious prosecution, and conspiracy); *In re Barringer*, 00 SH 80, *petition to impose discipline on consent allowed*, M.R. 17621 (Sept. 21, 2001) (attorney was censured for making false statements concerning a judge's conducting an *ex parte* interview, holding someone in contempt, and the judge's personal finances); *In re Riordan*, 824 N.W.2d 441 (Wis. 2012) (attorney was reprimanded for falsely stating that a judge was biased, the judge was covering up the violation of the attorney's rights; and the judge was abusing his power). Thus, we do not believe that Respondent's false statement concerning a judge requires a longer suspension.

We therefore recommend that Respondent be suspended for 30 days. We find this recommended sanction to be commensurate with Respondent's misconduct, consistent with

discipline that has been imposed for comparable misconduct, and sufficient to serve the goals of attorney discipline, act as a deterrent, and preserve the public's trust in the legal profession.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we recommend that Respondent be suspended from the practice of law for 30 days, and that she be required to complete the ARDC's Professionalism Seminar within one year after the Court's final order of discipline.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles E. Pinkston, Jr.
Bradley N. Pollock
Michael T. Reagan

CERTIFICATION

I, Michelle M. Thome, Clerk of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission of the Supreme Court of Illinois and keeper of the records, hereby certifies that the foregoing is a true copy of the Report and Recommendation of the Review Board, approved by each Panel member, entered in the above entitled cause of record filed in my office on October 13, 2022.

/s/ Michelle M. Thome

Michelle M. Thome, Clerk of the
Attorney Registration and Disciplinary
Commission of the Supreme Court of Illinois

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¹ At the 2021 disciplinary hearing, Respondent offered the same defense (no access) concerning the offensive materials posted on the Facebook page. The Hearing Board stated, "According to Respondent's testimony, as of October 23, 2018, she no longer had the log-in information for the Madeline Dinmont Facebook page. We question that portion of Respondent's testimony, particularly as Respondent knew that the Facebook page used the same log-in information as the Fire the Liar website and Respondent was later able to access the website." (Hearing Bd. Report at 17.)

² In arguing that there is no violation of Rule 8.2(a) unless the judge is named, Respondent cites Attorney Grievance Commission of Maryland v. Dyer & Gray, 162 A.3d 970 (Md. 2017), in which two attorneys made false statements concerning the circuit court, various judges, and other officials

in various documents, including an appellate filing, in which they made false statements about the circuit court, without naming a specific judge. That case, however, is inapposite. The court in that case found there was no violation of Rule 8.2(a) because “Respondents’ statements did not constitute knowingly false statements.” *Id.* at 1023. The court concluded that the attorneys’ “statements were based on the circumstances of the underlying litigation and their assessment was based on the circuit court” having taken specific actions. *Id.* In response, the Administrator cites *In re Harrison*, 06 CH 36 (Hearing Bd., July 12, 2007), affirmed, (Review Bd., Oct. 14, 2008), approved and confirmed, M.R. 22839 (March 16, 2009), in which an attorney violated Rule 8.2(a) by filing a motion falsely accusing a judge of misconduct, but without identifying the judge by name. We note, however, the failure to name the judge was not an issue in that case. Neither case specifically addresses the question of whether Rule 8.2(a) can be violated when the name of the judge is not identified. We conclude that it can.

AFFIDAVIT OF EXPERT BRUCE ANDERSON

STATE OF FLORIDA)
) ss
COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH)

I, Bruce Anderson, being first duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

1. My name is Bruce Anderson. I am over 18 and I am competent to testify. As owner and principal of Next 72 Intelligence, LLC, based in Florida, I have over 20 years of experience in investigative intelligence, including digital forensics, metadata analysis, authentication of electronic evidence, and litigation support. I have provided expert analysis in complex legal proceedings involving online identity, social media attribution, and discovery chain-of-custody. My curriculum vitae is attached.

2. I was retained by Attorney Ronald D. Wilkinson, on behalf of Attorney Margaret Jean Lowery, to evaluate the validity of evidence and digital exhibits and social media evidence cited in disciplinary proceedings brought by the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (ARDC) under Commission No. 2023PR00060.

3. I reviewed the following materials:
 - o ARDC First Amended Complaint (February 2024), including Counts I–VI.
 - o Exhibit 12: Alleged email from ARDC attorney Rachel C. Miller, later disclaimed by the purported author.
 - o Ms. Lowery’s formal answers, interrogatories, subpoena requests, and motion pleadings.

- Affidavits from Ronald D. Wilkinson, Paul Evans, Dr. Patrick VanSchoyck, M.D., and other witnesses.
 - Chronology of disciplinary activity prepared by Ms. Lowery and corroborated by docketed documents.
 - Twitter/X account materials, including screenshots, platform warnings, and a takedown notification.
 - Rulings and orders from the ARDC Hearing Board and Illinois Supreme Court, including Dkt. Nos. 25, 40, 46, 47, 49, 91, 120, and 123.
 - Order from Chief Judge Ronald A. White (Dkt. 181, July 31, 2025, Case No. 6:25-cv-22-RAW, Eastern District of Oklahoma).
4. The ARDC cited social media posts attributed to an account labeled “@LoweryLawFirm” and/or variations thereof as the basis for Counts II, IV, V, and VI. (Count III was dismissed.) The evidentiary record submitted by the ARDC contains no forensic analysis, metadata logs, tweet identifiers, IP address traces, or platform-verified documentation from X Corp (formerly Twitter) that would establish who created, accessed, or controlled the @LoweryLawFirm account. Instead, the evidence consists solely of screenshots or written summaries, lacking digital signatures, provenance data, or any chain-of-custody validation. No technical or platform-derived evidence has been presented that links Ms. Lowery to authorship or control of the posts cited in the complaint.
5. Ms. Lowery provided written disclosures identifying her actual Twitter/X accounts, including @oklowerylaw, @ [REDACTED], and @ [REDACTED], none of which match the account cited by the ARDC.

- a. Primary personal account: @ [REDACTED] Created December 2022, with over 25,000 followers, no focus on Illinois or Judge Andrew Gleeson.
 - b. Professional account (@OkLoweryLaw): Created October 2023, using a recent photograph of Ms. Lowery.
 - c. Personal Oklahoma account: @ [REDACTED] Created October 2023, used to chat with friends.
 - d. None of these accounts match the @LoweryLawFirm account cited by the ARDC in address, content, tone, or communication style.
6. According to both Mr. Wilkinson & Ms. Lowery, in a conference call with Attorney Jon Hawk of McDermott Will & Emery, representing X Corp, Mr. Hawk reportedly stated there was no @LoweryLawFirm account or associated posts. his is consistent with and supports Ms. Lowery's claim. As a forensic expert, I cannot independently verify this statement without access to X Corp's records, but it underscores the critical need for direct platform data to authenticate the evidence. In this case, it appears Ms. Lowery is being recommended for disbarment based on what, from a forensic standpoint, appears to lack technical substantiation."Ms. Lowery filed discovery requests, including interrogatories and a subpoena to depose X Corp's records custodian, to authenticate the social media content. These were denied by the ARDC or blocked by Hearing Board orders, including:
- o Motion to Compel Admissions and Motion for Sanctions (Dkt. No. 25).
 - o Motion for Leave to File Interrogatories (Dkt. No. 123).
 - o Illinois Supreme Court denial of discovery enforcement (Dkt. No. 91, without explanation).

7. In a prior 2020 proceeding (Commission No. 2020PR00018), the ARDC obtained metadata, PayPal logs, domain registrations, and alias email records. No comparable efforts appear in the current record.
8. Ms. Lowery requested a transcript of the Inquiry Board proceedings; however, the ARDC responded that no such transcript exists. From a forensic and evidentiary standpoint, this absence may be significant, as it limits the ability to independently assess the Inquiry Board's evidentiary review process. Without a transcript, there is no documented record detailing when, how, or under what evidentiary standards the Inquiry Board reviewed or authenticated the @LoweryLawFirm posts cited in the First Amended Complaint. The lack of such foundational documentation impairs the ability to verify the integrity and reliability of the evidence referenced, thereby undermining the procedural transparency of the ARDC's disciplinary action.
9. Based on the docket record, repeated denials of access to evidentiary materials—including X Corp records (Dkt. Nos. 25, 123), surveillance video (Dkt. No. 123, Interrogatories 16–17), and the Inquiry Board transcript—have limited the ability to conduct standard forensic authentication procedures. This absence of accessible source material across several rulings (e.g., Dkt. Nos. 46, 91, 120) reflects an evidentiary gap that impedes independent validation. From a forensic standpoint, similar patterns in other cases have introduced risks to evidentiary reliability when source materials were unavailable for technical review.
10. This is further illustrated by the ARDC's August 31, 2022 letter (Dkt. No. 123), which references its review of courthouse surveillance video related to the alleged

altercation in Count I. Ms. Lowery's Interrogatories Nos. 16–17 requested access to these videos and any associated chain-of-custody documentation from Synapsis. These requests were denied, resulting in a lack of opportunity to perform standard forensic verification procedures typically used to assess the authenticity and evidentiary reliability of surveillance media...

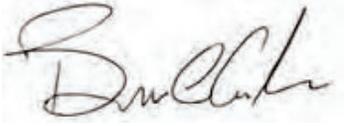
11. In digital forensic practice, the absence of chain-of-custody documentation for screenshots or surveillance footage introduces a significant risk that the materials could have been altered, selectively captured, or even spoofed without detection. Without cryptographic hashes, time-stamped metadata, or verified logs indicating who captured or transmitted the data and when, it is not possible to confirm whether these materials have been modified, truncated, or sourced from unauthenticated platforms. This lack of evidentiary provenance reduces the reliability of the material and limits its utility in attribution or behavioral analysis. In cases involving social media or video evidence, chain-of-custody logs are foundational to establishing authenticity and evidentiary integrity.
12. In the absence of metadata, tweet identifiers, IP address logs, platform-verified account ownership from X Corp, surveillance video chain-of-custody documentation, and a transcript of the Inquiry Board proceedings, there is insufficient technical evidence to support a forensic determination regarding the authenticity or authorship of the @LoweryLawFirm posts. As such, the evidentiary basis for attributing the content to any specific individual—whether Ms. Lowery or otherwise—remains unverified. Reliance solely on a display name, profile photograph, and post content—absent corroborating technical validation—is

inadequate for attribution in a matter marked by contested claims and heightened adversarial context. To evaluate the @LoweryLawFirm account and related evidence, the following must be obtained from X Corp:

13. In order to conduct a proper forensic evaluation and digital attribution of the Twitter/X account @LoweryLawFirm, the following data elements would need to be obtained directly from X Corp:
 - The account's original creation date and the IP address used at the time of registration.
 - Any account-identifying information, including associated email addresses, usernames, phone numbers, and payment methods used during setup or subsequent access.
 - A comprehensive log of IP addresses that accessed the account, with corresponding timestamps.
 - A complete export of all posts made by the account, including tweet identifiers, timestamps, and associated metadata.
 - A statement from X Corp indicating whether the account was ever reported, suspended, or flagged for suspicious or inauthentic activity.
 - These data types are standard in digital forensics and are necessary to establish authorship, usage history, and technical control over a social media account.
14. This affidavit is based solely on the evidence reviewed and the absence of substantiating data, using established forensic practices and standards. I offer no legal conclusions and express no opinion as to Ms. Lowery's guilt or innocence.

My findings are limited to technical and evidentiary observations derived from forensic analysis and investigative methodology.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Anderson", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Bruce Anderson
Principal, Next 72 Intelligence, LLC
813-293-2991
August 5, 2025

AFFIDAVIT OF BRUCE ANDERSON

STATE OF FLORIDA COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

I, Bruce Anderson, being duly sworn, state as follows:

1. Background

I am the principal of Next 72 Intelligence, LLC, and a forensic investigator specializing in digital evidence authentication and metadata analysis. I am a licensed investigator in the State of Florida, (C 1000639), I hold certifications as a (CFDE) Certified Digital Examiner, (CPTE) Certified Penetration Testing Engineer, (CEH) Certified Ethical Hacker. This affidavit is submitted in my professional capacity to document my factual findings regarding the authenticity, creation metadata, and procedural compliance of hearing transcripts submitted in the disciplinary matter of *In re Margaret Jean Lowery*, ARDC Commission No. 2023PR00060.

All information herein is strictly limited to facts verifiable through metadata, file properties, document content, and statutory requirements imposed by Illinois law. This affidavit contains **no legal conclusions or advocacy** and is intended to provide factual and technical clarity to assist the Court in evaluating evidentiary integrity. This affidavit does not assess legal admissibility but highlights the absence of certification elements required by statute and Supreme Court rule, which may bear upon the Court's evaluation.

2. Governing Illinois Law for Transcript Certification

I used the current Illinois Court Rules for our examination of documents.

Under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 321: > *“The record on appeal shall consist of the judgment appealed from, the notice of appeal, and the entire original common law record, including reports of proceedings prepared in accordance with Rule 323.”*

Under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 323(a): > *“The report of proceedings shall include all the evidence pertinent to the issues on appeal and shall be certified by the court reporter as correct.”*

Under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 323(b): > *“In cases where no verbatim transcript is obtainable, the appellant shall prepare a proposed report of proceedings from the best available means... and submit it to the trial judge for approval, along with notice to opposing counsel.”*

Under the Illinois Certified Shorthand Reporters Act (225 ILCS 415): > “A person may not hold himself or herself out as a Certified Shorthand Reporter (CSR) or engage in shorthand reporting without being licensed under this Act.” (225 ILCS 415/4)

“Each transcript of a deposition or proceedings certified by a CSR must bear the reporter’s name, CSR number, and a signed certificate of accuracy.” (225 ILCS 415/16)

A transcript must, therefore, include: - The full name of a licensed CSR - The CSR license number (as issued by IDFPR) - A Certificate of Accuracy signed by the CSR - (Optionally) A CSR seal or signature stamp - Proper filing with notice to the clerk (Rule 323(b))

3. Forensic Review of Each Transcript

A. Inquiry Board Transcript – September 12, 2023

- **File Name:** Inquiry Board Sept 12 Transcript.pdf
- **Created:** March 31, 2025
- **Modified:** October 13, 2025
- **Author/Creator:** “melissac” using Adobe Acrobat Pro 2020
- **Software Used:** Acrobat Distiller 25.0 (Windows)
- **Page Count:** 51

Findings: - This transcript was created approximately 18 months after the proceeding. - Metadata indicates the creator is “melissac.” No Certificate of Accuracy is embedded. - No CSR license number appears in the document. - The document was generated using Adobe desktop tools, not CSR-grade reporting software.

Conclusion: Based on the metadata and file properties, this transcript does not satisfy the requirements of Rule 323(a) or 225 ILCS 415. It lacks a verifiable connection to a Certified Shorthand Reporter. These findings should be reviewed under current Illinois Statutes by the Court.

【85†Inquiry Board Sept 12 Transcript.pdf】

B. Hearing Board Transcript – May 2, 2024

- **File Name:** May 2nd Transcript 05-02-2024-4861-5300-0656.pdf
- **Created:** May 13, 2024
- **Modified:** October 13, 2025
- **Software Used:** Foxit Quick PDF Library 15.11
- **Page Count:** 78

Findings: - Created 11 days after the actual hearing took place. - No author or CSR is listed in the metadata. - Produced using a commercial PDF library not associated with professional court reporting. - Lacks any Certificate of Accuracy, CSR name, or license number. - No metadata traceable to transcription software used by licensed court reporters.

Technical Note: Foxit Quick PDF Library is not a Certified Shorthand Reporter (CSR) platform. It is a software development kit (SDK) used by programmers to generate or manipulate PDFs. It is not intended or approved for use by licensed court reporters in Illinois. By contrast, approved CSR platforms typically include proprietary court reporting tools such as StenoCAT, Eclipse, Case CATalyst, and DigitalCAT, which incorporate CSR identity, certification, and compliance tracking into their workflow.

Conclusion: This transcript does not meet the digital forensic standards or procedural certification requirements imposed by Illinois Rule 323(a) or 225 ILCS 415. It should be reviewed under current Illinois Statutes by the Court.

【92†May 2nd Transcript 05-02-2024-4861-5300-0656.pdf】

C. Review Board Oral Argument Transcript – July 11, 2025

- **Files:** JULY 11 Transcript.pdf and JULY 11 Transcript2 - Lowery.pdf
- **Created:** July 24, 2025
- **Modified:** October 13, 2025 (both versions)
- **Software Used:** Foxit Quick PDF Library 15.11
- **Page Count:** 51

Findings: - Both versions of the file were created 13 days after the hearing occurred. - No CSR author appears in metadata; both were processed through Foxit PDF Library. - The documents are textually identical but have different metadata instance IDs and modification times (14 minutes apart), indicating administrative duplication. - Neither version contains a CSR license number, a proper Certificate of Accuracy, or digital signature traceable to a licensed court reporter. - The ARDC issued an order acknowledging the transcript had been redacted and subsequently reinstated, without any CSR recertification.

Conclusion: These documents show no verifiable origin from a certified court reporter. Their content, despite being unaltered between versions, lacks forensic and procedural authentication. These findings should be reviewed under current Illinois Statutes by the Court.

【88†JULY 11 Transcript .pdf】 【90†Order to Modify:Alter July 11 Transcript.pdf】

4. Statutory and Procedural Violations Summary Table

Requirement	Present in Any File?	Required by Law?	Statutory Authority
CSR license number	✗ No	✓ Yes	225 ILCS 415/16
Certificate of Accuracy signed by CSR	✗ No	✓ Yes	225 ILCS 415/16
CSR seal or verifiable digital signature	✗ No	✓ Yes	225 ILCS 415/16
Filing with court clerk and notice per procedural rules	✗ No	✓ Yes	Illinois Supreme Court 323(b)

5. Forensic Metadata Attribution

The following metadata fields were identified as pointing to authorship and technical tool usage:

Transcript	Metadata Field	Value	Implication
Inquiry Board	Author / Creator	melissac	No CSR license identified
May 2, 2024	Creator Tool	Foxit Quick PDF Library	Not court reporter software
July 11, 2025	Creator Tool	Foxit Quick PDF Library	Same tool; no certification or traceability
All Transcripts	No embedded CSR ID	—	No official reporting software used

Court-recognized CSR platforms such as StenoCAT, Eclipse, Case CATalyst, or DigitalCAT do not appear in any metadata for these files. “There is no statutory requirement in Illinois that mandates specific transcription software; however, professional Certified Shorthand Reporters in Illinois routinely utilize recognized industry platforms such as StenoCAT, Eclipse, Case CATalyst, and DigitalCAT. These systems are designed to support stenographic accuracy, certification, and Rule 323 compliance. No metadata in the transcripts reviewed contained evidence of such platforms, certification logs, or embedded CSR credentials.”

6. Jurisdictional Affidavit – Absence in Record

As part of my forensic review of the procedural record, I was asked to identify whether any Administrator’s affidavit establishing jurisdiction under **Illinois Supreme Court Rule 753(b)** was present in the disciplinary files of *In re: Margaret Jean Lowery*, ARDC Commission No. 2023PR00060. Based on the document sets reviewed and the metadata associated with each, I found no such affidavit on file.

The following is a factual chronology of Ms. Lowery’s formal and repeated requests for such an affidavit across multiple venues:

I. Illinois ARDC – Inquiry and Hearing Board Proceedings

- **June 30, 2023** – Ms. Lowery filed a Jurisdictional Statement asserting that she had retired from the Illinois bar and that the Administrator was required to file a jurisdictional affidavit under Rule 753(b).
- **August 2023** – Ms. Lowery submitted multiple written requests for confirmation of the existence of an Administrator’s affidavit; no affidavit was produced in response.
- **September 2023 – April 2024** – In written motions and filings part of the Hearing Board record, she repeated that no affidavit appeared in the case file.
- **May 2024 Hearing** – The proceeding transcript contains no indication that the Administrator’s affidavit was introduced or relied upon.
- **May 11, 2024** – The Hearing Board entered judgment without any reference to the existence of a jurisdictional affidavit.

II. Illinois ARDC – Review Board Proceedings

- **June 30, 2023** – Jurisdiction was re-challenged at the outset of the appeal; the record notes her retired status (Exhibit 1-A).
- **February 12, 2024** – Ms. Lowery filed a Motion to Compel Production of the jurisdictional affidavit pursuant to Rule 753(b) and Supreme Court Rules 321–323.
- **July 2025 Orders** – The Review Board issued procedural rulings but made no findings on the jurisdictional defect or affidavit.
- **August 12 & 18, 2025** – Additional motions reiterated that no such affidavit was filed; no responsive order followed.

III. Illinois Supreme Court

- **Throughout 2024–2025** – Ms. Lowery raised the jurisdictional issue in petitions for review. No order or docket entry acknowledged the existence or absence of the affidavit.

IV. Federal Proceedings – U.S. District Court, E.D. Oklahoma (Case No. 6:25-cv-22-RAW)

- **February 15, 2024** – The Amended Complaint alleged the absence of jurisdiction under Rule 753(b).
- **February 19, 2025** – A Rule 60 Motion reiterated this claim and incorporated forensic concerns.

V. U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit (Case Nos. 25-7070 & 25-7073)

- **June–September 2025** – Jurisdictional deficiencies were raised in mandamus and appellate filings.

Conclusion: As of this date, no jurisdictional affidavit has been provided to Ms. Lowery or myself. No digital metadata, docket entry, or certified document evidences its existence in the case files reviewed. These findings are offered solely to document the procedural record. I defer all legal conclusions to the Court’s interpretation of Rule 753(b) and related authorities.

7. Certification

I certify under penalty of perjury that the facts stated in this affidavit are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and based on metadata and document analysis from the above-captioned files.

