

Falls Church, Virginia 22041

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File: D2007-289

Date: DEC 6 2007

In re: STEVEN JAMES RODRIGUEZ, ATTORNEY

IN PRACTITIONER DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE

ON BEHALF OF DHS: Rachel A. McCarthy, Bar Counsel

ON BEHALF OF GENERAL COUNSEL: Jennifer J. Barnes, Bar Counsel

**ORDER:**

**PER CURIAM.** The respondent will be expelled from practice before the Board, Immigration Courts, and Department of Homeland Security (the "DHS").

On October 5, 2007, in the United States District Court for the Central District of California, the respondent pled guilty to a serious crime concerning immigration laws. Specifically, the respondent pled guilty to one count of making false statements, in violation of 8 U.S.C. § 1001 and 2(b).

Consequently, on October 17, 2007, the DHS initiated disciplinary proceedings against the respondent and petitioned for the respondent's immediate suspension from practice before the DHS. On October 18, 2007, the Office of General Counsel for the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) asked that the respondent be similarly suspended from practice before EOIR, including the Board and Immigration Courts.

Therefore, on October 25, 2007, we suspended the respondent from practicing before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS pending final disposition of this proceeding.

The respondent was required to file a timely answer to the allegations contained in the Notice of Intent to Discipline but has failed to do so. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.105(c)(1); 1292.3(e)(3)(ii). The respondent's failure to file a response within the time period prescribed in the Notice constitutes an admission of the allegations therein, and the respondent is now precluded from requesting a hearing on the matter. 8 C.F.R. § 1292.3(e)(3)(ii).

The Notice recommends that the respondent be expelled from practice before the DHS. The Office of General Counsel of EOIR asks that we extend that discipline to practice before the Board and Immigration Courts as well. As the respondent failed to file a timely answer, the regulations direct us to adopt the recommendation contained in the Notice, unless there are considerations that compel us to digress from that recommendation. 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.105(d)(2); 1292.3(e)(3)(ii). Since the recommendation is appropriate in light of the respondent's serious crime, related to his immigration law practice, we will honor it. Accordingly, we hereby expel the respondent from practice before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS.

As the respondent is currently under the Board's October 25, 2007, order of suspension, we will deem the respondent's expulsion to have commenced on that date. The respondent is instructed to maintain compliance with the directives set forth in our prior order. The respondent is also instructed to notify the Board of any further disciplinary action against him.

The respondent may petition this Board for reinstatement to practice before the Board, Immigration Courts, and DHS under 8 C.F.R. § 1003.107(b). In order to be reinstated, the respondent must demonstrate that he meets the definition of an attorney or representative, as set forth in 8 C.F.R. §§ 1001.1(f) and (j). *Id.*

  
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FOR THE BOARD