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## NEWS RELEASE

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July 23, 2008

### **EOIR Announces Latest Disciplinary Actions Under Rules of Professional Conduct** *Seven Attorneys Immediately Suspended; Five Receive Final Orders; One Is Reinstated*

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has recently taken disciplinary action against 12 attorneys for violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct for immigration practitioners. One attorney was reinstated.

EOIR announces these disciplinary actions to inform the public about practitioners who are no longer authorized to represent clients before an immigration tribunal. In most cases, EOIR has disciplined the practitioner based on a sanction imposed by another jurisdiction or a criminal conviction.

Disciplinary proceedings begin when the Office of the General Counsel of either EOIR or the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), files a Notice of Intent to Discipline with EOIR's Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). The disciplinary action can result in the suspension or expulsion of a practitioner before the immigration courts, the BIA, and DHS. Attorneys who are suspended or expelled must be reinstated by the BIA before they can resume the practice of law before the BIA, the immigration courts, and DHS.

EOIR has recently taken the following disciplinary actions:

#### **Immediate Suspensions**

The BIA ordered the immediate suspension of the following attorneys:

- **Tricia-Ann Abigail Blair:** She was disbarred from the practice of law in Florida for trust account violations and engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation. She was immediately suspended by the BIA on June 24, 2008, based on her disbarment in Florida, pending final disposition of her case.

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- □ **Jose L. Del Castillo:** He was convicted in the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut for one count of immigration-related fraud. He was immediately suspended by the BIA on June 24, 2008, based on his conviction in Connecticut, pending final disposition of his case.
- □ **Lisa J. Jackson:** She was suspended from the practice of law in Connecticut for 1 year and 1 day for violating several of the state's rules of professional conduct involving safekeeping of property and conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice. She was immediately suspended by the BIA on May 15, 2008, based on her suspension in Connecticut, pending final disposition of her case.
- □ **Mirosław Thomas Lobasz:** He was suspended from the practice of law in Florida for 3 years for numerous trust account violations. He was immediately suspended by the BIA on June 24, 2008, based on his suspension in Florida, pending final disposition of his case.
- □ **Godfrey Y. Muwonge:** He was temporarily suspended from the practice of law in Wisconsin. He was immediately suspended by the BIA on June 24, 2008, based on his temporary suspension in Wisconsin, pending final disposition of his case.
- □ **Nazanin Nasri:** She was convicted in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia for one count of conspiracy to commit immigration fraud. She was immediately suspended by the BIA on June 24, 2008, based on her conviction in Virginia, pending final disposition of her case.
- □ **Juan Carlos Perez:** He was suspended from the practice of law in Florida for 6 months after he was found to be in contempt of court with regard to a previous disciplinary order. He was immediately suspended by the BIA on June 19, 2008, based on his suspension in Florida, pending final disposition in his case.

**Final Orders of Discipline**

- **Richard G. Hackwell:** A final order of June 24, 2008, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for 5 years, effective April 16, 2008, based on his disbarment in Utah.
- **William T. Jebb, II:** A final order of June 19, 2008, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for 6 months, effective April 9, 2008, based on his 6-month suspension in New York.

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- **Victor Mba-Jonas:** A final order of May 29, 2008, suspends him indefinitely from practice before immigration tribunals, effective April 25, 2008, based on his suspensions in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.
- **Mark H. Teklinski:** A final order of June 10, 2008, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for 60 days, effective May 15, 2008, based on his 60-day suspension in Michigan. He was previously suspended by the BIA on May 15, 2008, based on his suspension in Michigan.
- **James Harvey Tipler:** A final order of May 19, 2008, suspends him indefinitely from practice before immigration tribunals, effective Sept. 14, 2007, based on his 91-day suspension in Florida, his 15-month suspension in Alabama, and his failure to disclose these suspensions to USCIS.

## Reinstatement

- **Albert S. Lefkowitz:** He was reinstated to practice before immigration tribunals on June 24, 2008, after he completed his 3-month suspension before EOIR.

## Background

The Rules of Professional Conduct appear in Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR Parts 1003 and 1292). They include provisions specifying grounds for disciplinary action, requirements for receiving and investigating complaints, and procedures for conducting hearings. The rules also authorize the BIA to suspend immediately a practitioner who has been subject to disbarment, suspension, or resignation with an admission of misconduct as imposed by a federal or state court, or who has been convicted of a serious crime, pending a summary proceeding and final sanction. The Rules of Professional Conduct are available at [http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/vll/fedreg/2000\\_2001/fr27jn00R.pdf](http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/vll/fedreg/2000_2001/fr27jn00R.pdf).

A “List of Disciplined Practitioners” is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/profcond/chart.htm>. In an effort to provide more detailed information about individual attorney discipline cases, every immediate suspension or final order issued can be accessed through this list by clicking on the highlighted “date” link.

Additional information about the Attorney Discipline Program can be found at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcond.htm> and <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcondfaks.htm>.

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*EOIR, an agency within the Department of Justice, is responsible for adjudicating immigration cases. Specifically, under delegated authority from the Attorney General, EOIR interprets and administers federal immigration laws by conducting immigration court proceedings, appellate reviews, and administrative hearings. EOIR consists of three components: the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, which is responsible for managing the numerous immigration courts located throughout the United States where immigration judges adjudicate individual cases; the Board of Immigration Appeals, which primarily conducts appellate reviews of immigration judge decisions; and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer, which adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to providing the fair, expeditious, and uniform interpretation and application of immigration law in all cases.*