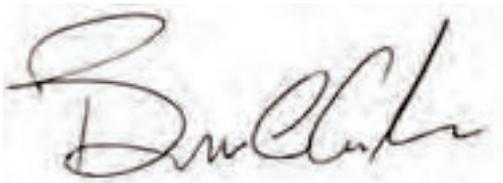
Bruce Anderson

Principal, Next 72 Intelligence, LLC

813-293-2991

www.thenext72.com

Monday, October 13, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Anderson", is written over a light gray background.

Bruce C. Anderson (CEO)

BRUCE ANDERSON

3905 Teaberry Lane ■ Sun City Center, FL 33573
813.293.2991 ■ confidential@thenext72.com



CEO & Co-FOUNDER NEXT 72 Intelligence, LLC

Bruce Anderson is the CEO and Co-Founder of NEXT 72 Intelligence LLC a boutique high tech Cyber Fraud Investigation and Geolocation Intelligence Agency with its home offices located in Tampa, Florida. NEXT 72 specializes in helping private investigators, attorneys and law enforcement through its Cellphone Geolocation, Banking Intelligence and investigative resources.

Our capabilities scan over 18 billion geo data points worldwide across 400 million phones across the globe.

▶ Mr. Anderson during his career has jointly worked on cases with the FBI, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Secret Services, Interpol, U.S. Post Office, Internal Revenue Services and both domestic and federal law enforcement agencies.

- ▶ Mr. Anderson has been responsible for solving cases involving international hacker groups, multi-national companies, cargo theft, insider theft, organized fraud rings, extortion, tortious interference, trademark infringement, counterfeiting and defamation.
- ▶ Mr. Anderson is a member of the FBI Infraguard, and the Secret Service, Miami Cyber Crime Task Force. He is a former law enforcement detective, and is a certified "white hat" Ethical Hacker (CEH), Certified Penetration Testing Engineer (CPTE), Certified Digital Forensic Examiner (CFDE) and Certified Security Analyst (ECSA), and is registered as a Private Investigator Agency A1000310.
- ▶ His unique blend of law enforcement, Geolocaition technology, advanced cyber tactics, human intelligence resources, computer forensics, internet forensics, legal background, expert testimony and live investigations of over 1000 cyber cases help him to be a real resource for attorneys and corporations worldwide.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Cyber Issues

- ▶ Geolocation Intelligence
- ▶ Cellular location & tracking
- ▶ Banking Intelligence
- ▶ Brokerage Intelligence
- ▶ Wire Fraud
- ▶ Recovering Stolen Money
- ▶ Missing Persons Location
- ▶ Witness and Suspect development from GeoSpatial Data.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NEXT 72 LLC, CEO/ Co-Founder 2021-Current

A specialized cell phone geolocation and banking intelligence agency that assists private investigators, law enforcement and attorneys solve complex cases requiring specialized skills an technology.

- ▶ Responsible for geolocation intelligence investigations to assist in cargo theft, counterfeiting, as well as comprehensive criminal and civil investigations.
- ▶ Responsible for the high-tech tracking of internet and cyber fraud suspects for the purposes of recovery of assets, and intelligence on organized fraud, cargo theft and counterfeit groups.
- ▶ Responsible for racking hidden money worldwide for judgments and potential litigation.
- ▶ Frequent Speaker on subjects of Geolocation Intelligence, and advance Cyber Investigative Methods and Strategies for Private Investigators, Law Enforcement and Corporate Risk Management

CYBER INVESTIGATION SERVICES LLC, / eENFORCE Co-Founder 2010-Current

The nation's leading Cyber Investigative and Intelligence firm helping Corporations, Attorneys, Professionals develop investigative, legal and international-jurisdictional strategies related to Cyber Threats impacting Corporate and Personal Brands, Financial Assets, Intellectual Property, Corporate Security and Liability.

Director of Cyber Division responsible for the management and operations of Cyber Investigations, Forensics and Technical R&D.

- ▶ Responsible for Sales, Management and Oversight of Brand Protection Division, eEnforce
- ▶ Responsible for the oversight and management of Cyber Investigators and Investigative Cases for the company.
- ▶ Responsible for the direction and implementation and Investigation of Cyber Intrusions and Data Breach Incidents
- ▶ Responsible for the Forensic division and subsequent cases, evidence chain of custody for the company.
- ▶ Responsible for R&D and Technical Advances for the Company.
- ▶ Frequent Speaker on subjects of Cyber Intrusions & IT Security, and Cyber Investigative Methods and Strategies for Private Investigators, Law Enforcement and Corporate Risk Management

CEO/ SEO and Reputation Management Firm 2007-1010

Private Entrepreneur responsible for the management, design and operation of some of the leading internet and information marketing experts in the field of Real Estate and Internet Marketing.

- ▶ Experience in design, development and implementation of Internet Marketing Strategy.
- ▶ Experience in developing reputational repair strategies utilizing SEO and PR tactics.
- ▶ Responsible of the implementation, monitoring and development of SEO and link building strategies for private clients.
- ▶ Frequent Speaker on subjects of Internet marketing, Search Engine Optimization and Content Distribution.

Investigator/Alachua County Sheriffs Office

Investigator responsible for investigating major crimes against persons and property for the Alachua County Sheriffs Office.

- ▶ Experience in Crimes against persons including robbery, fraud, international theft, murder, aggravated battery, and sex crimes.
- ▶ Experience in crimes against property including fraud, burglary, grand larceny, and white-collar crime.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF LICENSED INVESTIGATORS
FBI Infraguard Tampa (Board Of Directors)
Secret Service Financial Crimes Task Force
World Association Of Detectives
International Organization of Private Intelligence Agencies
International Association of Asset Recovery Specialists
National Association of Fraud Investigators
National Council Of Investigators and Security Services

DESIGNATIONS

Certified Digital Forensics Examiner (CFDE)
 Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)
 Certified Security Analyst (ECSA)
 Certified Pen Testing Engineer (CPTE)
 Florida Licensed Private Investigator

TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY

X-Ways Computer & Digital Forensics
Lantern 4 Phone Forensics
MobileEdit Phone Forensics
Paraben Device Acquisitions
Backtrack Ethical Hacking and Pen Testing
Nessus Vulnerability Web & Network Scanning
Burp Suite Web Application Testing
Internet and Social Media Forensics
Paraben Phone and SIM card Forensics
Hacking and Intrusion Investigations
Network Forensic Investigations
White Collar Crime Investigations
Brand and Reputational Attack Investigations
Internet Fraud Investigations

EXPERT WITNESS CASES

Walter Weaver Defense Case

Negligent Homicide

Forensic Expert Testimony

Sept 2016

Morgan County, West Virginia

August 2016

Moshe Mortner Versus David Baksht

Internet Forensic Testimony

New York, NY

November 16, 2018

Guen Versus Pereira

State of California First Appellate District,

Division 5

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EXHIBIT THREE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

In the Matter of:)	
)	
MARGARET JEAN LOWERY)	SUPREME COURT NO MR 31506
)	
RESPONDENT,)	COMMISSION NO 2020 PR 0018
)	
NO. 6271777)	

OBJECTION TO ARDC PETITION FOR TAXATION OF COSTS

COMES NOW the Respondent, Margaret J. Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm and for her objection to the ARDC’s Petition for Rule 773 Taxation of Costs, respectfully advises this Court as follows:

I.

PROCEDRAL HISTORY

1. On October 29, 2018, Ms. Lowery wrote to Mr. Rotskoff stating she had concerns that Judge Andrew J. Gleeson of the 20th Judicial Circuit was harassing her via improper bar complaints. A copy of Ms. Lowery’s email to Mr. Rotskoff is marked at *Exhibit A*.

2. On or about November 2018, Ms. Lowery again complained to the Chief Justice who was the Commissioner over the ARDC about Gleeson’s harassment and the ARDC’s failure to address it.

FILED

April 24, 2023

ARDC CLERK

3. On April 6, 2023, this Court instructed the undersigned by & through its General Counsel to file a complaint with the Director of Equity & Inclusion and to also forward a copy to the Complaint to this Court.

Once again instead of dealing with the issues raised, this Court mailed back the Complaint (after instructing that they should receive it) and once again instructs counsel that a third complaint should be sent the very Commission which ignored the first two written complaints it received.

4. Neither the ARDC nor its designee Mr. Rotskoff (hereinafter “Rotskoff”) ever responded nor addressed Ms. Lowery’s (hereinafter “Lowery”) complaint about harassing conduct of Judge Andrew Gleeson (hereinafter “Gleeson”) nor did the ARDC ever address concerns that Gleeson was harassing Lowery for an improper purpose.

5. For Rotskoff, at no time did he ever consider his receipt of 14 ARDC complaints made by one male judge (Gleeson) going through a divorce against a single female attorney (Lowery), who the judge swears he doesn’t know, to be problematic. At no time did Rotskoff, the ARDC or this Court express any concern for Lowery or the harassment they were putting her through. So how many ARDC complaints does one male judge have to file with the ARDC before this Court believes the judge is harassing a woman and weaponizing the ARDC process for an improper purpose? One would think 5 complaints with an email

from the attorney stating she felt she was being harassed would raise an eyebrow or cause an inquiry to be made, but not at the Illinois Supreme Court, no, not even after FOURTEEN COMPLAINTS by one male judge does this Court bother to ask what is going on. No mechanism exists to stop, report nor address this kind of harassment which apparently this Court appears to think if appropriate and acceptable.

Even after receiving the email from Lowery that she felt harassed by Gleeson, Rotskoff did nothing. In fact, it appears he actually retaliated against Lowery for complaining based upon the number of additional complaints he accepted by Gleeson after he received her email. Would this Court, the Hearing Board or Review Board have viewed this case differently had Rotskoff been forthcoming in addressing Gleeson's harassment? What is apparent is that both Rotskoff and Gleeson had motive to assassinate Lowery's character because any reasonable person would question what was going on at the ARDC and before this Court to have this occur? **See Exhibit B.**

Complaint #1	April 24, 2017
Complaint #2	April 26, 2017
Complaint #3	August 1, 2018
Complaint #4	April 24, 2017 (Rearguing closed complaint)
Complaint #5	April 26, 2017 (Rearguing closed complaint)
Complaint #6	August 6, 2018
Complaint #7	August 21, 2018

Complaint #8	October 15, 2018
Complaint #9	December 31, 2018
Complaint #10	October 19, 2022
Complaint #11	October 24, 2022
Complaint #12	October 25, 2022
Complaint #13	November 10, 2022
Complaint #14	January 18, 2022

In many of the above Complaints, Gleeson complains about the actions of others, not about Lowery, yet Rotskoff forwarded each complaint to Lowery requiring her to respond knowing the damage same would cause to her financially, economically, professionally and emotionally. So confident was Gleeson in having the ARDC as his total ally, that Gleeson openly mocked Lowery in his complaints calling her a “common person” and suggesting that Lowery was ‘unhinged.’ Quite shocking since the same judge testified before the Hearing Board that he does not know Lowery and never had a conversation with her. So what then is going on?

6. Lowery complained directly to the Illinois Supreme Court by telephoning and faxing the Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court in November of 2018. Once again, absolutely nothing was done about the harassment except for the ARDC, Rotskoff & Gleeson to intensively it. Refusing to address harassment is condoning it.

7. Following the October & November 2018 email & oral report to the Illinois Supreme Court, Ms. Lowery endured more complaints from Andrew J. Gleeson which were all approved by Rotskoff. At no time, even after receiving the email from Lowery, did Rotskoff ever consider that Gleeson's complaints might be harassment or systemic gender discrimination. So biased was Rotskoff, that he never questioned the harassment by a male judge even when the number of complaints exceeded ten in count and even after receiving a complaint from the victim. Rotskoff instead of addressing Lowery's complaint, joined the harasser and lent the prestige of his office and that of the Illinois Supreme Court, to his systemic gender harassment campaign of Lowery.

8. Next, there is no mechanism for any Respondent when being harassed by a judge before this Court's in an official proceedings to bring it to the attention of this Court. In fact, so pervasive is the ARDC's vengeance/retaliation model known in the legal community, *that Respondent was warned by ISBA Mutual that even that simple email to Rotskoff would trigger more retaliation by the ARDC towards her*, which in fact was what occurred. Again, this is a systemic failure of the Court's process and oversight of the ARDC.

9. Between 2017 and the present Ms. Lowery has been subject to more than 13+ complaints written by Gleeson on State letterhead directed to bar disciplinary counsel in two jurisdictions. Copies of the complaints against Lowery

are set forth in *Exhibit B*. As a reminder, Ms. Lowery had a spotless record before these events, serving on the Oklahoma Professionalism Commission (Inquiry Board) and the Illinois Character & Fitness Committee. The ARDC bamboozled this Court into believing that after engaging in the principled practice of law for 35 years, over two states, before The Hague, before the U.S. Supreme Court, and after donating endless hours to assist the poor, that suddenly Ms. Lowery engaged in the unprincipled practice of law, lying to the Court, misdirecting investigations, all while suffering from a rare blood cancer, and being forced to undergo cancer treatments while trying to survive a pandemic with a compromised immune system.

Despite the complete lack of evidence, a conviction was obtained using the testimony of a woman ill with undiagnosed blood cancer. Review Lowery's Deposition in January 2021 compared to her July 2019 Sworn Statement and it is very clear and obvious that Lowery was ill during the Sworn Statement. *See Exhibit J & K*. By January 2021, Lowery had finished her blood cancer treatments successfully.

10. On January 17, 2023, the Court denied the Petition in Error filed by each side (the Court thereby refusing to perform even a de novo review of the substantive, procedural or systemic gender bias issues raised in the pleadings). Instead this Court adopted the *all-male* Review Board Decision suspending

Respondent from the practice of law for thirty (30) days. She was also required to complete the *ARDC Professionalism Seminar*, effective February 7, 2023.

11. On January 18, 2023, Ms. Lowery forwarded to Rotskoff a list of Illinois Supreme Court approved professionalism seminars with certificates she completed per the Hearing Board's directive. In fact, Lowery completed every online professionalism seminar offered by the ISC Commission on Professionalism, but believing that the ARDC & Rotskoff would once again invent a problem, Lowery forwarded only a portion of the certificates of completion. *A copy of the email is attached as Exhibit C.*

12. The Hearing Board Report in relevant part stated:

(Ms. Lowery) be required to successfully complete the *ARDC's Professionalism Seminar* within one year after entry of the Court's final order of discipline.

Ms. Lowery voluntarily completed all ISC Commission on Professionalism's Coursework approved by this Court, to-wit:

- a. Communicating During Conflict: Understanding Your Role
- b. Resiliency of Lawyers, Strength Under Stress
- c. Professionalism for Solo & Small Firms
- d. Ending Incivility in the Workplace
- e. A new path forward, how lawyers can foster wellness & competency
- f. Rebalance the Scales
- g. Advancing Women in Law Summit
- h. The Busy Lawyer's Guide to Wellbeing
- i. Ending Harassment, Bullying and Incivility in the Legal Workplace
- j. Rebalance the Scales: Implicit Bias, Diversity & the Legal Profession

Instead of honoring the ten completed professionalism courses Ms. Lowery undertook as specified by the Hearing Board, Mr. Rotskoff & the ARDC rejected every single course. Rotskoff instead substituted his judgement for that of the Hearing Board Chair (a woman) and required Lowery to complete additional coursework that had nothing to do with professionalism. Rotskoff instead required Lowery to complete:

1. Conflicts of Interest
2. Handling Trust Funds
3. Fees & Billing
4. Client Communication issues

Lowery is corporate in house healthcare counsel. None of the above coursework related to, nor dealt with any part of Lowery's actual legal practice nor did it address any issue raised in the ARDC Complaint. *See January 19, 2023 ARDC Email, Exhibit D.* It appeared once again that a male ARDC prosecutor substituted his own judgment for that of the female Hearing Board Chair in order to further harass the Respondent. Lowery promptly turned in the completed certificates as required.

So the ARDC's position that somehow Lowery is uncooperative is not only false, *it is being done for the sole purpose of perpetuating a system of gender bias.*

13. On March 17, 2023, the ARDC forwarded its Rule 773 Statement of Costs which Lowery received from counsel on the March 22, 2023.

14. On March 22, 2023, Lowery emailed Rotskoff asking him to forward a W-9 per IRS rules and asking the ARDC to remove Duebbert's charges. Rotskoff responded that he was refusing to speak with Lowery about any matter. *See Exhibit E.*

15. On March 31, 2023, Ms. Lowery filed an Entry of Appearance and objection to the Statement of Costs. *See Exhibit F.* She forwarded her objection requesting that Mr. Rotskoff respond. Instead of trying to resolve the issues, the ARDC once again shows its systemic bias against women Respondents and files a Petition without ever responding to any of the issues raised by email or in Lowery's objection. Can you imagine an ARDC administrator refusing to communicate in writing to a person of color? But it is OK to ignore female attorneys and treat them unprofessionally.

16. On or about April of 2023, Ms. Lowery also filed a complaint with this Court over the conduct of the ARDC. Ms. Lowery was directed to file her complaint with Ms. Brown, the Director of Equity & Inclusion, which she did. She also forwarded the information on the harassment of her by Gleeson to the JIB.

17. Ms. Lowery was more than happy to abide by this Court's directive and await the investigation results. It is unsurprising that Rotskoff is not and wants to push the envelope once more. So on the heels of two written complaints, Rotskoff now wants to continue the harassment by forcing the ARDC Petition.

II.**BACKGROUND**

In 35 years of practice, Ms. Lowery has never had a disciplinary issue. Then a judge she has never practiced before, Gleeson (hereinafter “Gleeson”), began filing complaint after complaint against her. Gleeson has now filed 14+ bar complaints against Lowery in Illinois and one in Oklahoma. The Hearing Board found unequivocally that Ms. Lowery never made a posts against the judge. Failing to prove any professional misconduct in her law practice, the ARDC decided to target Lowery for character assassination with ‘process crimes.’ What is even more troublesome is the ARDC was on notice that in July of 2019 when Lowery gave her less than stellar sworn statement that **she suffered from undiagnosed blood cancer.** So when the ARDC found out this was an issue, instead of addressing it, the ARDC & Gleeson barreled down even harder on Lowery to charge her with process crimes.

Then there were the ARDC threats: if Lowery raised her blood cancer issue as an explanation, the ARDC would invent more charges to file against her seeking permanent disbarment. Rotskoff stated the ARDC would subpoena ever medical record about Lowery in existence in order to humiliate her in public and to call into question her fitness to practice law. Having already watched the ARDC “invent” crimes that never occurred, it wasn’t a stretch for Lowery to believe that the ARDC would invent a record in order to permanently destroy her legal career.

In Gleeson's first ARDC complaint, he said Lowery's JIB Statement (publicly released by Duebbert without Lowery's consent) accused this Court and others of a wide and vast conspiracy to commit First Degree Murder." Lowery said no such thing. Her report was a description of what others said. Specifically Lowery recounted what an attorney and two court personnel said while very drunk in a bar about a sitting judge. *At no time did the ARDC go after the male attorney who made publicly disparaging statements about the judge. Instead of holding the male attorney who engaged in the professional conduct accountable, it was Lowery who was professionally attacked for reporting it.*

Gleeson's Complaint #1 was about the foregoing event, it was written on Official State letterhead. More importantly, it was the basis for Ms. Lowery sarcastic joke during the telephone call to Go Daddy which resulted in discipline by this Court.¹ So not only did Lowery get a bar complaint for reporting unprofessional conduct, she got sanctioned by this Court for joking about it.² Gleeson mistakenly attributed what other court personnel said in bar about Judge Duebbert as an attack on himself (Gleeson) and Gleeson also confused what others said as Lowery's own words and beliefs. *Reporting an act of misconduct or what others said during an act of misconduct is not endorsing the misconduct or criminal behavior. At no time*

¹ Ms. Lowery repeatedly apologized. The ARDC repeatedly stated no apology was ever made by Lowery. Even the 2019 Sworn Statement contains an apology, so does her 2021 Deposition and her Testimony before the Hearing Board. This is another example of disparate treatment between male and female attorneys before the ARDC.

² Ms. Lowery regrets making the 'sarcastic joke.'

did the ARDC address the conduct of the drunk male attorney or the courthouse personnel. It was “kill the messenger” and blame the woman.

Next, the Hearing Board would not permit Lowery to produce the ARDC complaint by Gleeson containing his written statement about ‘setting up a judge for murder’ which would clearly shows the basis for Lowery’s sarcastic comment.³ Again, without the context of the excessive bar complaints filed by Gleeson, the outrageous allegations made by Gleeson against Lowery, her belief that she was being harassed by Gleeson for improper reasons, or the fact that she was physically ill from cancer, all of those factors likely would have led reasonable people to understand the sarcasm. But the Hearing Board and Review Board didn’t get to hear the truth about what was going on because of the ARDC’s ongoing prosecutorial misconduct, its systemic gender bias against women.

So imagine Ms. Lowery’s shock when Gleeson accused her of posting KKK posts about him on social media.⁴ The entire basis of that complaint was “guilt by association” as stated by Gleeson himself. Lowery has never knowingly associated with racists or extremists and she certainly would never help such individuals in any political campaign. In 1983, while working on her undergraduate degree at SMU, Lowery was recognized by Coretta Scott King of the MLK Center for Social Change

³ Lowery has admitted that her comment was in bad taste and apologized repeatedly to Judge Gleeson. However, he has refused to accept the apology. Gleeson assumes no responsibility for any of his actions towards Lowery.

⁴ In the early 1990’s Lowery discovered thru genetic testing she was ethnically of Ashkenazi Jewish descent.

for her Civil Rights work. Even one of Lowery's Oklahoma Civil Right's cases in the 1990's became the National Moot Court Question for debate.

