

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**SUPREME COURT**

**ORDER**

**LD-2018-0008, In the Matter of Geoffrey Michael Dowd, Esquire**

On September 14, 2018, the Attorney Discipline Office (ADO) filed a certified copy of an order of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, suspending Attorney Geoffrey Michael Dowd from the practice of law in Massachusetts for a period of six months, and requiring a petition for reinstatement and a hearing before reinstatement. The discipline was based upon the finding that Attorney Dowd violated numerous court rules in his representation of a client who retained him to prepare an estate plan and by continuing his representation after having been administratively suspended from the practice of law. Attorney Dowd was found to have violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct (R.P.C.) and Supreme Judicial Court (S.J.C.) Rules:

1. R.P.C. 1.1 and R.P.C. 1.3, by failing to competently and diligently represent the client in preparing an estate plan;
2. R.P.C. 1.4, by failing to respond to the client's requests for information and failing to keep the client reasonably informed of the status of his matter;
3. R.P.C. 5.5(a), R.P.C. 8.4(d), S.J. C. Rule 4:01 § 17, and S.J. C. Rule 4:03(3), by continuing to represent the client while administratively suspended from the practice of law; and
4. R.P.C. 8.4(d) and (g) and S.J.C. Rule 4:01 §3, by failing to cooperate with bar counsel's investigation necessitating the issuance of a subpoena.

In accordance with Supreme Court Rule 37(12)(b), the court ordered that a copy of the order of the Supreme Judicial Court be served on Attorney Dowd. It ordered Attorney Dowd and the ADO to inform the court if either contended that the imposition of identical or substantially similar discipline was unwarranted. The order also required the parties to inform the court what, in their view, constitutes substantially similar discipline if discipline was warranted. Attorney Dowd did not file a response to the order. The ADO notified the court that, in its view, the imposition of substantially similar discipline was warranted, and that a suspension of six months and one day

was substantially similar to the sanction imposed by the Supreme Judicial Court.

Rule 37(12)(d) provides for the imposition of reciprocal discipline by the court unless the respondent attorney or the ADO demonstrates, or the court finds, based upon the face of the record from which the discipline is predicated, that: (1) the procedure followed by the jurisdiction imposing discipline was so lacking in notice or opportunity to be heard as to constitute a deprivation of due process; (2) the imposition of the same or substantially similar discipline by the court would result in grave injustice; or (3) the misconduct established warrants substantially different discipline in New Hampshire.

Having reviewed the order of the Supreme Judicial Court, the court concludes that none of these factors are present. It appears from the order that Attorney Dowd appeared for the hearing before the Supreme Judicial Court. He has made no claim that he lacked an opportunity to be heard in the proceeding. As the record of the Massachusetts proceeding shows, Attorney Dowd committed numerous rule violations. In light of the number and seriousness of Attorney Dowd's misconduct, the court does not find that the imposition of substantially similar discipline would result in grave injustice or that his misconduct would warrant substantially different discipline in New Hampshire. The court agrees with the ADO that a suspension of six months and one day is substantially similar discipline. Accordingly, the court concludes that a reciprocal suspension of six months and one day should be imposed.

Therefore, the court orders that Attorney Geoffrey Michael Dowd be suspended from the practice of law in New Hampshire for a period of six months and one day. The suspension shall become effective immediately.

Any motion for reinstatement will be governed by Rule 37(14)(b). Attorney Dowd is hereby assessed all expenses incurred by the Professional Conduct Committee in the investigation and prosecution of this matter. See Rule 37(19).

DATE: November 26, 2018

ATTEST:

  
**Eileen Fox, Clerk**

Distribution:  
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File