Next, the Hearing Board found Lowery innocent of the charges of making the derogatory posts about Gleeson⁵ & those charges comprised Counts I & II of the original complaint. In fact that was the entire complaint by the judge which should have closed the matter. But the ARDC continued its prosecution even though the original complaint cleared Ms. Lowery of the material matters raised by Gleeson in his complaint. Since the original basis for the professional discipline no longer existed, the charges now morphed into process crimes.⁶ Moving the target is also a pattern of conduct displayed in systemic racial and gender discrimination cases in professional discipline both in Illinois and nationally.

The Hearing Board also declined to find misconduct based on her statement during the telephone conversation to Go Daddy recorded solely for internal quality assurance purposes because Lowery's comment was made in a very limited context, unrelated to any court proceeding, and did not identify anyone by name. The Board after finding Lowery told the truth throughout the proceedings then found she

⁵ The Hearing Board consisted of two women and one male. **Lowery's ARDC hearing was the ONLY hearing conducted in person during 2021. The only in person hearing in 2021 was against a woman.**

⁶ Moliterno, James E., *Politically Motivated Bar Discipline*, Washington University Law Quarterly, VOL. 83:725 with internet link: [VALUE PLURALISM IN LEGAL ETHICS \(wustl.edu\)](https://www.wustl.edu/law/ethics/value-pluralism-in-legal-ethics)

“knowingly made false statements to the ARDC about her involvement in setting up the website.”⁷

In its decision, the Hearing Board also commented that it felt Lowery was “hiding something,” however, the two women and one man on the Hearing Panel never asked Lowery a single question. Perhaps if they had asked a question, the finding and outcome would have been different. However, instead of asking Ms. Lowery questions, it appears she was disciplined for “hiding something.”

At the time of the hearing, Lowery was undergoing cancer treatments and her physical appearance likely made the Panel question why she did not raise her health issues. Had the Hearing Board asked, Lowery would have answered that she did not raise the issue of her health because the ARDC threatened her with more professional charges, if she did so. Next, the ARDC’s conduct is a direct violation of federal law, the ADA. It also prevented the Hearing Panel, Review Panel and this Court from being in full possession of the facts. It is also represents proof that the ARDC currently engages in prosecutorial misconduct for the purpose of supporting systemic gender discrimination of women attorneys in professional discipline.

⁷ In the transcript Lowery states Page 39, Line 5-7 “Peter, I told you I helped them. I showed them how to do it and then I told them I didn’t want to be a party to it.” If no discussion occurred, then the Administrator should have said, wait a second, we never discussed it. But he didn’t. An off the record discussion was held where the difference between ‘setting up’ a website or writing program code versus ‘setting up’ a website and writing fill or content was discussed. Rather than placing the off the record discussion on the record, the Administrator seized upon the mistake to accuse Lowery of lying. It again highlights the “get a woman lawyer” at all cost mentality at the ARDC.

On top of the ARDC's threat, Duebbert, the male convicted perjurer, also threatened Lowery with HIPAA violations if she revealed any information about him.⁸ Duebbert openly smirked & bragged on the record before the Hearing Board that he would not be "disbarred." Duebbert was not disbarred, but got one year UFO.

Both Lowery and the ARDC appealed the Hearing Board Decision. The ARDC appealed Counts III & IV and sought a 2 year UFO suspension or as much enhanced discipline as they could get. The all-male Review Board⁹ granted the ARDC's motion in part and denied it in part. It found Lowery violated Count III & IV, but reduced her discipline from 60 to 30 days finding the Hearing Board had improperly held her outstanding bar service against her. Many irregularities occurred in that decision, including the invention of facts not found in the record, all of which were raised and ignored by this Court in Respondent's petition.

Both Lowery & the ARDC appealed to this Court. The ARDC then sought a six month suspension, which again the ARDC lost. Lowery also lost because *this Court would not review the numerous violations of procedural & substantive due process nor the allegations of systemic gender discrimination inherent in the*

⁸ On October 7, 2018, Lowery discovered information about Duebbert as his LAP sponsor that caused her to terminate the relationship which is why Duebbert expressed such rage at Lowery. To date she has never disclosed the information because the Hearing Board refused to give her immunity.

⁹ The Review Board was all male and comprised one non attorney. Since the Review Board reviews only legal issues Respondent questions whether non attorneys should serve in such a role considering Illinois UPL rules.

professional discipline proceedings.¹⁰ This Court ignored the 26+ interruptions by Rotskoff in the Sworn Statement, that an all-male Review Board made up facts about a female Respondent that can be found nowhere in the record nor did this Court follow its own case law, instead it singled out a female attorney for different treatment than male attorneys.

This background information is important context to the following issues:

III.

REASONS FOR OBJECTION TO COSTS REQUESTED

Ms. Lowery objects to the taxation of the following costs:

A. Administrators Costs Not filed within 30 days of Final Order

The Administrator request for Costs was filed more than 30 days AFTER final judgment. *IL Sup Ct Rule 374*. Respondent's objection is timely filed. Rule 374 states:

An appellant or an appellee, as the case may be, who desires costs to be taxed, *shall state them in an itemized and verified bill* of costs which should be filed with the clerk of the reviewing court, with proof of service, *within 14 days after rehearing is denied or barred*. Any objections to the bill of costs must be filed within 10 days after service of the bill of costs, unless the time is extended by the court. If objections are filed to the bill of costs, the clerk of the reviewing court will refer said bill and objections to the court for disposition. If no objections are filed to the bill of costs, the clerk of the reviewing court shall tax the costs.

¹⁰ The Court previously held that no violation occurred when five men participated in an anti-retention campaign and lied about two judges, costing the judges retention.

The ARDC bill was not clearly itemized, nor verified nor filed within 14 days as prescribed by this Rule.

B. Witness Fees - Ron Duebbert.

The Administrator called attorney & former judge Ron Duebbert (“Duebbert”). Duebbert at the time of testimony was on interim suspension for being an imminent danger to the public and for repeatedly lying. He is now suspended UFO. Ms. Lowery was his LAP sponsor and Duebbert even lied about that fact to the Hearing Panel.¹¹ When a LAP sponsor accepts a matter, it is registered with the LAP program. The LAP director at the time was Janet Piper Voss. Because of the nature of the LAP program, Ms. Lowery would not and could not release information. Releasing information without a court Order or patient authorization violates state & federal law. Duebbert threatened Lowery about release of his information. *The Hearing Board refused to enter an Order permitting Lowery to testify*, so once again, the ruling went against the truth, against the woman and in favor of a male attorney, who was a convicted perjurer.¹²

¹¹ Sworn Statement, Page 50, Lines 22-24: A: I also helped him through the Lawyers Helping Lawyers (LAP in IL) and that's what I was trying to do. Page 51, Lines 1-7: Q: So this might be a little out on a limb but do you think that he took advantage of this friendship to somehow drag you in to assisting him? A: Yes. -Q: Against Judge Gleeson? A: Yes.

¹² Other attorneys present described via affidavit that the July 2021 hearing (the only one in 2021) as highly charged and very biased – lending an air that the proceedings were for show, that a deal was already cut and the decision was already made as to outcome. The truth was not relevant to anything.

Ms. Lowery objects to Ron Duebbert's witness fee charge as it represents an unreasonable expense to incur. The Hearing Board found Duebbert's testimony incredulous, unbelievable and not relevant. Why would an Administrator call a male convicted perjurer and removed judge, on interim suspension with pending discipline, to the stand to testify against a *female* attorney? Remember Duebbert laughed at the Hearing about how his testimony was so 'great' it was going to keep him from being disbarred.

C. Miscellaneous Costs - Synapsis Inc.

According to their website, Synapsis is an IT Company based in Springfield, Illinois, that "excels in staff augmentation, cybersecurity and information technology services." No explanation exist from the Administrator as to what this cost is for why it should be taxed to Lowery. *Lowery was found not guilty of making any of the errant online posts, so this appears to be an improper request.* It is also not reasonable to charge Lowery for what appears to be the ARDC's "computer overhead."

D. Transcripts

1. Ms. Lowery has already paid all costs of her transcripts, so this represents a double charge against her.
2. The ARDC does not state with any specificity who or what these transcripts are for, making objection to the entry impossible. Lowery

requested the ARDC forward to her an explanation, but they refused. The burden is on the ARDC to prove costs and they failed and refused their duty to Respondent or this Court. This is again an example of the systemic gender bias at the ARDC.

3. The burden is upon the ARDC to prove the expense is reasonable, necessary with good cause shown. No such good cause was shown as evidenced by their refusal to communicate.

4. Excessive Transcript Fees.

a. The ARDC deposed Ron Duebbert, the convicted perjurer, who had professional misconduct charges pending against him. This is not a reasonable charge since the Hearing Board & Review Board found his testimony unbelievable. Anything related to transcripts involving Duebbert should be denied. Next if Duebbert was to be believed, then why was his admission of being involved in a judicial campaign not addressed by the ARDC? The much more plausible explanation for this entire case lies with Duebbert. *But instead of going after the convicted perjurer, the ARDC targeted the woman attorney with cancer because she was an easier target..*

- b. The ARDC also deposed Duebberts's sister who had no knowledge of any facts in the case. She was neither credible nor mentally hinged – thus she was not a proper witness at deposition let alone hearing. The ARDC did not call her at hearing. Again, the ARDC produced no credible witness, yet wants Lowery to pay for their transcripts. More disturbing are the reports received that two witnesses contacted the ARDC with direct exculpatory evidence. The ARDC never turned over the names or the testimony to Lowery's counsel, two individuals who had direct knowledge that Lowery was innocent of the ARDC charges.
5. Rules 773(a) specifically states that the ARDC should not charge for matters they appealed and lost. It appears they did charge Lowery for transcripts they used on their appeal which they lost. Those charges should be removed or discounted.
6. Next, the taxation of costs Rule violates the Equal Protection Clause because it fails to address improper claims brought by the Administrator. In other words, this system improperly favors guilt of a Respondent in order to “recover costs.” It also fails to address the fair assessment of costs. If the attorney is cleared of 50% of the charges, then why should she pay 100% of the costs? When, if ever, is the

Administrator taxed costs when he brings unfounded charges against an attorney? And costs should never be taxed while a harassment investigation is underway.

7. The ARDC failed in its burden to identify what the listed transcripts were for or to prove 'good cause shown' or how these costs were reasonable and necessary, even after been notified in writing two weeks ago for an explanation. The failure to even communicate with counsel shows the ARDC's systemic bias against women Respondents. . Therefore the request for transcript costs should be denied.

IV

SYSTEMIC GENDER BIAS**DISPARATE TREATMENT OF WOMEN & MINORITIES BY ARDC**

Systemic Gender Bias exists when a system is so slanted in favor of one gender or race as to make the entire system flawed and unfair. **In professional discipline actions, women lawyers are 107% more likely to be found guilty of bar infractions and more severely punished/disbarred than their white male counterparts.** Professional licensing boards systematically treat female lawyers more harshly than their male counterparts. This represents systemic gender bias in professional discipline.¹³

In a 2016 study, a woman attorney was **107% more likely to be disbarred than her male counterparts** for the same conduct.¹⁴ A female attorney is also charged more frequently for conduct her male counterparts are not charged for and she receives much harsher discipline. *Id.* A 107% disparity in treatment between men and women lawyers in professional discipline is neither a minor nor an insignificant problem. And the problem with systemic bias does not stop with women.¹⁵

¹³ Elseessar, Kim, Female Lawyers Face Widespread Gender Bias, According to New Study, Forbes, October 1, 2018.

¹⁴ Kang, Y.Peter, Female Attorneys More Likely To Be Disbarred Study Says, Law 360; June 9, 2016 and Kennedy, McDonnell & Stephens; Does Gender Raise the Ethical Bar? Exploring The Punishment of Ethical Violations at Work, published by Vanderbilt University, Wharton School University of Pennsylvania and Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

¹⁵ The ARDC last annual report shows men & women are charged exactly in proportion to their bar membership. The problem? Empirical studies show that women do not commit professional misconduct at equal rates to men.

African Americans (“AA”), also suffer harsher treatment in professional disciplinary matters. Over a 28 year span, the State of California Bar found African American males were *four times more likely to have bar complaints and to receive harsher discipline than their white male counterparts*.¹⁶ An informal review of Illinois ARDC cases since 2000 shows the Illinois problem to be worse. African American male attorneys in Illinois are *seven times* more likely to receive a complaint and then they receive harsher discipline than their white male counterparts.

When Reuters wrote about the racial disparity issue, it singled out Illinois as a state which should, but refused to track such discriminatory conduct. Why? Would it have anything to do with the fact that all of the top positions at the ARDC are held by white men? Next the annual report shows that men and women are charged exactly to their proportion in the profession. Yet study after study shows that women do not commit professional misconduct at the same rate. So the ARDC is proving by their statistics that they are in fact charging and prosecuting women in order to “even up the numbers” when every study shows such a system amounts to systemic gender discrimination on its face.

Patricia W. Hatamyar & Kevin M. Simmons, Are Women More Ethical Lawyers? An Empirical Study, 31 Fla. St. U. L. Rev. (2004) . <https://ir.law.fsu.edu/lr/vol31/iss4/2>

¹⁶ Weiss, Debra Cassens, ABA Journal, New California Bar Study Finds Racial Disparities in Lawyer Discipline, November 18, 2019. See also State Bar of California Report attached.

The issue now before this Court is whether the disparate treatment of Ms. Lowery and other women lawyers is part of a pattern of systemic discrimination, unconscious bias or whether it represents intentional gender and racial discrimination in professional discipline?

A. Gender Bias in the Proceedings

During Lowery's sworn statement in July 2019, the *male prosecutor* interrupted Lowery **more than 26 times** – a behavior this Court previously stated was both unprofessional and *prima facie* evidence of gender bias. While this issue was brought to this Court's attention in Lowery's appellate brief, this Court refused to address it. Not only would the interruptions likely impact the outcome of the proceedings, all the interruptions ran up the transcript costs.

Next, at the time of Ms. Lowery's Sworn Statement in July of 2019, she had undiagnosed blood cancer which caused her blood to thicken making her overly tired, anxious and nauseous. This is disclosed not an excuse, it is an explanation. The constant interruptions not only led to confusion, it likely led to the charges against Lowery. More importantly, it needlessly *increased the costs of the transcripts and litigation*. Yet when Ms. Lowery brought her health condition to the ARDC's attention, **she was threatened with additional charges** if she used her blood cancer as an explanation because her testimony both before and after July 2019 was very different. It was apparent to any person reading her transcripts before and after

July 2019, that something was very wrong with Ms. Lowery's health. The ARDC's conduct toward Ms. Lowery was in violation of the ADA and further demonstrates that systemic gender discrimination at the ARDC. In case after case, when a male attorney has a similar issue, the ARDC bends over backwards to accommodate them, but not when it's a woman attorney.

In response, Lowery provided to the ARDC a signed letter from her physician confirming her cancer diagnosis, her successful cancer treatments and her fitness to practice law. The ARDC continued undaunted.

B. All Male Review Board:

Next, the Review Board assigned by this Court was 100% male. For a woman attorney, that is NOT a panel of one's peers. National bar studies repeatedly establish the disparate treatment of women and minorities in bar discipline occurs when they have all male panels or all white panels. Women and minorities are treated much more harshly in the filing of professional complaints and in the discipline given when no diversity exists.¹⁷ In fact, the systemic bias seems to follow a consistent pattern. (1) Inflated professional charges are made against the woman (2) process crimes are added (3) when the original complaint is proven unfounded the prosecutor pursues the process crime. (4) male attorneys engaging in

¹⁷ In 2015 Deubbert was censored for knowingly and intentionally made a false statement about the qualifications, integrity, and other facts of his opponent in a promotional mailer that he sent to 75,000 to 100,000 potential voters while campaigning to be a judge in the 20th Judicial District in the November 2012 election.

the identical behavior are either not charged or receive favorable treatment and less harsh discipline. (5) the female is targeted relentlessly unlike her male counterparts to the point that many women leave the profession or attempt suicide, so great was the perceived wrong committed against them by this Court.¹⁸

Next, the Review Board consisting of three males made factual findings which do not exist in record. The opinion cites no transcripts nor any record before this Court. The Review Board purpose was to review the law, not invent facts. Yet the Review Board went beyond its stated scope, to find Ms. Lowery misdirected the ARDC investigation. *Rev Bd. at 14*. No factual finding exists anywhere in the record to support this finding. None. No charge or allegation was ever made that the investigation was misdirected.¹⁹

Additionally, it was not one fact the Review Board invented in its opinion without any transcript basis to justify its ruling. Mr. Vuckovich in his brief identified several pages of serious factual mistakes made by the Review Board which this court summarily dismissed. As the saying goes, “Bad facts make bad law.” Thus the question must be asked: Was the Review Board’s conduct a mistake? Or was it so

¹⁸ In two cases of the fifteen attorneys who participated in the “grievance” only the women attorneys were singled out for prosecution. The male prosecutors gave all the men participants a pass. (In re Jennifer Teague)

¹⁹ This misdirection finding was made by the JIB against Duebbert. No factual basis exists in the record to make such a finding against Lowery. Inventing facts against a female respondent in bar discipline is also direct evidence of systemic discrimination. Yet this Court ignored it when it was brought to its attention.

gender biased it felt emboldened to make up facts about a woman to justify its harsh legal findings?

The recitation of these facts is important because it is part and parcel of a systemic problem with the Illinois professional disciplinary system and why costs should be denied in this case. It should also cause this Court to pause and reopen the entire proceedings to address the prima facie case of harassment and gender discrimination which occurred herein.

C. Gender Bias in Application of Disciplinary Rules

Most problematic are the numerous cases of disparate treatment by the ARDC involving women in Illinois professional discipline cases. For instance, the ARDC failed to provide to this Court an *exculpatory case* directly on point during the appeal process. The ARDC Administrator, Jerome Larkin was the prosecuting attorney *In re William Beatty Starnes*, No 63592, 118 Ill.2d 489, 115 Ill.Dec. 379, 517 N.E.2d 1065, yet at no time did he cite the case nor bring it to any of the Panel or this Court's attention.

In the Starnes case, FIVE MALE attorneys in the Fifth District engaged in an anti-retention campaign spewing lies which cost two judges their retention. This Court, the Illinois Supreme Court, found that when five MALES engage in the conduct *there was no rules violation and dismissed the charges*. Despite knowing this decision, the ARDC prosecuted Lowery, a woman, for the same conduct and

then never cited the case as an exculpatory decision. Lowery found out about the case preparing this motion. Failing to bring forth exculpatory case law is a violation of the Rules themselves. It also highlights the disparate treatment of men versus women in ARDC professional discipline cases.

D. Examples of ARDC Systemic Bias & Disparate Treatment

1. Paul Storment, Jr. – a repeat serial offender. He instructed his client to lie to the Court during trial, stole client funds and otherwise brought ill repute upon the profession & harmed the public. He is again practicing law. He is a white male.
2. Brady Allen – Mr. Allen has been investigated by the Illinois AG for four years for using his position of trust as an Assistant States Attorney in Coles County to sexually harass and extort women criminal defendants. Even though Allen is criminally charged with over 30 felonies which involve dangerous behavior to the public, there are no pending ARDC complaints against him & no motion for interim suspension has ever been filed to protect the public.²⁰
3. Stephen Wigginton– Wigginton repeatedly drove drunk & *was accused of official misconduct against women in his office as the Southern District of Illinois, USA.* Wigginton was found guilty of

²⁰ ARDC cite checked on 3/31/2023 at 1:15 p.m.

sexual misconduct by the DOJ during its investigation and he resigned. It took the ARDC four years to bring charges. Then the ARDC *never charged nor addressed his sexual misconduct against women in his office. Missouri suspended him indefinitely.*

This Court recently imposed discipline *on consent*²¹ pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 762(b). Wigginton was suspended from the practice of law for one (1) year and until further order of the Court, with the suspension stayed in its entirety by a three (3) year period of probation subject to conditions.²²

4. Amiel Cueto – His bar discipline did not occur until after he was released from federal prison for obstruction of justice. He openly harassed female US Attorney Mirium Miquelon. Cueto called Ms. Miquelon, **Miss Piggy**. He also openly bragged about ‘owning 17 of the 19 judges in St. Clair County.’ This highlights again the toxic environment women lawyers experience practicing law in Southern Illinois. Ironically, Gleeson awarded Cueto a \$24.6 million dollar

²¹ Disparate treatment of women and minorities appears at every phase of the prosecution by the ARDC. Men are much more likely to have ‘deals’ made and is very much evidence of the ‘good ole boy’ system in action.

²² Ms. Lowery was never offered discipline on consent unless she agreed to disbarment or 2 years UFO which is tantamount to disbarment.

Next, when Lowery approached LAP before her cancer diagnosis, many thought she suffered from anxiety due to her high heart rate when it was actually her thickened blood. LAP director, Dr. Diana Uchyima thought she had anxiety caused by PTSD and said since it was caused by Ms. Lowery working at Ground Zero on April 19th after the Oklahoma City Bombing, it wasn’t Illinois responsibility to deal with her problems, she needed to go back to Oklahoma.

attorney fee to a disbarred attorney and convicted federal felon. The award was later vacated.²³ No disciplinary charges were ever brought against Gleeson for his judicial conduct.

5. Michael Madigan – Over a year ago Madigan was indicted for public corruption. No ARDC charges have ever been filed against him nor any interim suspension sought. It is hard to comprehend how the failure to address public corruption in the bar advances the ARDC’s mission of “*promoting and protecting the integrity of the legal profession.*”
6. Jennifer Teague – In that case, only women attorneys and a women judge were prosecuted. **The male attorneys who engaged in the identical conduct before the Worker’s Compensation Court were not prosecuted.** Why? One of the female attorney who was prosecuted tried to point out this discrepancy to the Court in her brief – only for the Court to ignore it.
7. Brian Flynn – Complaints were filed about Mr. Flynn posting defamatory comments on Face Book, in the newspaper and making outrageous utterances about a judge in open court. In 2018, the ARDC

²³ After initially entering a default judgment in favor of disbarred attorney Amiel Cueto awarding compensatory damages, punitive damages, and attorneys' fees totaling more than \$98 million, St. Clair County Associate Judge Andrew Gleeson entered orders vacating the \$24.6 million attorneys' fee award and reducing and eventually eliminating the \$66.5 million punitive damages award. Cueto’s lawsuit was against American Bank Holdings, Inc. of Maryland and Gleeson’s decision was reversed on appeal.

wrote back to the Complainant that “Illinois Attorneys enjoy First Amendment Rights.” This represents direct evidence of disparate treatment by the ARDC against women such as Lowery, because the identical conduct at the identical time, was treated quite differently when it involved a woman attorney.²⁴

8. Physical Attack - Ms. Lowery was physically attacked by a male attorney & friend of Gleeson’s at the St. Clair County Courthouse in June of 2022. A witnesses reported the conduct to the ARDC (multiple witnesses called the ARDC to complain. The ARDC did nothing. The ARDC cited a lack of a police report. Yet Ms. Lowery submitted two police reports, one to the Belleville Police and one to the St. Clair County Sheriff. The same male attorney previously took a baseball bat to another attorney’s BMW bashing out the vehicle windows.

E. ONGOING HARASSMENT OF LOWERY

Ms. Lowery has been the subject of continuous harassment by Gleeson, a male judge. Since 2017, Gleeson has filed more than 13+ bar complaints against

²⁴ Copies of the Flynn Complaint are included. In October of 2023, Flynn & Gleeson conspired to enter Lowery’s hacked Twitter account in order to make additional false reports to the ARDC.

Lowery was again required to respond to the ARDC inquiry despite the fact that the ARDC set up its own social media account on Twitter in order to spy on Lowery. So the ARDC knew based upon the Twitter notice of Hack posted that her account had been clearly hacked just hours before Gleeson made his complaint. No one ever bothered to question Gleeson about his filing a false report on a clearly hacked account.

Lowery. Each one of these complaints took time away from Lowery’s law practice and her ability to earn a living.²⁵ Gleeson and Rotskoff weaponized the bar disciplinary process. The ARDC not only permitted the conduct, but encouraged it by not addressing the harassment when it was notified of it occurring in October of 2018. All 13+ bar complaints by a male judge were on State of Illinois letterhead, used State of Illinois resources and resulted in Ms. Lowery incurring a \$2500 deductible with ISBA Mutual for each complaint. Between deductibles and paying Mr. Vuchovich, her out of her own pocket costs have now exceeded \$150,000 requiring her to sell her home, all as she suffers from blood cancer.

More importantly, at no point did the ARDC or this Court question why a male judge was harassing a female attorney with non-stop bar complaints – especially when Lowery had never practiced before him. At the time of these Complaints, Gleeson was going through a divorce. Ms. Lowery reported this judge’s behavior to Mr. Rotskoff by email, Mr. Manella, ISBA Mutual, Justice Karmeier and later Mr. Vuckovich. All she wanted was for the harassment to stop.²⁶ No mechanism exists to bring issues involving gender discrimination or harassment in

²⁵ Nine of the complaints were found to be without merit, the one is the subject to this objection.

²⁶ Specifically in November of 2018, Lowery reported the harassment and threats to the Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. He told her to not worry, nothing would come of it. Then when contacted by Mr. Vuchovich, Justice Karmeier remembered the call, but “forgot” what it was about.

professional discipline to the Court's attention without fear of more charges being leveled.

Next, the ARDC sought disbarment, then 2 years UFO, then 6 months suspension against Ms. Lowery because a male judge wanted to 'destroy' her.²⁷ Perhaps this Court should inquire into the reasons this male judge holds such extreme bias against female attorneys especially one who has never appeared professionally in his Court. All of the bar complaints were on State letterhead, lending the prestige of office to Gleeson's terror campaign against a woman with a disability.²⁸

V.

EQUITALE RELIEF

Ms. Lowery understands that the Rule permits the taxation of costs, but requests this Court grant 'equitable relief' under the circumstances. If the foregoing has not caused this Court to pause, please consider the following.

A. **Hardship:** Ms. Lowery was diagnosed with blood cancer in June of 2020 and as a result has been limited in her ability to work or practice law. Her first court appearance returning to full time practice was the week of March 20,

²⁷ While the reasons publicly appear to be for the anti-retention campaign, Lowery was the only attorney in the group which consisted of other attorneys singled out for discipline.

²⁸ Politically Motivated Bar Discipline, *Washington University Law Review*, Volume 83, Issue 3.

2023. Then you have the excessive complaints by Gleeson which went unchecked by the ARDC as previously discussed.

- B. **Outstanding Bills:** Mr. Vuckovich did an excellent job in this matter and Ms. Lowery is working to get the last three months of his bill paid off. She also has over \$60,000 in non-covered medical bills AFTER insurance paid. Her house went into foreclosure in February 2023, *not from non-payment*, but because ‘someone called’ her bank and told them this disciplinary case would likely place her mortgage in default, so the bank called the note due despite the fact that Ms. Lowery was sending in timely payments. Of course to date Judge Gleeson has failed and refused to transfer the foreclosure case (St. Clair County Case #23-FC-0083) out of the 20th Judicial Circuit and to federal court due to complete diversity and also due to an obvious conflict of interest in the 20th Judicial Circuit. Yet once again the motion to transfer has been sitting before the Court & Judge Gleeson for more than six weeks without appropriate action.
- C. **Support of the Bar:** Ms. Lowery has donated to the Illinois Bar Foundation, The Oklahoma Bar Foundation, Oklahoma Lawyers Helping Lawyers and the Illinois Lawyer’s Assistance Program, all before her illness. She is also a Paul Harris Fellow. Next, *despite applying for jobs, no one will hire her because of this disciplinary case.* Would this Court give an attorney a position with a

finding that she intentionally “misdirected a professional investigation, impugned a judge AND lied to her licensure board?” The answer proves the point. It also identifies the problem when such discipline is disparately given to an already marginalized group of attorneys. Judge Gleeson specifically threatened Lowery with the following statement: “I will see to it that you are homeless and living under a bridge.” This was reported to Justice Karmerier when it occurred.

D. **30 day payment requirement.** The rule requires payment within 30 days. If the court requires payment, Ms. Lowery requests a reasonable payment plan or additional time, which would allow her to get back up on her feet economically, including selling her house to pay all the bills incurred by Gleeson’s harassment. Or this Court can always count her pro bono work to a disabled man of limited means as his Guardian for the last 5 years as in kind payment.

E. **The Purpose of Discipline is ‘not to punish**

This Court has repeatedly held the purpose of discipline is not to punish. If this Court is not aware, *process crimes are routinely used to persecute minorities and political opponents.* Section 3 of 42 U.S.C. § 1985

- F. **Disparate Earning Power:** Women and minorities earn less money than their white male counterparts. When Lowery started practicing law in 1987²⁹, the gender pay gap was 63 cents for every dollar earned by men. Today the average pay gap is 79 cents for every dollar a man earns. Over a lifetime, that wage gap amounts to over FOUR MILLION in lost earning power.³⁰ Based upon this disparity, requiring a disabled women undergoing cancer treatment to pay the entire cost of an appeal the ARDC lost under these facts, seems overtly harsh.
- G. Next, if the pattern and practice at the ARDC continues, Ms. Lowery fully expects her objection to be met by a *Petition for Excess Costs* or more likely more bar complaints by Gleeson.

VI

RELIEF SOUGHT

Ms. Lowery requests any and all of the following:

- a. Stay of all proceedings pending outcome of the investigation by the Director of Equity & Inclusion.
- b. Reopening of the case to see if the foregoing facts when heard in full would have resulted in a different outcome, whether the case was a

²⁹ Lowery is a white female, age 61.

³⁰ [Women in the Workforce: The Gender Pay Gap Is Greater for Certain Racial and Ethnic Groups and Varies by Education Level | U.S. GAO](#)

product of harassment, and whether the discipline Lowery received was based upon systemic gender discrimination.

- c. Waiver of the costs based upon equity, comparative negligence, etc.
- d. Additional time to pay
- e. Reduction of assessed costs.

In fair world where the Rules of Law is followed, this Court would reopen this case, but there appears to be no mechanism to do so which highlights another problem in bar discipline. Where does a Respondent complain when harassment and bias allegedly occurs at the ARDC during professional disciplinary proceedings? Any complaint or criticism is met with more charges and harsher treatment by the ARDC and this Court. To date, Ms. Lowery has no idea where such matters are to be addressed.

VII

CONCLUSION

Ms. Lowery has served the Courts tirelessly over 35 years through her bar work. She was the second woman appointed to the 5th District Character & Fitness Committee *in 2007* after Ms. Whittington. Ms. Lowery brings these matters to the Court's attention **to improve the legal system, not to disparage or destroy it**. One does not donate endless hours to programs representing minorities, women and those who lack means, only to lose their license to a system intent on destroying her & the

very people she seeks to protect; those who have historically been marginalized and disenfranchised by the legal system.

In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court had the opportunity to end racial segregation. It failed in its responsibilities. *Plessy v. Ferguson*. The case before this Court represents a similar problem, a problem of systemic gender and racial bias which results in the disparate treatment of women and minorities in professional discipline.

The level of fear by women and minorities to speak out about what has occurred to them during bar discipline process is concerning. This Court had a female ARDC Administrator, Ms. Mary Robinson, who is a fine attorney. The undersigned worked with her and never had an issue with Ms. Robinson. Ms. Lowery also worked with the Oklahoma Bar General Counsel which is their Chief Disciplinary Counsel, Mr. Dan Murdock, on various matters. Again never an issue. So in two jurisdictions, over 35 years of practice, before two State Supreme Courts, two Chief Bar Disciplinary counsel, no issue ever existed with Lowery's professional conduct until she encountered male attorneys Rotskoff & Gleeson.

Unfortunately, this case represents an all too familiar pattern of discriminatory conduct in professional discipline. This Court can take judicial notice of the historical treatment of women, such as **Anita Hill or Christine Ford Blasey**. One need only look at how their testimony was received when they dared to speak out against a male judge.

In Illinois, it appears all a male lawyer/judge has to do is whistle his complaint, then ARDC initiates the riot and the woman is publicly lynched. *Yet when 5 male attorneys in the same judicial district did far worse, this Court said there was no issue.* Over and over again, this case demonstrates that the “Good Ole Boy System” is alive and thriving in Illinois.

As previously stated, women lawyer are 107% more likely to be disbarred and disciplined due to systemic gender bias, not because of their professional misconduct, but because they are women attorneys. Ms. Lowery is now one of those women. In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Court said separate is equal. It is clear that women and minority bar members are not treated equally by our professional disciplinary system. The question is when will this Courts address it?

Respectfully submitted,

THE LOWERY LAW FIRM



Margaret J. Lowery, IARDC 6271777

1624 Carlyle Ave, Suite 516

Belleville, IL 62221

(618) 741-6600

mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

In the Matter of:)	
)	
MARGARET JEAN LOWERY)	SUPREME COURT NO MR 31506
)	
RESPONDENT,)	COMMISSION NO 2020 PR 0018
)	
NO. 6271777)	

NOTICE OF FILING & PROOF OF SERVICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on April 24, 2023, an electronic copy of the Respondents Objection to Administrator’s Petition for Costs was submitted to the Clerk of the Supreme Court for filing. On that same date, one copy was served on Counsel for the Administrator via email to Mr. Peter Rotskoff.

Respectfully submitted,

THE LOWERY LAW FIRM



Margaret J. Lowery, IARDC 6271777
1624 Carlyle Ave, Suite 516
Belleville, IL 62221
(618) 741-6600
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

The undersigned attorney, hereby certifies, per the Rules, that the Respondent served copies on the Administrator of the foregoing pleadings on the 24th day of April, 2023 and Mr. Vuckovich



Margaret J. Lowery

FILED

April 24, 2023

ARDC CLERK

Exhibit 4

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,
Attorney-Respondent,
No. 6271777.

Commission No. 2023PR00060

AFFIDAVIT

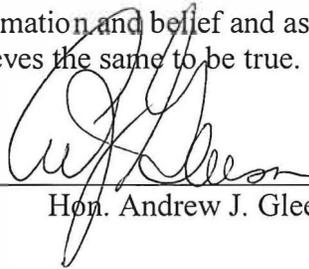
I, Hon. Andrew J. Gleeson (“Affiant”), being duly sworn, hereby say:

1. Affiant is over the age of 18, possesses firsthand knowledge of the facts presented in this Affidavit, and if called as a witness, Affiant will testify to the truth of the facts presented in this Affidavit.
2. Affiant is the Chief Judge of the 20th Judicial Circuit, St. Clair County, Illinois.
3. Affiant has reviewed the complaint in this matter, as well as the underlying objection to petition for costs and judgment for costs referenced in paragraphs five and six of the complaint.
4. At no time did Affiant ever state that he would see to it that Respondent was homeless and living under a bridge.
5. At no time has Affiant ever had a substantive conversation with the Respondent, except for a passing greeting at a bar association function.

6. Further Affiant sayeth not.

CERTIFICATION

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that he verily believes the same to be true.



Hon. Andrew J. Gleeson

Dated: 12/11/2023

Exhibit 5

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.

Commission No. 2023PR00060

COMPLAINT

Jerome Larkin, Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (“ARDC”), by his attorney, Rachel C. Miller, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 753(b), complains of Respondent, Margaret Jean Lowery (“Respondent”), who was licensed to practice law in Illinois on July 21, 2000, and alleges that Respondent has engaged in the following conduct which subjects her to discipline pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 770:

COUNT I

(false statement in a pleading)

1. On January 17, 2023, the Supreme Court entered an order suspending the Respondent from the practice of law for 30 days and requiring her to successfully complete the ARDC Professionalism Seminar within one year of the Court’s final order of discipline. The discipline was effective February 7, 2023.

2. On March 17, 2023, the ARDC sent a letter and Statement of Costs to Respondent’s attorney notifying him that Respondent was responsible for costs in the amount of \$1,500 pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 773.

FILED
9/18/2023 1:20 PM
ARDC Clerk

3. At no time between March 17, 2023 and April 18, 2023 did Respondent pay the \$1,500 in costs pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 773.

4. On April 18, 2023, the ARDC filed a petition for order and judgment for costs in the Illinois Supreme Court.

5. On April 24, 2023, Respondent filed an objection to the petition for order and judgment for costs.

6. In her objection, Respondent stated that Judge Andrew Gleeson “specifically threatened” Respondent by saying “I will see to it that you are homeless and living under a bridge.”

7. Respondent’s statement in paragraph six, above, was false, because Judge Gleeson did not make the statement.

8. Respondent knew at the time that she made the statement in paragraph 6, above, that it was false.

9. By reason of the conduct outlined above, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. knowingly making a false statement of fact or law to a tribunal by filing a false pleading in the Illinois Supreme Court, as described in paragraph six, above, in violation of Rule 3.3(a)(1) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010),
- b. knowingly making a false statement or making a statement with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge, adjudicatory officer or public legal officer, or of a candidate for election or appointment to judicial or legal office, as described in paragraph six, above, in violation of Rule 8.2(a) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010), and
- c. conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation by making the false statement described in paragraph six, above, in violation of Rule 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

COUNT II

(false statement or a statement with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity concerning the integrity of the Supreme Court of Illinois)

10. The Administrator reincorporates and realleges paragraphs one through eight, above.

11. Prior to July 6, 2023, Respondent created an account on Twitter under the name of “Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm.”

12. On July 6, 2023, Respondent created and published a post on the Twitter account described in paragraph 11, above, the said the following:

“Did you know the ARDC & the Illinois Supreme Court has a [sic] history of permitting harassment of women until they comitt [sic] suicide or leave the bar? That’s how they enforce their “anti discrimination and non harassment policy.” How do I know this? I interviewed the affected women.”

13. Respondent’s statement in paragraph 12, above, that the ARDC and Illinois Supreme Court have a history of permitting harassment of women until they commit suicide or leave the bar was false.

14. Respondent made the statement in paragraph 12, above, knowing it was false, or with a reckless disregard for its truth or falsity.

15. By reason of the conduct outlined above, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. knowingly making a false statement or making a statement with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge, by conduct including stating that the Illinois Supreme Court permits harassment of women until they commit suicide, as described in paragraph 12, above, in violation of Rule 8.2(a) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

WHEREFORE, the Administrator requests that this matter be assigned to a panel of the Hearing Board, that a hearing be held, and the panel make findings of fact, conclusions of fact and law, and a recommendation for such discipline as is warranted.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Larkin, Administrator
Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission

By: /s/ Rachel C. Miller
Rachel C. Miller

Rachel C. Miller
Counsel for Administrator
3161 W. White Oaks Dr., Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
Telephone: (217) 546-3523
Email: ARDCeservice@iadc.org
Email: rmiller@iadc.org

Exhibit 6



Margaret J. Lowery  **מרגרט לורי** @lowerylawfirm · 11h ...

Today I found out that a person I had admired, profoundly broke my heart and that person was Chief Justice Anne Burke. I attend bar meetings and we swam in the pool together talking at bar meetings on the difficulties of women in the bar and the UMPH it took to succeed. 1/2

 1    49  



Margaret J. Lowery  **מרגרט לורי** @lowerylawfirm · 11h ...

I then found out today, that she lied to my face about her kindness. She HATES JEWS. While smiling to me and nodding, behind those kind eyes lied seething JEW HATE. Then she smirked and laid her plan to destroy my career.

 1    31  



Margaret J. Lowery  **מרגרט לורי** @lowerylawfirm · 11h ...

I am a practicing attorney in the State of Illinois and it is the MOST CORRUPT system and the most TOXIC SYSTEM in the USA. I would rather pour gasoline over my body than ever step foot in that FUCKING HELLHOLE. So why don't I just leave THE BAR, they won't FUCKING LET ME!

Exhibit 7



Margaret J. Lowery מרגרט לורי @lowerylawfirm · Nov 9



ONLY in ILLINOIS do you see a retired CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE COURT walking into the courthouse with her DEFENDANT attorney husband for his CORRUPTION trial. Same person who spewed JEW HATE all over the FBI tape airwaves. This is HOW the State of Illinois demonstrates FAIRNESS!



Ex-Ald. Edward Burke corruption trial:
Display featuring famous corruption cases...

[Visit >](#)

Exhibit 8



Margaret J. Lowery  מרגרט לורי @lowerylawfirm · Nov 13



Every single day I am going to ask the tough questions. Why? Because women and minority attorneys deserve better treatment than they are receiving from this entity IMHO.

The Illinois Supreme Court espouses that it does NOT tolerate workplace abuse, such as bullying, retaliation and discrimination, so when will the justices produce a complete list of all the whistleblowers they have

whistleblowers they have hired to demonstrate this statement?



 41



Exhibit 9



Margaret J Lowery @MargaretJLowery · Aug 11



If you believe Illinois attorneys should or should not have free speech, let the court know your opinion by telling them here

Illinois Supreme Court
200 E Capitol Ave
Springfield, IL 62701

Or [@illinoiscourts](#)



Margaret J Lowery @MargaretJLowery · Aug 11

Manage exten

Open Microso

Wow the Illinois Supreme Court has a hit list of attorneys they want to target because they are outspoken whistleblowers? They target their political opponents? Is this true? I can hardly fathom the most distinguished leaders of the law would send the ARDC out after your... [Show more](#)



Exhibit 10



Margaret J. Lowery, JD, MHA • 3rd+

General Counsel - External

1mo • Edited • 

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If you think we have not entered a TOTALITARIAN REGIME under our current elected officials, then you need to see the attached.

Now the Illinois Supreme Court is following attorneys to the Holocaust Museum in Missouri to spy on them. What possible 'confidential investigation' can there be for an attorney to attend an event at the Holocaust Museum? Oh no that's not the point, the point is to let everyone know the government spies on Jews?

This is the behavior of the Third Reich or Nazi's and the purpose is to make people afraid to associate with you. The purpose is to isolate an individual same as what the SS & Hitler did. I am EMBARRASSED to be a member of the Illinois Bar.

This kind of conduct on the part of the Illinois Supreme Court should OUTRAGE everyone.



ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

1 of 2

One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive, Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6219
(312) 565-2600 (800) 826-8625
Fax (312) 565-2320

3161 West White Oaks Drive, Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
(217) 546-3523 (800) 252-8048
Fax (217) 546-3785

Frank Wolff
One Metropolitan Square
211 North Broadway, Suite 3600
St. Louis, MO 63102
fwolff@bryancave.com

Springfield
June 27, 2023

Re: Margaret Jean Lowery
Administrator's Investigation
No. 2023IN01374

Dear Mr. Wolff:

It is my understanding that you represent the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum ("Museum") in St. Louis. We are engaged in a confidential investigation, referenced above, regarding an Illinois-licensed attorney, Margaret Jean Lowery. We would like to make a request for information related to an event hosted at the Museum, which has been described to us as an Anti-Semitism Seminar ("Seminar").

Please advise our office, in writing, on the following details regarding the June 13 Seminar at the Museum:

- whether Ms. Lowery attended the Anti-Semitism Seminar on June 13, 2023, at the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum;
- whether it was in-person only, livestream, or hybrid event;
- what time the seminar began and ended;
- whether this was a ticketed event;
- whether receiving a ticket required a payment; and
- whether the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum maintained a guest list and/or sign-in procedure for the event.

Exhibit 11

M.R. 032026



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Thread



Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm @MargaretJLowery

When female attorneys are persecuted by professional licensure boards with false charges, made up evidence & testimony by a convicted perjurer, it represents a system out of control. They hold you down, shove it up your ass and then tell you to enjoy it. IT'S CAREER RAPE.

8:33 AM · Mar 24, 2023 · 454 Views

1 Quote 2 Likes



Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery La... @MargaretJLo... · Mar 24

If that sounds harsh, it should. False accusations are not only the worst thing in law, they are a mortal sin. Bearing false witness. How can anyone have faith in a legal system which KNOWINGLY persecutes the people its charged to protect?



reuters.com

Racial bias in attorney discipline? Few states track for it. When Masah SamForay, a family attorney in Joliet, Illinois, heard that a report from the State Bar of California found it had disbarred Black...

1



59



Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery La... @MargaretJLo... · Mar 24

And my research has left me horrified at how broken our system is. In Illinois, AA lawyers are 7 times more likely to be charged, convicted and receive harsher punishment than their white male counterparts. California its 4 times.

2



199



Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery La... @MargaretJLo... · Mar 25

And now another study, women are 106% more likely to be disbarred or receive harsher punishment than their male counterparts. In fact, women lawyers are targeted for complaints that men are not.

1



158



Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery La... @MargaretJLo... · Mar 24

A client just sent me this. Read it. Not my opinion. Their observation.

I've always read that rape is about power and

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Margaret J Lowery @MargaretJLowery Health Care & Corp MHA, BA. Licensec Illinois & Oklahoma

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Central Banks · Trending FOMC 5,193 Tweets

Sports · Trending #WWEDraft 5,472 Tweets

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Politics · Trending Brett Kavanaugh 20.9K Tweets

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Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm ✓
@MargaretJLowery

Effective today, the ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ruled no attorney in the State of Illinois has ANY FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS. If an attorney expresses ANY opinion about a judge, it will subject the attorney to immediate discipline.

11:39 AM · Jan 17, 2023 · 151 Views



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Margaret J Lowery
@MargaretJLowery
Health Care & Corp
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191K Tweets

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Exhibit 12



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M.R.032026

← Tweet



Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery Law Firm
@MargaretJLowery



Did you know the ARDC & the Illinois Supreme Court has a history of permitting harassment of women until they comitt suicide or leave the bar? That's how they enforce their "anti discrimination and non harassment policy." How do I know this? I interviewed the affected women.

[@illinoiscourts](#)

Last edited 8:15 PM · Jul 6, 2023 · 169 Views

1 Like



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Margaret J Lowery ...
@MargaretJLowery

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Health Care & Corporate Law. JD, MHA, BA. Licensed to practice in Illinois & Oklahoma.

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Exhibit 13



Margaret J Lowery of The Lowery Law ...  @MargaretJLo... · Jul 19 ...

Isn't it ironic that the new SCC associate judge signed off on the majority of Chief Judge Andrew Gleeson's DIVORCE and in return gets appointed to a new judgeship? I wonder what the paid rate of exchange was for services rendered in that divorce. All above board I'm sure. 🤔



 69



Exhibit 14



Margaret J Lowery 
@MargaretJLowery



Since 2018, I have notified [@illinoiscourts](#) of abuse, harassment, retaliation, sex based discrimination (in writing almost a dozen times). Not once have they opened an investigation. Not once have they stepped in to stop the abuse. Not once have they acted to protect against the male harassment, retaliation or discrimination despite having a policy in effect. I've been subject to over 20 harassing complaints by a judge I've never appeared before as a single woman. He was going thru a nasty divorce. The Illinois Supreme Court apparently endorses, permits, encourages and sanctions the harassment of women and minorities in the Illinois Bar to the point they must flee the jurisdiction. [ilcourtsaudio.blob.core.windows.net/antilles-resou...](#) [@megynkelly](#) [@RealCandaceO](#)

6:37 AM · Aug 14, 2023 · 31 Views

Exhibit 15

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

FILED
11/7/2023 5:52 PM
ARDC Clerk

In the Matter of:)
)
MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,)
) Commission No. 2023PR00060
Attorney-Respondent,)
)
No. 6271777.)

PETITION TO REMOVE CHAIR FOR CAUSE

COMES NOW the Respondent Margaret J. Lowery and moves to remove the Chair for cause pursuant to Commission Rule and 735 ILCS 5/ 2-1001(a)(3), to-wit:

1. Ms. Choi Williams is the Hearing Board Chair in this matter.
2. She is a partisan Democrat who has made substantial donations to Democratic candidates. *See Exhibit A.* Ms. Lowery is an Oklahoma Republican.
3. Both Ms. Choi Williams and ARDC Miller appear to have conspired to violate the Rules of Professional Conduct, 3.4, Fairness to Opposing Counsel, in this matter which states “A lawyer shall not:

(a) unlawfully obstruct another party's access to evidence or unlawfully alter, destroy or conceal a document or other material having potential evidentiary value. A lawyer shall not counsel or assist another person to do any such act;

Two members of this court allegedly are conspiring to deprive the Respondent of her Civil and Constitutional Rights because she is ethnic Jew?

4. On November 2, 2023, Chair Choi Williams entered an Order barring

Respondent from conducting *any discovery* in the above matter. Ms. Lowery filed a Motion for Leave to File *Interrogatories*, eleven (11) short questions. The ARDC objected and in their objection, ARDC Miller asked the Chair to bar Respondent from conducting any discovery in the above case.

5. On November 2, 2023 the Chair entered an order barring Respondent from conducting any discovery in the case in violation of the RPC and Respondent's civil and constitutional rights. *See Exhibit B.*
6. The Chair's act of barring discovery means she has prejudged the matter. Denying an accused the right to conduct ANY discovery is per se evidence of bias and it is also a violation of Commission Rules, the RPC and the Judicial Canons.
7. As further evidence, the voters of Illinois refused to elect Chair Choi-Williams to the position of appellate judge in 2022. Apparently the Chair's bias left voters 'less than impressed.'
8. Next, there is the direct evidence that these proceedings were brought for an improper and illegal reason by the ARDC upon which the Chair has now taken up the illegal cause.
9. ARDC Miller violated the civil and constitutional rights of Respondent by conducting a secret governmental investigation of her attendance at the St. Louis Holocaust Museum, Gestapo Style, to wit, on June 27, 2023, ARDC

Attorney Rachael Miller sent a letter to the St. Louis Holocaust museum's attorney, Frank Wolff of Bryan Cave in St. Louis demanding the following information:

It is my understanding that you represent the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum ("Museum") in St. Louis. We are engaged in a CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATION, referenced above, regarding Illinois-licensed attorney, Margaret Jean Lowery.....Please advise our office, in writing, on the following details regarding the June 13 Seminar at the Museum:

- a. whether Ms. Lowery attended the Anti Semitism Seminar on June 13, 2023 at the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum
- b. whether it was in-person only, livestream or hybrid event
- c. what time the seminar began and ended
- d. whether this was a ticketed event
- e. whether receiving a ticket required a payment; and
- f. whether the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum maintained a guest list and/or sign-in procedure for this event.

A copy of Ms. Miller's letter is *attached to this Petition as Exhibit C*.

10. What professional regulation does the Illinois Supreme Court conduct of Jews at Temple/Holocaust Museum in Missouri? What possible professional regulation is involved with the ticket price? A sign in sheet? Ms. Lowery is an ethnic Jew who lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She is also a registered Republican.
11. Next, this Court by the through the ARDC failed and refused to address the anti-Semitic conduct of Attorney Ed Burke who went on a hate filled anti-Semitic tirade on FBI recordings as part of his public corruption trial records.

This was the spouse of the sitting Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court making anti-Semitic comments which this Court and the ARDC have known about for FIVE YEARS AND for FIVE YEARS nothing has been done to address it? Yet an ethnic Jew attending a safety Seminar requires a Nazi Storm Trooper inquiry in another state.

12. Then the retired Chief Justice Lloyd Karmeier confirms Respondent reported the harassment and threat to the Illinois Supreme Court and the Illinois Supreme Court IGNORED IT? The Court ignored their own policies, state and federal law?
13. So in summary, the Illinois Supreme Court ignores anti-Semitism within its ranks when it involves the Chief Justice and her spouse, ignores his public corruption for more than 5 years, ignores threats reported to the Court, ignores written reports of harassment even though there are more than 20 harassing complaints, conducts Gestapo investigations of Jews and then puts a partisan democrat on the case who publicly comments on the credibility of witnesses in advance of hearing?
14. The hallmark of bias, extreme prejudice and unfitness to remain on a case is where a judge forms an opinion about a matter or an attorney's character solely upon ex parte statements about extra judicial events without full possession of the facts. Ms. Choi Williams made posts in favor of Mr. Larkin, the

Complainant, and the Arab Bar on Social Media.

15. *Illinois Supreme Court Rule 63* “An independent and honorable judiciary is indispensable to justice in our society.
16. Ms. Choi Williams permitted the judge's work and social relationships to influence her conduct and/or her judgment.
17. Ms. Choi Williams Order barring discovery, conveys the impression that Ms. Miller and the ARDC are in a special position to influence the Chair which apparently they are as evidence by all the photos of the Chair in Exhibit D.
18. Ms. Choi Williams failed to abstain from public comment about a pending, or impending proceeding and she has therefore demonstrated her bias towards one party and against the Respondent.

AUTHORITY

In re Marriage of O'Brien, 2011 IL 109039, the Illinois Supreme Court cited the U.S. Supreme Court decision of *Caperton v A.T. Massey Coal Co*, 556 US 868 (2009) in describing circumstances requiring recusal. The Court has identified additional instances which, as an objective matter, require recusal where “the probability of actual bias on the part of the judge or decision maker is too high to be constitutionally tolerable,” *Withrow v. Larkin*, 421 U. S. 35, 47.

Of the two instance cited by the U.S. Supreme Court it is the second instance which is applicable to this case, where a judge had no pecuniary interest in the case but had determined in an earlier proceeding whether criminal charges should be brought and then proceeded to try and convict the petitioners. *In re Murchison*, 349 U. S. 133. Finding that “no man can be a judge in his own case,” and “no man is permitted to try cases where he has an interest in the outcome,” *Id.*, at 136, the Court noted that the circumstances of the case and the prior relationship required recusal. The judge’s prior relationship with the defendant, as well as the information acquired from the prior proceeding, was critical. In reiterating that the rule that “a defendant in criminal contempt proceedings should be [tried] before a judge other than the one reviled by the contemnor,” *Mayberry v. Pennsylvania*, [400 U. S. 455](#), 466, rests on the relationship between the judge and the defendant, *id.*, at 465, the Court noted that the objective inquiry is not whether the judge is actually biased, but whether the average judge in his position is likely to be neutral or there is an unconstitutional “potential for bias.” *id.*, at 466. Pp. 9–11.

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that personal bias or the appearance of impropriety required for recusal of a judge for cause (under 455(a)) is subject to the limitation that has come to be known as the "extrajudicial source" doctrine. *Liteky v. United States*, (1994) No. 92-6921. See also *United States v. Grinnell Corp.*, 384 U.S. 563, 583.

“Extrajudicial” refers to a bias that does not derive from evidence or the conduct of parties that the judge observes during the course of proceedings. *Johnson v. Trueblood*, 629 F.2d 287, 290-91 (3d Cir. 1980). There is too much “risk that the judge ‘would be so psychologically wedded’ to his or her previous position as a prosecutor that the judge ‘would consciously or unconsciously avoid the appearance of having erred or changed position.

To prevail, the movant must 1) allege specific facts showing bias; 2) prove that these facts amount to personal bias; and 3) show that the facts are sufficient to convince a reasonable person that bias actually exists. The terms “bias” and “prejudice” “connote a favorable or unfavorable disposition or opinion that is somehow wrongful or inappropriate, either because it is undeserved, or because it rests upon knowledge that the subject ought not to possess, or because it is excessive in degree.” *Liteky*, 114 S. Ct. at 1155. The proper standard for disqualification under is whether the charge of lack of impartiality is grounded in facts that create a reasonable doubt concerning the judge's impartiality, not in the mind of the judge or in the mind of the movant, but in the mind of a reasonable person.

Publicly commenting on the credibility of the complaining party and the witnesses who are to appear before the Chair requires removal. The Respondents case is not a stepping stone for the Chairs career aspirations.

WHEREFORE premises considered, Respondent prays that Ms. Choi Williams be removed for cause, for Ms. Miller to be removed, and for this matter to be sent outside the state of Illinois because it appears that the entire court system is so biased and prejudicial in Illinois that no

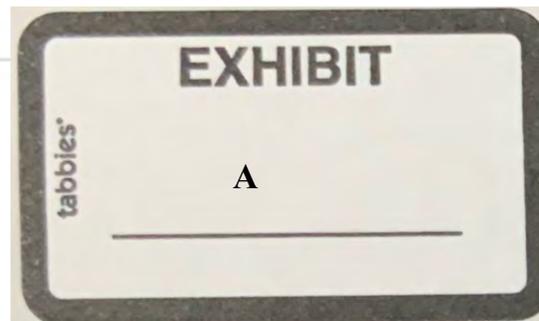
Respectfully submitted,

THE LOWERY LAW FIRM



Margaret J. Lowery, IARDC 6271777
7122 South Sheridan Road
Suite 2-1110
Tulsa, OK 74133
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com
(618)741-6600

First and Last Name of Donor



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Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI PEORIA, IL 61602	CITY OF PEORIA	CITY ATTORNEY	03-09-2015	\$250	Cheri Bustos (D)	Federal
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		03-13-2020	\$250	AVELAR, DAGMARA (DEE) (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		11-01-2021	\$250	AVELAR, DAGMARA (DEE) (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		11-10-2021	\$250	AVELAR, DAGMARA (DEE) (D)	IL
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Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI C LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		07-16-2020	\$250	KILBRIDE, THOMAS L (TOM) (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	CITY OF LOCKPORT	ATTORNEY	05-27-2022	\$20,000	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI (D)	IL

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Displaying records **1 - 14** of 14.

(Note: We only display the first 500 records. Need more? Please contact us requests@crp.org.)

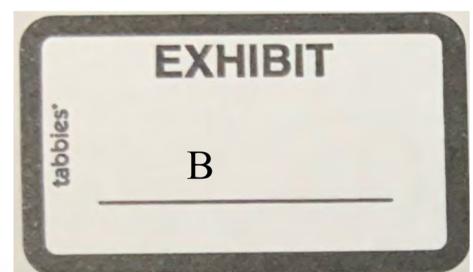
Category	Contributor	Employer	Occupation	Date	Amount	Recipient	Recipient Jurisdiction
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI PEORIA, IL 61602	CITY OF PEORIA	CITY ATTORNEY	03-09-2015	\$250	Cheri Bustos (D)	Federal
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		03-13-2020	\$250	AVELAR, DAGMARA (DEE) (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		11-01-2021	\$250	AVELAR, DAGMARA (DEE) (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		11-10-2021	\$250	AVELAR, DAGMARA (DEE) (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI & DICK LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		02-21-2020	\$250	BERTINO-TARRANT, JENNIFER (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI C LOCKPORT, IL 60441	BLANK		07-16-2020	\$250	KILBRIDE, THOMAS L (TOM) (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	CITY OF LOCKPORT	ATTORNEY	05-27-2022	\$20,000	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI (D)	IL

DONATE

Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	CITY OF LOCKPORT	ATTORNEY	02-01-2022	\$25,000	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	CITY OF LOCKPORT	ATTORNEY	02-07-2022	\$258	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	CITY OF LOCKPORT	ATTORNEY	02-07-2022	\$100	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	CITY OF LOCKPORT	ATTORNEY	09-21-2022	\$12,000	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	CITY OF LOCKPORT	ATTORNEY	04-01-2022	\$3,945	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI (D)	IL
Money to Candidates	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI LOCKPORT, IL 60441	CITY OF LOCKPORT	ATTORNEY	05-17-2022	\$2,500	WILLIAMS, SONNI CHOI (D)	IL

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Data on federal individual contributions downloaded from the Federal Election Commission on 03/06/23. State and local contributions are uploaded on a rolling basis. **Federal law prohibits the use of contributor information for the purpose of soliciting contributions or for any commercial purpose.** Bear in mind that contributions to politicians can also be made through [Political Action Committees](#).



**BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION**

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.

Commission No. 2023PR00060

ORDER

The Chair having considered Respondent's Motion For Leave To Substitute Counsel, Entry of Appearance For Respondent and Respondent's Motion For Leave To File Discovery, and the Administrator's Response To Respondent's Motion For Leave To File Discovery,

IT IS ORDERED:

- 1) Respondent's Motion For Leave To Substitute Counsel is granted and the entry of appearance for Margaret Jean Lowery is hereby filed instanter;
- 2) Respondent's Motion For Leave To File Discovery is denied;
- 3) The pre-hearing conference in this matter remains scheduled for April 23, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., and will be conducted by telephone. Counsel for the Administrator and Counsel for Respondent shall be available at that time and are responsible for calling in. The Clerk of the Commission shall provide the parties with the call-in information; and
- 4) All remaining dates in the October 23, 2023 order remain in effect.

FILED

November 02, 2023

ARDC CLERK



ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive, Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6219
(312) 565-2600 (800) 826-8625
Fax (312) 565-2320

3161 West White Oaks Drive, Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
(217) 546-3523 (800) 252-8048
Fax (217) 546-3785

Frank Wolff
One Metropolitan Square
211 North Broadway, Suite 3600
St. Louis, MO 63102
fwolff@bryancave.com

Springfield
June 27, 2023

Re: Margaret Jean Lowery
Administrator's Investigation
No. 2023IN01374

Dear Mr. Wolff:

It is my understanding that you represent the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum ("Museum") in St. Louis. We are engaged in a confidential investigation, referenced above, regarding an Illinois-licensed attorney, Margaret Jean Lowery. We would like to make a request for information related to an event hosted at the Museum, which has been described to us as an Anti-Semitism Seminar ("Seminar").

Please advise our office, in writing, on the following details regarding the June 13 Seminar at the Museum:

- whether Ms. Lowery attended the Anti-Semitism Seminar on June 13, 2023, at the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum;
- whether it was in-person only, livestream, or hybrid event;
- what time the seminar began and ended;
- whether this was a ticketed event;
- whether receiving a ticket required a payment; and
- whether the Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum maintained a guest list and/or sign-in procedure for the event.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I may be reached at 217-546-8160.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Rachel C. Miller
Rachel C. Miller
Counsel
ARDC Litigation Division

RCM:kl
_#1638439

EXHIBIT D

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS OF CHAIR CHOI-WILLIAMS



Sonni Williams • 2nd

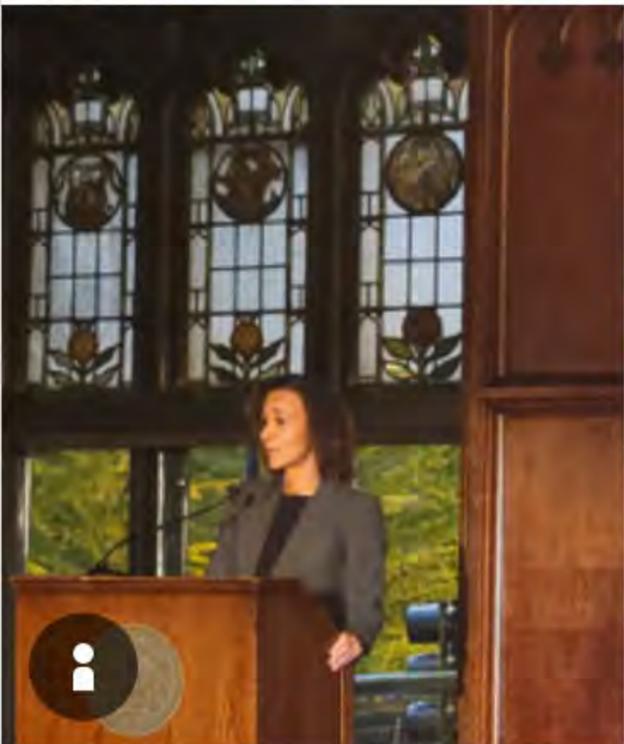
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City Attorney at City of Lockport

1w • Edited •

What a wonderful tribute to Jerry Larkin's 45 years of service on the [ARDC: Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission of the Supreme Court of Illinois](#), retiring as its Administrator and concluding with the swearing-in of [Lea Gutierrez, JD](#) as the next ARDC Administrator! I'm honored to continue my service as an ARDC hearing chair member! [Kenya Jenkins-Wright](#), [Erika Harold](#), [Tim Bertschy](#), [Anisa Jordan](#)



47

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Sonni Williams



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What a wonderful tribute to Jerry Larkin's 45 years of service on the ARDC: Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission of the Suprem ...see more





Sonni Williams

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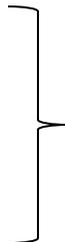
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

In the matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.



Supreme Court No. M.R.

Commission No. 2023PR00060

NOTICE OF FILING

TO: Margaret Jean Lowery
Attorney-Respondent
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on December 20, 2023, I electronically filed with the Clerk of the Illinois Supreme Court the Administrator's PETITION PURSUANT TO ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT RULE 774(a)(1). On that same date, a copy was served via e-mail on Respondent on or before 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lea S. Gutierrez, Administrator
Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission

By: /s/ Peter L. Rotskoff
Peter L. Rotskoff

Peter L. Rotskoff
Counsel for the Administrator
3161 W. White Oaks Dr. Suite
301 Springfield, IL 62704
Telephone: (217) 546-8163
Email: protskoff@iadc.org

E-FILED
12/20/2023 1:53
CYNTHIA A. GRANT
SUPREME COURT CLERK

FILED

December 20, 2023

ARDC CLERK

PROOF OF SERVICE

The undersigned, an attorney, hereby certifies, pursuant to Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, 735-ILCS-5/109, that Administrator's PETITION PURSUANT TO ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT RULE 774(a)(2) on the individual shown on the foregoing Notice of Filing, by email at: mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com on December 20, 2023 at or before 4:00 p.m.

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that he verily believes the same to be true.

By: /s/ Peter L. Rotskoff
Peter L. Rotskoff

FILED

December 20, 2023

ARDC CLERK

E-FILED
12/20/2023 1:53
CYNTHIA A. GRANT
SUPREME COURT CLERK



SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

SUPREME COURT BUILDING
200 East Capitol Avenue
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1721

CYNTHIA A. GRANT
Clerk of the Court

(217) 782-2035
TDD: (217) 524-8132

January 03, 2024

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICE
160 North LaSalle Street, 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601-3103
(312) 793-1332
TDD: (312) 793-6185

Margaret Jean Lowery
7122 S. Sheridan Road
Suite 2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133-2775

In re: In re: Margaret Jean Lowery
M.R.032026

Dear Margaret Jean Lowery:

Enclosed is an order entered January 03, 2024, by the Supreme Court of Illinois in the above-captioned cause.

Very truly yours,

Cynthia A. Grant
Clerk of the Supreme Court

cc: Michelle Thome
Peter Lawrence Rotskoff

FILED

January 03, 2024

ARDC CLERK

M.R.032026

IN THE
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

In re:)
) Attorney Registration & Disciplinary
Margaret Jean Lowery.) Commission
))
) 2023PR00060
))

TO: Margaret Jean Lowery
7122 S. Sheridan Road
Suitem2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133-2775

ORDER

It appearing to the Court that a verified petition has been filed by the Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission alleging that a complaint has been voted against respondent by the Inquiry Board; that respondent violated the Rules of Professional Conduct; that respondent's conduct involves fraud or moral turpitude which threatens irreparable harm to the public, her clients or the orderly administration of justice; and there appears to be persuasive evidence to support the charges, as indicated in the Administrator's complaint filed in the Commission on September 18, 2023, in In re Lowery 2023PR00060; and seeking respondent's interim suspension from the practice of law until further order of the Court pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 774;

Now, therefore, the said respondent Margaret J. Lowery is hereby ruled to show cause, in writing, why she should not be suspended from the practice of law effective immediately and until further order of the Court pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 774.

The answer to this rule shall be filed in the office of the Clerk of this Court in Springfield on or before February 7, 2024.

Order Entered by the Court.

Overstreet, J., took no part.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the seal of said Court, this 3rd day of January, 2024.

Cynthia A. Grant

Clerk,
Supreme Court of the State of Illinois

FILED

January 03, 2024

ARDC CLERK

FILED

January 03, 2024
SUPREME COURT
CLERK

AFFIDAVIT OF EXPERT BRUCE ANDERSON

STATE OF FLORIDA)
) ss
COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH)

I, Bruce Anderson, being first duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

1. My name is Bruce Anderson. I am over 18 and I am competent to testify. As owner and principal of Next 72 Intelligence, LLC, based in Florida, I have over 20 years of experience in investigative intelligence, including digital forensics, metadata analysis, authentication of electronic evidence, and litigation support. I have provided expert analysis in complex legal proceedings involving online identity, social media attribution, and discovery chain-of-custody. My curriculum vitae is attached.

2. I was retained by Attorney Ronald D. Wilkinson, on behalf of Attorney Margaret Jean Lowery, to evaluate the validity of evidence and digital exhibits and social media evidence cited in disciplinary proceedings brought by the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (ARDC) under Commission No. 2023PR00060.

3. I reviewed the following materials:
 - ARDC First Amended Complaint (February 2024), including Counts I–VI.
 - Exhibit 12: Alleged email from ARDC attorney Rachel C. Miller, later disclaimed by the purported author.
 - Ms. Lowery’s formal answers, interrogatories, subpoena requests, and motion pleadings.

- Affidavits from Ronald D. Wilkinson, Paul Evans, Dr. Patrick VanSchoyck, M.D., and other witnesses.
 - Chronology of disciplinary activity prepared by Ms. Lowery and corroborated by docketed documents.
 - Twitter/X account materials, including screenshots, platform warnings, and a takedown notification.
 - Rulings and orders from the ARDC Hearing Board and Illinois Supreme Court, including Dkt. Nos. 25, 40, 46, 47, 49, 91, 120, and 123.
 - Order from Chief Judge Ronald A. White (Dkt. 181, July 31, 2025, Case No. 6:25-cv-22-RAW, Eastern District of Oklahoma).
4. The ARDC cited social media posts attributed to an account labeled “@LoweryLawFirm” and/or variations thereof as the basis for Counts II, IV, V, and VI. (Count III was dismissed.) The evidentiary record submitted by the ARDC contains no forensic analysis, metadata logs, tweet identifiers, IP address traces, or platform-verified documentation from X Corp (formerly Twitter) that would establish who created, accessed, or controlled the @LoweryLawFirm account. Instead, the evidence consists solely of screenshots or written summaries, lacking digital signatures, provenance data, or any chain-of-custody validation. No technical or platform-derived evidence has been presented that links Ms. Lowery to authorship or control of the posts cited in the complaint.
5. Ms. Lowery provided written disclosures identifying her actual Twitter/X accounts, including @oklowerylaw, @ [REDACTED], and @ [REDACTED], none of which match the account cited by the ARDC.

- a. Primary personal account: @ [REDACTED] Created December 2022, with over 25,000 followers, no focus on Illinois or Judge Andrew Gleeson.
 - b. Professional account (@OkLoweryLaw): Created October 2023, using a recent photograph of Ms. Lowery.
 - c. Personal Oklahoma account: @ [REDACTED] Created October 2023, used to chat with friends.
 - d. None of these accounts match the @LoweryLawFirm account cited by the ARDC in address, content, tone, or communication style.
6. According to both Mr. Wilkinson & Ms. Lowery, in a conference call with Attorney Jon Hawk of McDermott Will & Emery, representing X Corp, Mr. Hawk reportedly stated there was no @LoweryLawFirm account or associated posts. his is consistent with and supports Ms. Lowery's claim. As a forensic expert, I cannot independently verify this statement without access to X Corp's records, but it underscores the critical need for direct platform data to authenticate the evidence. In this case, it appears Ms. Lowery is being recommended for disbarment based on what, from a forensic standpoint, appears to lack technical substantiation."Ms. Lowery filed discovery requests, including interrogatories and a subpoena to depose X Corp's records custodian, to authenticate the social media content. These were denied by the ARDC or blocked by Hearing Board orders, including:
- o Motion to Compel Admissions and Motion for Sanctions (Dkt. No. 25).
 - o Motion for Leave to File Interrogatories (Dkt. No. 123).
 - o Illinois Supreme Court denial of discovery enforcement (Dkt. No. 91, without explanation).

7. In a prior 2020 proceeding (Commission No. 2020PR00018), the ARDC obtained metadata, PayPal logs, domain registrations, and alias email records. No comparable efforts appear in the current record.
8. Ms. Lowery requested a transcript of the Inquiry Board proceedings; however, the ARDC responded that no such transcript exists. From a forensic and evidentiary standpoint, this absence may be significant, as it limits the ability to independently assess the Inquiry Board's evidentiary review process. Without a transcript, there is no documented record detailing when, how, or under what evidentiary standards the Inquiry Board reviewed or authenticated the @LoweryLawFirm posts cited in the First Amended Complaint. The lack of such foundational documentation impairs the ability to verify the integrity and reliability of the evidence referenced, thereby undermining the procedural transparency of the ARDC's disciplinary action.
9. Based on the docket record, repeated denials of access to evidentiary materials—including X Corp records (Dkt. Nos. 25, 123), surveillance video (Dkt. No. 123, Interrogatories 16–17), and the Inquiry Board transcript—have limited the ability to conduct standard forensic authentication procedures. This absence of accessible source material across several rulings (e.g., Dkt. Nos. 46, 91, 120) reflects an evidentiary gap that impedes independent validation. From a forensic standpoint, similar patterns in other cases have introduced risks to evidentiary reliability when source materials were unavailable for technical review.
10. This is further illustrated by the ARDC's August 31, 2022 letter (Dkt. No. 123), which references its review of courthouse surveillance video related to the alleged

altercation in Count I. Ms. Lowery's Interrogatories Nos. 16–17 requested access to these videos and any associated chain-of-custody documentation from Synapsis. These requests were denied, resulting in a lack of opportunity to perform standard forensic verification procedures typically used to assess the authenticity and evidentiary reliability of surveillance media...

11. In digital forensic practice, the absence of chain-of-custody documentation for screenshots or surveillance footage introduces a significant risk that the materials could have been altered, selectively captured, or even spoofed without detection. Without cryptographic hashes, time-stamped metadata, or verified logs indicating who captured or transmitted the data and when, it is not possible to confirm whether these materials have been modified, truncated, or sourced from unauthenticated platforms. This lack of evidentiary provenance reduces the reliability of the material and limits its utility in attribution or behavioral analysis. In cases involving social media or video evidence, chain-of-custody logs are foundational to establishing authenticity and evidentiary integrity.
12. In the absence of metadata, tweet identifiers, IP address logs, platform-verified account ownership from X Corp, surveillance video chain-of-custody documentation, and a transcript of the Inquiry Board proceedings, there is insufficient technical evidence to support a forensic determination regarding the authenticity or authorship of the @LoweryLawFirm posts. As such, the evidentiary basis for attributing the content to any specific individual—whether Ms. Lowery or otherwise—remains unverified. Reliance solely on a display name, profile photograph, and post content—absent corroborating technical validation—is

inadequate for attribution in a matter marked by contested claims and heightened adversarial context. To evaluate the @LoweryLawFirm account and related evidence, the following must be obtained from X Corp:

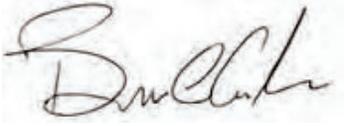
13. In order to conduct a proper forensic evaluation and digital attribution of the Twitter/X account @LoweryLawFirm, the following data elements would need to be obtained directly from X Corp:

- The account's original creation date and the IP address used at the time of registration.
- Any account-identifying information, including associated email addresses, usernames, phone numbers, and payment methods used during setup or subsequent access.
- A comprehensive log of IP addresses that accessed the account, with corresponding timestamps.
- A complete export of all posts made by the account, including tweet identifiers, timestamps, and associated metadata.
- A statement from X Corp indicating whether the account was ever reported, suspended, or flagged for suspicious or inauthentic activity.
- These data types are standard in digital forensics and are necessary to establish authorship, usage history, and technical control over a social media account.

14. This affidavit is based solely on the evidence reviewed and the absence of substantiating data, using established forensic practices and standards. I offer no legal conclusions and express no opinion as to Ms. Lowery's guilt or innocence.

My findings are limited to technical and evidentiary observations derived from forensic analysis and investigative methodology.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Anderson", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Bruce Anderson
Principal, Next 72 Intelligence, LLC
813-293-2991
August 5, 2025

AFFIDAVIT OF BRUCE ANDERSON

STATE OF FLORIDA COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

I, Bruce Anderson, being duly sworn, state as follows:

1. Background

I am the principal of Next 72 Intelligence, LLC, and a forensic investigator specializing in digital evidence authentication and metadata analysis. I am a licensed investigator in the State of Florida, (C 1000639), I hold certifications as a (CFDE) Certified Digital Examiner, (CPTE) Certified Penetration Testing Engineer, (CEH) Certified Ethical Hacker. This affidavit is submitted in my professional capacity to document my factual findings regarding the authenticity, creation metadata, and procedural compliance of hearing transcripts submitted in the disciplinary matter of *In re Margaret Jean Lowery*, ARDC Commission No. 2023PR00060.

All information herein is strictly limited to facts verifiable through metadata, file properties, document content, and statutory requirements imposed by Illinois law. This affidavit contains **no legal conclusions or advocacy** and is intended to provide factual and technical clarity to assist the Court in evaluating evidentiary integrity. This affidavit does not assess legal admissibility but highlights the absence of certification elements required by statute and Supreme Court rule, which may bear upon the Court's evaluation.

2. Governing Illinois Law for Transcript Certification

I used the current Illinois Court Rules for our examination of documents.

Under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 321: > *"The record on appeal shall consist of the judgment appealed from, the notice of appeal, and the entire original common law record, including reports of proceedings prepared in accordance with Rule 323."*

Under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 323(a): > *"The report of proceedings shall include all the evidence pertinent to the issues on appeal and shall be certified by the court reporter as correct."*

Under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 323(b): > *"In cases where no verbatim transcript is obtainable, the appellant shall prepare a proposed report of proceedings from the best available means... and submit it to the trial judge for approval, along with notice to opposing counsel."*

Under the Illinois Certified Shorthand Reporters Act (225 ILCS 415): > “A person may not hold himself or herself out as a Certified Shorthand Reporter (CSR) or engage in shorthand reporting without being licensed under this Act.” (225 ILCS 415/4)

“Each transcript of a deposition or proceedings certified by a CSR must bear the reporter’s name, CSR number, and a signed certificate of accuracy.” (225 ILCS 415/16)

A transcript must, therefore, include: - The full name of a licensed CSR - The CSR license number (as issued by IDFPR) - A Certificate of Accuracy signed by the CSR - (Optionally) A CSR seal or signature stamp - Proper filing with notice to the clerk (Rule 323(b))

3. Forensic Review of Each Transcript

A. Inquiry Board Transcript – September 12, 2023

- **File Name:** Inquiry Board Sept 12 Transcript.pdf
- **Created:** March 31, 2025
- **Modified:** October 13, 2025
- **Author/Creator:** “melissac” using Adobe Acrobat Pro 2020
- **Software Used:** Acrobat Distiller 25.0 (Windows)
- **Page Count:** 51

Findings: - This transcript was created approximately 18 months after the proceeding. - Metadata indicates the creator is “melissac.” No Certificate of Accuracy is embedded. - No CSR license number appears in the document. - The document was generated using Adobe desktop tools, not CSR-grade reporting software.

Conclusion: Based on the metadata and file properties, this transcript does not satisfy the requirements of Rule 323(a) or 225 ILCS 415. It lacks a verifiable connection to a Certified Shorthand Reporter. These findings should be reviewed under current Illinois Statutes by the Court.

【85†Inquiry Board Sept 12 Transcript.pdf】

B. Hearing Board Transcript – May 2, 2024

- **File Name:** May 2nd Transcript 05-02-2024-4861-5300-0656.pdf
- **Created:** May 13, 2024
- **Modified:** October 13, 2025
- **Software Used:** Foxit Quick PDF Library 15.11
- **Page Count:** 78

Findings: - Created 11 days after the actual hearing took place. - No author or CSR is listed in the metadata. - Produced using a commercial PDF library not associated with professional court reporting. - Lacks any Certificate of Accuracy, CSR name, or license number. - No metadata traceable to transcription software used by licensed court reporters.

Technical Note: Foxit Quick PDF Library is not a Certified Shorthand Reporter (CSR) platform. It is a software development kit (SDK) used by programmers to generate or manipulate PDFs. It is not intended or approved for use by licensed court reporters in Illinois. By contrast, approved CSR platforms typically include proprietary court reporting tools such as StenoCAT, Eclipse, Case CATalyst, and DigitalCAT, which incorporate CSR identity, certification, and compliance tracking into their workflow.

Conclusion: This transcript does not meet the digital forensic standards or procedural certification requirements imposed by Illinois Rule 323(a) or 225 ILCS 415. It should be reviewed under current Illinois Statutes by the Court.

【92†May 2nd Transcript 05-02-2024-4861-5300-0656.pdf】

C. Review Board Oral Argument Transcript – July 11, 2025

- **Files:** JULY 11 Transcript.pdf and JULY 11 Transcript2 - Lowery.pdf
- **Created:** July 24, 2025
- **Modified:** October 13, 2025 (both versions)
- **Software Used:** Foxit Quick PDF Library 15.11
- **Page Count:** 51

Findings: - Both versions of the file were created 13 days after the hearing occurred. - No CSR author appears in metadata; both were processed through Foxit PDF Library. - The documents are textually identical but have different metadata instance IDs and modification times (14 minutes apart), indicating administrative duplication. - Neither version contains a CSR license number, a proper Certificate of Accuracy, or digital signature traceable to a licensed court reporter. - The ARDC issued an order acknowledging the transcript had been redacted and subsequently reinstated, without any CSR recertification.

Conclusion: These documents show no verifiable origin from a certified court reporter. Their content, despite being unaltered between versions, lacks forensic and procedural authentication. These findings should be reviewed under current Illinois Statutes by the Court.

【88†JULY 11 Transcript .pdf】 【90†Order to Modify:Alter July 11 Transcript.pdf】

4. Statutory and Procedural Violations Summary Table

Requirement	Present in Any File?	Required by Law?	Statutory Authority
CSR license number	✗ No	✓ Yes	225 ILCS 415/16
Certificate of Accuracy signed by CSR	✗ No	✓ Yes	225 ILCS 415/16
CSR seal or verifiable digital signature	✗ No	✓ Yes	225 ILCS 415/16
Filing with court clerk and notice per procedural rules	✗ No	✓ Yes	Illinois Supreme Court 323(b)

5. Forensic Metadata Attribution

The following metadata fields were identified as pointing to authorship and technical tool usage:

Transcript	Metadata Field	Value	Implication
Inquiry Board	Author / Creator	melissac	No CSR license identified
May 2, 2024	Creator Tool	Foxit Quick PDF Library	Not court reporter software
July 11, 2025	Creator Tool	Foxit Quick PDF Library	Same tool; no certification or traceability
All Transcripts	No embedded CSR ID	—	No official reporting software used

Court-recognized CSR platforms such as StenoCAT, Eclipse, Case CATalyst, or DigitalCAT do not appear in any metadata for these files. “There is no statutory requirement in Illinois that mandates specific transcription software; however, professional Certified Shorthand Reporters in Illinois routinely utilize recognized industry platforms such as StenoCAT, Eclipse, Case CATalyst, and DigitalCAT. These systems are designed to support stenographic accuracy, certification, and Rule 323 compliance. No metadata in the transcripts reviewed contained evidence of such platforms, certification logs, or embedded CSR credentials.”

6. Jurisdictional Affidavit – Absence in Record

As part of my forensic review of the procedural record, I was asked to identify whether any Administrator’s affidavit establishing jurisdiction under **Illinois Supreme Court Rule 753(b)** was present in the disciplinary files of *In re: Margaret Jean Lowery*, ARDC Commission No. 2023PR00060. Based on the document sets reviewed and the metadata associated with each, I found no such affidavit on file.

The following is a factual chronology of Ms. Lowery’s formal and repeated requests for such an affidavit across multiple venues:

I. Illinois ARDC – Inquiry and Hearing Board Proceedings

- **June 30, 2023** – Ms. Lowery filed a Jurisdictional Statement asserting that she had retired from the Illinois bar and that the Administrator was required to file a jurisdictional affidavit under Rule 753(b).
- **August 2023** – Ms. Lowery submitted multiple written requests for confirmation of the existence of an Administrator’s affidavit; no affidavit was produced in response.
- **September 2023 – April 2024** – In written motions and filings part of the Hearing Board record, she repeated that no affidavit appeared in the case file.
- **May 2024 Hearing** – The proceeding transcript contains no indication that the Administrator’s affidavit was introduced or relied upon.
- **May 11, 2024** – The Hearing Board entered judgment without any reference to the existence of a jurisdictional affidavit.

II. Illinois ARDC – Review Board Proceedings

- **June 30, 2023** – Jurisdiction was re-challenged at the outset of the appeal; the record notes her retired status (Exhibit 1-A).
- **February 12, 2024** – Ms. Lowery filed a Motion to Compel Production of the jurisdictional affidavit pursuant to Rule 753(b) and Supreme Court Rules 321–323.
- **July 2025 Orders** – The Review Board issued procedural rulings but made no findings on the jurisdictional defect or affidavit.
- **August 12 & 18, 2025** – Additional motions reiterated that no such affidavit was filed; no responsive order followed.

III. Illinois Supreme Court

- **Throughout 2024–2025** – Ms. Lowery raised the jurisdictional issue in petitions for review. No order or docket entry acknowledged the existence or absence of the affidavit.

IV. Federal Proceedings – U.S. District Court, E.D. Oklahoma (Case No. 6:25-cv-22-RAW)

- **February 15, 2024** – The Amended Complaint alleged the absence of jurisdiction under Rule 753(b).
- **February 19, 2025** – A Rule 60 Motion reiterated this claim and incorporated forensic concerns.

V. U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit (Case Nos. 25-7070 & 25-7073)

- **June–September 2025** – Jurisdictional deficiencies were raised in mandamus and appellate filings.

Conclusion: As of this date, no jurisdictional affidavit has been provided to Ms. Lowery or myself. No digital metadata, docket entry, or certified document evidences its existence in the case files reviewed. These findings are offered solely to document the procedural record. I defer all legal conclusions to the Court’s interpretation of Rule 753(b) and related authorities.

7. Certification

I certify under penalty of perjury that the facts stated in this affidavit are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and based on metadata and document analysis from the above-captioned files.

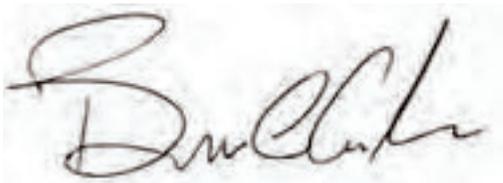
Bruce Anderson

Principal, Next 72 Intelligence, LLC

813-293-2991

www.thenext72.com

Monday, October 13, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Anderson", is written over a light gray background.

Bruce C. Anderson (CEO)

BRUCE ANDERSON

3905 Teaberry Lane ■ Sun City Center, FL 33573
813.293.2991 ■ confidential@thenext72.com



CEO & Co-FOUNDER NEXT 72 Intelligence, LLC

Bruce Anderson is the CEO and Co-Founder of NEXT 72 Intelligence LLC a boutique high tech Cyber Fraud Investigation and Geolocation Intelligence Agency with its home offices located in Tampa, Florida. NEXT 72 specializes in helping private investigators, attorneys and law enforcement through its Cellphone Geolocation, Banking Intelligence and investigative resources.

Our capabilities scan over 18 billion geo data points worldwide across 400 million phones across the globe.

▶ Mr. Anderson during his career has jointly worked on cases with the FBI, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Secret Services, Interpol, U.S. Post Office, Internal Revenue Services and both domestic and federal law enforcement agencies.

- ▶ Mr. Anderson has been responsible for solving cases involving international hacker groups, multi-national companies, cargo theft, insider theft, organized fraud rings, extortion, tortious interference, trademark infringement, counterfeiting and defamation.
- ▶ Mr. Anderson is a member of the FBI Infraguard, and the Secret Service, Miami Cyber Crime Task Force. He is a former law enforcement detective, and is a certified "white hat" Ethical Hacker (CEH), Certified Penetration Testing Engineer (CPTE), Certified Digital Forensic Examiner (CFDE) and Certified Security Analyst (ECSA), and is registered as a Private Investigator Agency A1000310.
- ▶ His unique blend of law enforcement, Geolocaition technology, advanced cyber tactics, human intelligence resources, computer forensics, internet forensics, legal background, expert testimony and live investigations of over 1000 cyber cases help him to be a real resource for attorneys and corporations worldwide.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Cyber Issues

- ▶ Geolocation Intelligence
- ▶ Cellular location & tracking
- ▶ Banking Intelligence
- ▶ Brokerage Intelligence
- ▶ Wire Fraud
- ▶ Recovering Stolen Money
- ▶ Missing Persons Location
- ▶ Witness and Suspect development from GeoSpatial Data.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NEXT 72 LLC, CEO/ Co-Founder 2021-Current

A specialized cell phone geolocation and banking intelligence agency that assists private investigators, law enforcement and attorneys solve complex cases requiring specialized skills an technology.

- ▶ Responsible for geolocation intelligence investigations to assist in cargo theft, counterfeiting, as well as comprehensive criminal and civil investigations.
- ▶ Responsible for the high-tech tracking of internet and cyber fraud suspects for the purposes of recovery of assets, and intelligence on organized fraud, cargo theft and counterfeit groups.
- ▶ Responsible for racking hidden money worldwide for judgments and potential litigation.
- ▶ Frequent Speaker on subjects of Geolocation Intelligence, and advance Cyber Investigative Methods and Strategies for Private Investigators, Law Enforcement and Corporate Risk Management

CYBER INVESTIGATION SERVICES LLC, / eENFORCE Co-Founder 2010-Current

The nation's leading Cyber Investigative and Intelligence firm helping Corporations, Attorneys, Professionals develop investigative, legal and international-jurisdictional strategies related to Cyber Threats impacting Corporate and Personal Brands, Financial Assets, Intellectual Property, Corporate Security and Liability.

Director of Cyber Division responsible for the management and operations of Cyber Investigations, Forensics and Technical R&D.

- ▶ Responsible for Sales, Management and Oversight of Brand Protection Division, eEnforce
- ▶ Responsible for the oversight and management of Cyber Investigators and Investigative Cases for the company.
- ▶ Responsible for the direction and implementation and Investigation of Cyber Intrusions and Data Breach Incidents
- ▶ Responsible for the Forensic division and subsequent cases, evidence chain of custody for the company.
- ▶ Responsible for R&D and Technical Advances for the Company.
- ▶ Frequent Speaker on subjects of Cyber Intrusions & IT Security, and Cyber Investigative Methods and Strategies for Private Investigators, Law Enforcement and Corporate Risk Management

CEO/ SEO and Reputation Management Firm 2007-1010

Private Entrepreneur responsible for the management, design and operation of some of the leading internet and information marketing experts in the field of Real Estate and Internet Marketing.

- ▶ Experience in design, development and implementation of Internet Marketing Strategy.
- ▶ Experience in developing reputational repair strategies utilizing SEO and PR tactics.
- ▶ Responsible of the implementation, monitoring and development of SEO and link building strategies for private clients.
- ▶ Frequent Speaker on subjects of Internet marketing, Search Engine Optimization and Content Distribution.

Investigator/Alachua County Sheriffs Office

Investigator responsible for investigating major crimes against persons and property for the Alachua County Sheriffs Office.

- ▶ Experience in Crimes against persons including robbery, fraud, international theft, murder, aggravated battery, and sex crimes.
- ▶ Experience in crimes against property including fraud, burglary, grand larceny, and white-collar crime.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF LICENSED INVESTIGATORS
FBI Infraguard Tampa (Board Of Directors)
Secret Service Financial Crimes Task Force
World Association Of Detectives
International Organization of Private Intelligence Agencies
International Association of Asset Recovery Specialists
National Association of Fraud Investigators
National Council Of Investigators and Security Services

DESIGNATIONS

Certified Digital Forensics Examiner (CFDE)
 Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)
 Certified Security Analyst (ECSA)
 Certified Pen Testing Engineer (CPTE)
 Florida Licensed Private Investigator

TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY

X-Ways Computer & Digital Forensics
Lantern 4 Phone Forensics
MobileEdit Phone Forensics
Paraben Device Acquisitions
Backtrack Ethical Hacking and Pen Testing
Nessus Vulnerability Web & Network Scanning
Burp Suite Web Application Testing
Internet and Social Media Forensics
Paraben Phone and SIM card Forensics
Hacking and Intrusion Investigations
Network Forensic Investigations
White Collar Crime Investigations
Brand and Reputational Attack Investigations
Internet Fraud Investigations

EXPERT WITNESS CASES

Walter Weaver Defense Case

Negligent Homicide

Forensic Expert Testimony

Sept 2016

Morgan County, West Virginia

August 2016

Moshe Mortner Versus David Baksht

Internet Forensic Testimony

New York, NY

November 16, 2018

Guen Versus Pereira

State of California First Appellate District,

Division 5

PUBLISHED ARTICLES, MENTIONS AND INTERVIEWS

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February 21, 2024

BEFORE THE ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT

ARDC CLERK

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.

)
)
) Commission No. 2023PR00060
)
) M.R. 032026
)

MOTION TO STAY PROCEEDINGS

COMES NOW the Respondent Margaret J. Lowery and moves to stay proceedings for one week for the following reasons:

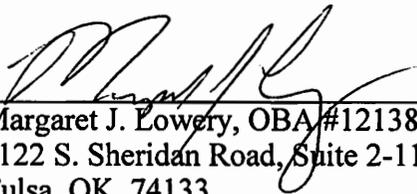
1. Ms. Lowery has a medical diagnosis which was confirmed by her provider to the Administrator. The diagnosis carries with it issues that may arise.
2. Ms. Lowery collapsed in her law office at the end of December, 2023. She needs to have medical testing at the hospital.
3. Respondent need the testing to determine whether surgery and/or further treatment is required.
4. Respondent cannot go inpatient for testing with Motions being presented every day in this case which require immediate response.
5. Respondent has asked Mr. Moran to cover in an ‘emergency,’ but it is not fair to Mr. Moran or Respondent to ask an attorney to get up to speed for one week. It would be simpler to stay the matter for one week to allow Ms. Lowery time to have testing and to then advise the Chair whether major surgery shall be required.
6. It would be hoped that the Administrator could agree.
7. A concurrent motion for stay was filed with the Chair, but matters are also pleading with this Court.

E-FILED 3
2/21/2024 4:45 PM
CYNTHIA A. GRANT
SUPREME COURT CLERK

WHEREFORE, Respondent prays for a one week stay so she can have her medical testing and advise whether surgery will be necessary and for such further relief as this Court deems just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

THE LOWERY LAW FIRM

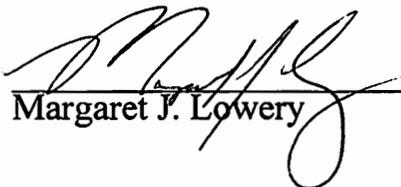


Margaret J. Lowery, OBA#12138
7122 S. Sheridan Road, Suite 2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com
(918) 513-2204
(Licensed in Oklahoma Only).

PROOF OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies, that she has complied with all laws and notices the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, 735-ILCS-5/109.

A copy of the foregoing pleadings was sent to Rachael Miller and Peter Rotskoff at their ARDC email at rmiller@iadc.org and/or protskoff@iadc.org before 5:00 p.m. on day of filing with the Clerk. -Under penalties as provided by law, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, to the best of her knowledge and belief after making a reasonable inquiry from her home in Oklahoma, and except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies that such matters are on information and belief.



Margaret J. Lowery

BEFORE THE ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.

)
)
)
)
)

Commission No. 2023PR00060

M.R. 032026

ORDER ON RESPONDENT’S MOTION

NOW on this ___ day of February 2024, there comes before this Court the Respondent’s Motion for One Week Stay and the Court finds that:

_____ MOTION GRANTED

_____ MOTION DENIED

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

In the Matter of:)
)
MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,)
) Commission No. 2023PR00060
Attorney-Respondent,)
)
No. 6271777.)

NOTICE OF FILING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on this 21th day of February, 2023 the undersigned emailed to Ms. Rachel Miller rmiller@iadc.org a copy of the Respondent’s pleading re STAY on the same day as filing, which are attached hereto and hereby served upon you.

Respectfully submitted,

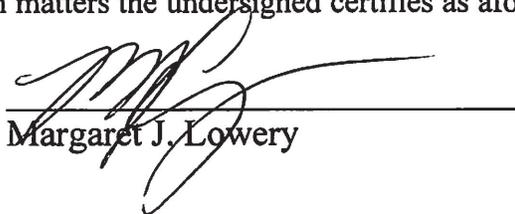
The Lowery Law Firm



Margaret J. Lowery, IARDC 6271777
7122 South Sheridan Road
Suite 2-1110
Tulsa, OK 74133
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com
(618)741-6600

PROOF OF SERVICE

The undersigned, an attorney, hereby certifies, pursuant to Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, 735-ILCS-5/109, that Ms. Lowery served copies of the Respondents pleading to Rachael Miller by email to rmiller@iadc.org at or before 5:00 p.m. Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that he verily believes the same to be true.


Margaret J. Lowery

FILED
2/21/2024 2:16 PM
ARDC Clerk

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

In the Matter of:)
)
MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,)
) Commission No. 2023PR00060
Attorney-Respondent,)
) M.R. 032026
No. 6271777.)

MOTION TO STAY PROCEEDINGS

COMES NOW the Respondent Margaret J. Lowery and moves to stay proceedings for one week for the following reasons:

1. Ms. Lowery has a medical diagnosis which was confirmed by her provider to the Administrator. The diagnosis carries with it issues that may arise.
2. Ms. Lowery collapsed in her law office at the end of December, 2023. She needs to have medical testing at the hospital.
3. Respondent need the testing to determine whether surgery and/or further treatment is required.
4. Respondent cannot go inpatient for testing with Motions being presented every day in this case which require immediate response.
5. Respondent has asked Mr. Moran to cover in an ‘emergency,’ but it is not fair to Mr. Moran or Respondent to ask an attorney to get up to speed for one week. It would be simpler to stay the matter for one week to allow Ms. Lowery time to have testing and to then advise the Chair whether major surgery shall be required.
6. It would be hoped that the Administrator could agree to an order for this to occur.

FILED
2/21/2024 2:16 PM
ARDC Clerk

WHEREFORE, Respondent prays for a one week stay so she can have her medical testing and advise whether surgery will be necessary and for such further relief as this Court deems just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

THE LOWERY LAW FIRM



Margaret J. Lowery, OBA #12138
7122 S. Sheridan Road, Suite 2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com
(918) 513-2204
(Licensed in Oklahoma Only).

PROOF OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies, that she has complied with all laws and notices the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, 735-ILCS-5/109.

A copy of the foregoing pleadings was sent to Rachael Miller and Peter Rotskoff at their ARDC email at rmiller@iadc.org and/or protskoff@iadc.org before 5:00 p.m. on day of filing with the Clerk. -Under penalties as provided by law, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, to the best of her knowledge and belief after making a reasonable inquiry from her home in Oklahoma, and except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies that such matters are on information and belief.



Margaret J. Lowery



SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

SUPREME COURT BUILDING
200 East Capitol Avenue
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1721

CYNTHIA A. GRANT
Clerk of the Court

(217) 782-2035
TDD: (217) 524-8132

February 27, 2024

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICE
160 North LaSalle Street, 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601-3103
(312) 793-1332
TDD: (312) 793-6185

Margaret Jean Lowery
7122 S. Sheridan Road
Suite 2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133-2775

In re: In re: Margaret Jean Lowery
M.R.032026

Today the following order was entered in the captioned case:

Motion by Margaret Jean Lowery to stay proceedings in this Court for one week. Denied.

Order entered by Justice Cunningham.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia A. Grant".

Clerk of the Supreme Court

cc: Michelle Thome
Peter Lawrence Rotskoff
Rachel Christine Miller

FILED

February 27, 2024

ARDC CLERK

2/2024

VANSCHOYCK FAMILY MEDICINE

7711 E 111TH STREET SUITE 109 TULSA, OKLAHOMA
PH 918-755-0000 F 833) 449-3866

TO: ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ARDC

One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive
Suite 1500
Chicago, IL 60601-5219

RE: Margaret J Lowery
DOB: 07/14/1961

Gentlemen,

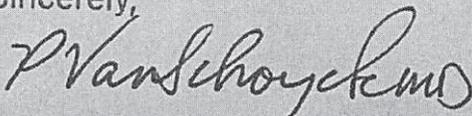
I am the primary care physician for Margaret Lowery. I had previously asked she have two weeks bed rest and hydration for a medical illness. I have been informed by Mrs. Lowery that your Administrator has refused to grant her the time I recommended.

I am perplexed that a professional of the law would ignore a medical professionals recommendation.

Her medical condition has progressed recently and I have again recommended she take time off from her work to see a specialist referral. I anticipate at least 10 days for recovery unless she requires surgery. Post surgery may require 6 weeks recovery.

I would appreciate professional courtesy between our two professions and respect my medical recommendation for recovery and treatment.

Sincerely,



Patrick VanSchoyck, MD.

**BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION**

FILED

April 09, 2024

ARDC CLERK

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6271777.

Commission No. 2023PR00060

ORDER

The Chair has considered the following motions, all filed by Respondent, and responsive pleadings: Motion for Leave to File Discovery (filed on April 2, 2024) and Objection; Motion for Leave to File Discovery (filed on April 5, 2024) and Objection; Motion to Permit Respondent's Audio/Video CSR Transcriptionist and Objection; Motion to Permit Remote Testimony, Objection, and Reply; Motion to Strike Administrator's Rule 253 List and Objection; and Motion to Bar All Testimony on Counts 3-6 & to Bar Amendment of Rule 253 Disclosure and Objection.

Accordingly,

IT IS ORDERED:

1. Both Motions for Leave to File Discovery are denied;
2. The Motion to Permit Audio/Video CSR Transcriptionist is denied, pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 44;
3. The Motion to Permit Remote Testimony is granted in part and denied in part. Judge Stiehl and Judge McGlynn are permitted to testify remotely. The remainder of the Motion to Permit Remote Testimony is denied;
4. The Motion to Strike Administrator's Rule 253 List is denied; and

STATE OF ILLINOIS
SUPREME COURT

At a Term of the Supreme Court, begun and held in Springfield, on Monday, the 12th day of January, 2026.

Present: P. Scott Neville, Jr., Chief Justice
Justice Mary Jane Theis
Justice Lisa Holder White
Justice Elizabeth M. Rochford
Justice David K. Overstreet
Justice Joy V. Cunningham
Justice Mary K. O'Brien

On the 15th day of January, 2026, the Supreme Court entered the following judgment:

M.R.032889

In re:
Margaret Jean Lowery.

Attorney Registration & Disciplinary
Commission

2023PR00060

Petition by respondent for leave to file exceptions to the report and recommendation of the Review Board. Denied. Respondent Margaret Jean Lowery is disbarred, as recommended by the Review Board.

Neville, C.J., took no part.
Overstreet, J., took no part.

As Clerk of the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois and keeper of the records, files and Seal thereof, I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the final order entered in this case.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have set my hand
and affixed the seal of said Supreme Court, in
Springfield, in said State, this 15th day of
January, 2026.

Cynthia A. Grant
Clerk,
Supreme Court of the State of Illinois



SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

SUPREME COURT BUILDING
200 East Capitol Avenue
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1721

CYNTHIA A. GRANT
Clerk of the Court

(217) 782-2035
TDD: (217) 524-8132

January 15, 2026

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICE
160 North LaSalle Street, 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601-3103
(312) 793-1332
TDD: (312) 793-6185

Margaret Jean Lowery
7122 S. Sheridan Road
Suite 2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133-2775

In re: In re: Margaret Jean Lowery
M.R.032889

Today the following order was entered in the captioned case:

Petition by respondent for leave to file exceptions to the report and recommendation of the Review Board. Denied. Respondent Margaret Jean Lowery is disbarred, as recommended by the Review Board.

Order entered by the Court.

Neville, C.J., took no part.
Overstreet, J., took no part.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia A. Grant".

Clerk of the Supreme Court

cc: Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission
Benjamin Lee Boroughf
Michelle Thome



SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

SUPREME COURT BUILDING
200 East Capitol Avenue
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1721

CYNTHIA A. GRANT
Clerk of the Court

(217) 782-2035
TDD: (217) 524-8132

January 15, 2026

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICE
160 North LaSalle Street, 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601-3103
(312) 793-1332
TDD: (312) 793-6185

Margaret Jean Lowery
7122 S. Sheridan Road
Suite 2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133-2775

In re: In re: Margaret Jean Lowery
M.R.032889

Today the following order was entered in the captioned case:

Motion by Margaret Jean Lowery to stay proceedings pending Supreme Court review. Denied.

Order entered by the Court.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia A. Grant".

Clerk of the Supreme Court

cc: Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission
Benjamin Lee Boroughf
Michelle Thome



SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

SUPREME COURT BUILDING
200 East Capitol Avenue
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1721

CYNTHIA A. GRANT
Clerk of the Court

(217) 782-2035
TDD: (217) 524-8132

January 15, 2026

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICE
160 North LaSalle Street, 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601-3103
(312) 793-1332
TDD: (312) 793-6185

Margaret Jean Lowery
7122 S. Sheridan Road
Suite 2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133-2775

In re: In re: Margaret Jean Lowery
M.R.032889

Today the following order was entered in the captioned case:

Motion by Margaret Jean Lowery to order entry of determinative evidence into the record. Denied.

Order entered by the Court.

Very truly yours,

Cynthia A. Grant

Clerk of the Supreme Court

cc: Benjamin Lee Boroughf
Michelle Thome



SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

SUPREME COURT BUILDING
200 East Capitol Avenue
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1721

CYNTHIA A. GRANT
Clerk of the Court

(217) 782-2035
TDD: (217) 524-8132

December 10, 2025

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICE
160 North LaSalle Street, 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601-3103
(312) 793-1332
TDD: (312) 793-6185

Margaret Jean Lowery
7122 S. Sheridan Road
Suite 2-1100
Tulsa, OK 74133-2775

In re: In re: Margaret Jean Lowery
M.R.032889

Today the following order was entered in the captioned case:

This cause coming to be heard on the motion of petitioner, Margaret Jean Lowery, a response having been filed, and the Court being fully advised in the premises;

IT IS ORDERED that the motion to dismiss for lack of jurisdiction based on denial of Title II access is denied.

Order entered by the Court.

Neville, C.J., took no part.
Overstreet, J., took no part.

Very truly yours,

Cynthia A. Grant

Clerk of the Supreme Court

cc: Benjamin Lee Boroughf
Michelle Thome

5. The Motion to Bar All Testimony on Counts 3-6 & to Bar Amendment of Rule 253

Disclosure is denied.

CERTIFICATION

I, Michelle M. Thome, Clerk of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission of the Supreme Court of Illinois and keeper of the records, certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the order, approved by the Hearing Board Chair, entered in the above entitled cause of record filed in my office on April 9, 2024.

/s/ Michelle M. Thome
Michelle M. Thome,
Clerk of the Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission of the
Supreme Court of Illinois

MAINLIB_#1732753_v1

PROOF OF SERVICE

I, Andrea L. Watson, hereby certify that I served a copy of this Order on Attorney-Respondent listed at the e-mail address shown below on April 9, 2024, at or before 5:00 p.m. At the same time, a copy of this Order was sent to Counsel for the Administrator by e-mail service.

Margaret Jean Lowery
Attorney-Respondent
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that she verily believes the same to be true.

/s/ Andrea L. Watson
Andrea L. Watson

MAINLIB_#1732753_v1

ISBA Member Record

Kelsi Kamphaus <kkamphaus@isba.org>

Tue 5/14/2024 12:44 PM

To: Margaret Lowery <mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com>

To whom it may concern,

Margaret Lowery's Illinois State Bar Association Membership ended on June 30th 2023.

Please reach out to us if you need anything further.

Thanks,

Kelsi Kamphaus
Member Services Representative



Phone (800) 252-8908 / (217) 525-1760

Email memberservices@isba.org

424 S Second St, Springfield, IL 62701



20 S. Clark St. (312) 379-2000 OFFICE
 Ste. 800 (312) 379-2049 FAX
 Chicago, IL 60603-1826 ISBAMUTUAL.COM

VIA E-MAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL

October 27, 2023

Margaret J. Lowery
 Lowery Law Firm
 1624 Carlyle Avenue, Suite 516
 Belleville, IL 62221-4558

Re: **ISBA Mutual Lawyers Professional Liability Insurance Policy 119322**
Policy Term – January 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024

Dear Ms. Lowery:

This letter is to notify you that ISBA Mutual Insurance Company will not be renewing the Lawyers Professional Liability policy referenced above due to the following:

- Claims and ARDC matters experience,
- The firm no longer maintains the principal office in Illinois.

Remember that your policy is a claims-made policy. This means any claim made against you after the policy expiration date is not covered.

Under the terms and conditions of the policy, an Extended Reporting Period (ERP), also known as "tail coverage", can be purchased. This option does not extend the policy term but extends the time in which you may report claims for wrongful acts committed prior to the expiration date of the policy. Nor will this option in any way increase or be in addition to the limits of liability.

To purchase an ERP, written notice of your intent to exercise an ERP option and the full premium due the Extended Reporting Period must be received by ISBA Mutual Insurance Company no later than February 1, 2024.

The Extended Reporting Period options available and the premiums that apply to them are as follows:

- | | |
|---|------------|
| • 12-month ERP - 60% of the full annual premium | \$2,498.00 |
| • 36-month ERP - 70% of the full annual premium | \$2,915.00 |
| • 72-month ERP - 85% of the full annual premium | \$3,539.00 |
| • Unlimited ERP - 100% of the full annual premium | \$4,164.00 |

You have the option of appealing this decision to the Company's Underwriting Committee. Should you like to appeal, please contact me as soon as possible. You may appeal in person or by teleconference. The date for the next meeting has not been set, but once you advise us of your intent to appeal, the date will be determined.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at (312) 379-2011.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Magali Olson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dash at the end.

Magali Olson
Underwriter

ARDC
of the Supreme Court of Illinois

ABOUT ARDC - CONTACT ARDC

Home / Lawyer Search

Lawyer Search

Edit Search | New Search

Your search returned 1 results

Last Name: Lowery
Include Former Names
Last Name Match: Exact

Registration status of information is not available for lawyers registered with ARDC

Name ▼
Lowery, Margaret J.

The ARDC's hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., on weekdays. The ARDC does not accept telephone or email. [Contact Us](#)

Chicago Office
One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive
Suite 1500
Chicago, IL 60601-6218

Springfield Office
3161 West White Oaks Drive
Suite 301

ARDC.org

as of 10/26/2023 01:15:46 PM

Printable Version

Full Licensed Name	Margaret Jean Lowery
Registered Address	7122 S Sheridan Road #2-1100 Tulsa, Oklahoma 74113
Registered Phone	(618) 741-6600
Registered Email	Not available
Date Admitted	July 21, 2000
Illinois Registration Status	Retired - not authorized to practice law or provide pro bona services - Last Registered Year: 2023
Malpractice Insurance	No malpractice report as attorney is retired

Public Record of Discipline and Pending Proceedings

Case(s) below are identified by caption and Commission case number. If there is more than one case, the cases are listed from most recent to oldest. A case may have more than one disposition or more than one component to a disposition, in which case each disposition and component is also listed separately within that case record, again in an order from most recent to oldest.

Click on [Case Research](#) to access any documents regarding this lawyer that are in our database. Case Research contains most disciplinary opinions of the Supreme Court and most disciplinary orders and board reports issued since 1990. If you have any questions, please contact us by phone or email.

800-325-3200 (with area code 618) 397-3200



ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive, Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6219
(312) 565-2600 (800) 826-8625
Fax (312) 565-2320

3161 West White Oaks Drive, Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
(217) 546-3523 (800) 252-8048
Fax (217) 546-3785

Margaret Lowery
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com,
margaretl@lowerywilkinsonlowery.com
and margaret.j.lowery@icloud.com

Springfield
January 23, 2026

Supreme Court No. M.R. 32889
Commission No. 2023PR00060

In Re: Margaret Jean Lowery

Notice: Ms. Lowery, you must acknowledge that you have received and reviewed this letter and Supreme Court Rule 764 and you must acknowledge receipt of these materials by return email to the email address listed below or by letter addressed to me within 7 days.

Dear Ms. Lowery:

As you know, the Supreme Court issued an order on January 15, 2026, imposing disbarment. The order was served upon you by the Clerk of the Court and became effective on the date issued.

The discipline ordered by the Court is in effect now, and you may not practice from the effective date of discipline and until the Court orders reinstatement after a petition and hearing pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 767.

A copy of Supreme Court Rule 764 is enclosed. The Rule sets forth a number of requirements for action that must be taken by you to terminate whatever practice you may have. An affidavit showing compliance with those requirements must be filed with the Clerk of the Supreme Court within 35 days of the effective date of the order of discipline.

If you have any questions about the requirements of Rule 764, please contact me at rmiller@iadc.org.

It is our practice to assign investigators to verify compliance with an order of discipline and with your compliance with Rule 764. The failure to comply can result in criminal charges, charges of contempt of court, and/or denial of any future petition for reinstatement.

January 23, 2026
Page 2

Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Rachel C. Miller
Rachel C. Miller
Litigation Counsel
ARDC Litigation Division

RCM:kl
Enclosure

RULE 764. Duties of a Disciplined Attorney and Attorneys Affiliated with Disciplined Attorneys

An attorney who is disbarred, disbarred on consent, or suspended for six months or more shall comply with each of the following requirements. Compliance with each requirement shall be condition to the reinstatement of the disciplined attorney. Failure to comply shall constitute contempt of court.

Any and all attorneys who are affiliated with the disciplined attorney as a partner or associate shall take reasonable action necessary to insure that the disciplined attorney complies with the provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) below. Within 35 days of the effective date of the order of discipline, each affiliated attorney or a representative thereof shall file with the clerk of the Supreme Court and serve upon the Administrator a certification setting forth in detail the actions taken to insure compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) below.

- (a) **Maintenance of Records.** The disciplined attorney shall maintain:
- (1) files, documents, and other records relating to any matter which was the subject of a disciplinary investigation or proceedings;
 - (2) files, documents, and other records relating to any and all terminated matters in which the disciplined attorney represented a client at any time prior to the imposition of discipline;
 - (3) files, documents, and other records of pending matters in which the disciplined attorney had some responsibility on the date of, or represented a client during the year prior to, the imposition of discipline;
 - (4) all financial records related to the disciplined attorney's practice of law during the seven years preceding the imposition of discipline, including but not limited to bank statements, time and billing records, checks, check stubs, journals, ledgers, audits, financial statements, tax returns and tax reports; and
 - (5) all records related to compliance with this rule.

(b) **Withdrawal from Law Office and Removal of Indicia as Lawyer.** Upon entry of the final order of discipline, the disciplined attorney shall not maintain a presence of occupy an office where the practice of law is conducted. The disciplined attorney shall take such action necessary to cause the removal of any indicia of the disciplined attorney as lawyer, counselor at law, legal assistant, legal clerk, or similar title.

(c) **Notification to Client.** Within 21 days after the entry of the final order of discipline, the disciplined attorney shall notify, by certified mail, return receipt requested, all clients whom the disciplined attorney represented on the date of the imposition of discipline, of the following;

- (1) the action taken by the Supreme Court;
- (2) that the disciplined attorney may not continue to represent them during the period of discipline;
- (3) that they have the right to retain another attorney; and
- (4) that their files, documents, and other records are available to them, designating the place where they are available.

(d) **List of Clients.** Within 21 days after the effective date of an order of discipline, the disciplined attorney shall file with the clerk of the Supreme Court and serve upon the Administrator an alphabetical list of the names, addresses, telephone numbers and file numbers of all clients whom the disciplined attorney represented on the date of, or during the year prior to, the imposition of discipline. At the same time, the disciplined attorney shall serve upon the Administrator a copy of each notification served pursuant to paragraph (c) above.

(e) **Notification to Courts.** Within 21 days of the effective date of the order of discipline, the disciplined attorney shall file a notice before the court in all pending matters in which the disciplined attorney is counsel of record and request withdrawal of his appearance. The notice shall advise the court of the action taken by the Supreme Court. The notice shall be served upon the disciplined attorney's former client and all other parties who have entered an appearance.

(f) **Notification to Others.** Within 21 days of the effective date of the order of discipline, the disciplined attorney shall, by certified mail, return receipt requested, notify the following of the action taken by the Supreme Court and his inability, during the period of discipline, to practice law in the State of Illinois:

- (1) all attorneys with whom the disciplined attorney was associated in the practice of law on the effective date of the order of discipline;
- (2) all attorneys of record in matters in which the disciplined attorney represented a client on the effective date of the order of discipline;
- (3) all parties not represented by an attorney in matters in which the disciplined attorney represented a client on the effective date of the order of discipline;
- (4) all other jurisdictions in which the disciplined attorney is licensed to practice law; and
- (5) all governmental agencies before which the disciplined attorney is entitled to represent a person.

(g) **Affidavit of Disciplined Attorney.** Within 35 days after the effective date of an order of discipline, the disciplined attorney shall file with the clerk of the Supreme Court and serve upon the Administrator an affidavit stating

- (1) the action the disciplined attorney has taken to comply with the order of discipline;
- (2) the action the disciplined attorney has taken to comply with this rule;
- (3) the arrangements made to maintain the files and other records specified in paragraph (a) above;
- (4) the address and telephone number at which subsequent communications may be directed to him; and
- (5) the identity and address of all other State, Federal and administrative jurisdictions to which the disciplined attorney is admitted to practice law.

(h) **Compensation arising from former law Practice.** Provided that the disciplined attorney complies with the provisions of this rule, the disciplined attorney may receive compensation on a quantum merit basis for legal services rendered prior to the effective date of the order of discipline. The disciplined attorney may not receive any compensation related to the referral of a legal matter to an attorney or attributed to the good will of her former law office.

(1) **Matters in which legal Proceedings Instituted.** The disciplined attorney shall not receive any compensation regarding a matter in which a legal proceeding was instituted at any time prior to the imposition of discipline without first receiving approval of the tribunal.

(2) **Other Aspects of Former Law Office.** The disciplined attorney shall not receive any compensation related to any agreement, sale, assignment or transfer of any aspect of the disciplined attorney's former law office without first receiving the approval of the Supreme Court. Prior to entering into any such transaction, the disciplined attorney shall file a petition in the Supreme Court and serve a copy upon the administrator. The petition shall disclose fully the transaction contemplated, shall attach any and all related proposed agreements and documents, and shall request approval of the transaction. The Administrator shall answer or otherwise plead to the petition within 28 days of service of the petition on the Administrator. If the Supreme Court determines that an evidentiary hearing is necessary, it may refer the matter to the circuit court for hearing.

(i) **Change of Address or Telephone Number.** Within 35 days of any change of the disciplined attorney's address or telephone number during the period of discipline, the disciplined attorney shall notify the Administrator of the change.

(j) **Modification of Requirements.** On its own motion or at the request of the Administrator or Respondent, the Supreme Court may modify any of the above requirements.

DO NOT CONTACT ME AGAIN

From Margaret Lowery <mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com>

Date Thu 1/29/2026 5:10 PM

To Lea Gutierrez <leasgutierrez@iardc.org>

Cc Ron W <ronw@lowerywilkinsonlowery.com>

Bcc Ron Wilkinson <rdavidwilkinson@msn.com>

To the Administrator:

I have never received a valid Illinois order establishing jurisdiction over me. The United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois has held that the ADA applies to me, and under *Tennessee v. Lane* any order issued in the absence of ADA-compliant access is **void**. Illinois has therefore never lawfully issued a valid order obligating any response from me.

Until such an order exists, I have no duty to respond. Because the validity of the proceeding, including jurisdiction, was never adjudicated, and because the purported order is void on its face under *In re Ruffalo*, any dispute regarding validity or enforcement is not properly addressed by email correspondence.

The proper forum for those issues is through counsel before Judge Dugan, who is hearing the Full Faith and Credit issues, or before the Clerk of the United States Supreme Court in response to the pending petition for certiorari. However it is not through direct communication with me.

I am represented by counsel in these matters. Ms. Miller is a party to the pending litigation and related appeals. Her continued direct contact with me is improper. Please direct her to cease all communications with me and to communicate only through counsel.

Margaret J. Lowery

Margaret J. Lowery, JD, MHA

The Lowery Law Firm
7122 South Sheridan Road, Suite 2-1110
Tulsa, OK 74133-2748
(918) 513-2204
Email: mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

Website: www.thelowerylawfirm.com

Licensed to practice law in the State of Oklahoma only.

The contents of this email message & any attachments are intended solely for the addressee(s) listed above. ***Do not forward this email without sender's permission.*** This communication is confidential and may be subject to applicable attorney/client and/or work product privileges. Do not deliver, distribute or copy this message and/or any attachments if you are not the intended recipient.

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Respondent,

No. 6271777.

Supreme Court No. M.R. 32889

Commission No. 2023PR00060

STATEMENT OF COSTS

Lea S. Gutierrez, Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, by her attorney, Rachel C. Miller, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 773(c), files this Statement of Costs in the amount of \$1,500. An itemization of all Rule 773 costs incurred in connection with the matter is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

Lea S. Gutierrez, Administrator
Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission

By: /s/ Rachel C. Miller

Rachel C. Miller

Rachel C. Miller
Counsel for Administrator
3161 W. White Oaks Dr., Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
Telephone: (217) 546-3523
Email: rmiller@iadc.org

4909-8698-0748, v. 1

E-FILED
2/3/2026 2:25 PM
CYNTHIA A. GRANT
SUPREME COURT CLERK

Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission

One Prudential Plaza

130 East Randolph Drive
Chicago, Illinois

312 565-2600

INVOICE NUMBER	9555
INVOICE DATE	31-Jan-26
COMMISSION NUMBERS	2023PR00060
PAGE	2

TO:
Margaret Jean Lowery

DATE		UNIT PRICE	2023PR00060
	A. WITNESS FEE COST		
5/31/2024	Andrew Gleeson Travel	371.13	371.13
	B. COURT REPORTER COST		
9/20/2023	Davis Reporting Service	163.00	
9/20/2023	Davis Reporting Service	163.00	
2/1/2024	Deborah J. Roberts	70.00	
5/14/2024	Davis Reporting Service	557.00	
6/30/2024	Keefe Reporting Company	89.30	
7/26/2025	Deborah J. Roberts	403.50	
			1,445.80
	C. MISCELLANEOUS COST		
1/31/2024	Oklahoma Legal Servers	110.00	
4/30/2024	FedEx - Exhibit expense	2,457.82	
			2,567.82
			4,384.75

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

In the Matter of:

MARGARET JEAN LOWERY,

Respondent,

No. 6271777.

Supreme Court No. M.R. 32889

Commission No. 2023PR00060

NOTICE OF FILING

TO: Margaret Lowery
Respondent
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on February 3, 2026, an electronic copy of the Administrator's STATEMENT OF COSTS was submitted to the Clerk of the Supreme Court for filing. On that same date, one copy was served on Counsel for Respondent via email at mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com at or before 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lea S. Gutierrez, Administrator
Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission

By: /s/ Rachel C. Miller

Rachel C. Miller

Rachel C. Miller
Counsel for Administrator
3161 W. White Oaks Dr., Suite 301
Springfield, IL 62704
Telephone: (217) 546-3523
Email: rmiller@iadc.org

E-FILED
2/3/2026 2:25 PM
CYNTHIA A. GRANT
SUPREME COURT CLERK

PROOF OF SERVICE

The undersigned, an attorney, hereby certifies, pursuant to Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, 735-ILCS-5/109, that the Administrator served copies of a Notice of Filing and the Administrator's STATEMENT OF COSTS, on the individual on the forgoing Notice of Filing, sent via e-mail at mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com on February 3, 2026, at or before 5:00 p.m.

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that she verily believes the same to be true.

/s/ Rachel C. Miller

Rachel C. Miller

E-FILED
2/3/2026 2:25 PM
CYNTHIA A. GRANT
SUPREME COURT CLERK

Fwd: Filing Returned for Envelope Number: 36492527 in Case: M.R.032889, In re: Margaret Jean Lowery for filing Notice - Appearance Filed (No Fee)

From Ron W <ronw@lowerywilkinsonlowery.com>
Date Wed 2/4/2026 1:42 PM
To Margaret Lowery <mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com>

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: no-reply@efilingmail.tylertech.cloud
Date: February 4, 2026 at 1:23:51 PM CST
To: Ron W <ronw@lowerywilkinsonlowery.com>
Subject: Filing Returned for Envelope Number: 36492527 in Case: M.R.032889, In re: Margaret Jean Lowery for filing Notice - Appearance Filed (No Fee)



ODYSSEY
eFileLL™

Filing Returned

Envelope Number: 36492527
Case Number: M.R.032889
Case Style: In re: Margaret Jean Lowery

The filing below has been reviewed and has been returned for the reasons outlined below. Please, contact the appropriate court help center for further information.

Return Reason(s) from Clerk's Office	
Court	File & Serve
Returned Reason	Rejection by Clerk.
Returned Comments	Your objection to the statement of costs is being rejected because an objection is not filed to a statement of costs. Per Supreme Court Rule 773(c), the Administrator shall prepare an itemized statement of costs, which shall be made a part of the record. If you contest the costs or fail to pay within 30 days of the service of the statement, pursuant to Rule 773(d), the Administrator may petition the court for an order and judgment assessing costs. If the Administrator files a petition for order and judgment for costs, you can file your objection at that time.

Document Details	
Case Number	M.R.032889
Case Style	In re: Margaret Jean Lowery
Date/Time Submitted	2/3/2026 5:29 PM CST
Filing Type	EFileAndServe
Filing Description	Entry of Special Appearance & Motion to Quash/Objection
Activity Requested	Notice - Appearance Filed (No Fee)
Filed By	Margaret Lowery
Filing Attorney	

Fwd: Filing Returned for Envelope Number: 36507594 in Case: M.R.032889, In re: Margaret Jean Lowery for filing Notice - Appearance Filed (No Fee)

From Ron W <ronw@lowerywilkinsonlowery.com>
Date Wed 2/4/2026 4:04 PM
To Margaret Lowery <mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com>

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: no-reply@efilingmail.tylertech.cloud
Date: February 4, 2026 at 4:01:41 PM CST
To: Ron W <ronw@lowerywilkinsonlowery.com>
Subject: Filing Returned for Envelope Number: 36507594 in Case: M.R.032889, In re: Margaret Jean Lowery for filing Notice - Appearance Filed (No Fee)



ODYSSEY
eFileLL™

Filing Returned

Envelope Number: 36507594
Case Number: M.R.032889
Case Style: In re: Margaret Jean Lowery

The filing below has been reviewed and has been returned for the reasons outlined below. Please, contact the appropriate court help center for further information.

Return Reason(s) from Clerk's Office	
Court	File & Serve
Returned Reason	Rejection by Clerk.
Returned Comments	Your objection to the statement of costs is being rejected because an objection is not filed to a statement of costs. Per Supreme Court Rule 773(c), the Administrator shall prepare an itemized statement of costs, which shall be made a part of the record. If you contest the costs or fail to pay within 30 days of the service of the statement, pursuant to Rule 773(d), the Administrator may petition the court for an order and judgment assessing costs. If the Administrator files a petition for order and judgment for costs, you can file your objection at that time.

Document Details	
Case Number	M.R.032889
Case Style	In re: Margaret Jean Lowery
Date/Time Submitted	2/4/2026 1:57 PM CST
Filing Type	EFileAndServe
Filing Description	Entry of Special Appearance & Objection to Jurisdiction with ADA request
Activity Requested	Notice - Appearance Filed (No Fee)
Filed By	Margaret Lowery
Filing Attorney	



ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

Keith ("Chuck") Roberts, Jr.
Special Counsel

Roberts, P.C.
400 S. Knoll St., Suite A
Wheaton, IL 60187
Telephone: (630) 668-4211
Email: chuckroberts@robertspc.com

February 2, 2026

Via Email

Margaret J. Lowery
7122 S Sheridan Rd, Suite 1110
Tulsa, OK 74133-2748
mlowery@thelowerylawfirm.com

Re :

Rachel Miller
In relation to
Margaret J. Lowery
2023IN2520

Martha Ferdinand
In relation to
Margaret J. Lowery
2024IN3334

Jose Lopez
In relation to
Margaret J. Lowery
2024IN3335

Esther Seitz
In relation to
Margaret J. Lowery
2025IN1962

Ashley Shambley
In relation to
Margaret J. Lowery
2025IN1963

Juan Thomas
In relation to
Margaret J. Lowery
2025IN1964

Dear Ms. Lowery:

I previously wrote to you regarding your communications to the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission regarding the following individuals:

2023 IN 2520 – Rachel Miller;
2024 IN 3334 – Martha Ferdinand;
2024 IN 3335 – Jose Lopez;
2025 IN 1962 – Esther Seitz;
2025 IN 1963 – Ashley Shambley; and
2025 IN 1964 – Juan Thomas.

The Illinois Supreme Court has issued its final decision in the underlying matter. I have carefully reviewed your communications concerning the above individuals. While I understand your concerns, you have not provided any information which would support a violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct by any of them. As a result, I have determined no action against any of the above is warranted and I will not initiate an investigation into these matters.



ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

Keith ("Chuck") Roberts, Jr.
Special Counsel

Roberts, P.C.
400 S. Knoll St., Suite A
Wheaton, IL 60187
Telephone: (630) 668-4211
Email: chuckroberts@robertspc.com

Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CR", written over a horizontal line.

Chuck Roberts, Special Counsel

CR/jlp