

Falls Church, Virginia 22041

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File: D2004-070

Date: AUG 20 2004

In re: JEFFREY GONZALEZ-PEREZ, ATTORNEY

IN PRACTITIONER DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE

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

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

ORDER:

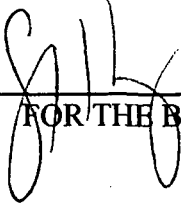
PER CURIAM. On March 29, 2004, the respondent's license to practice law was forfeited in Virginia for non-payment of annual dues and non-compliance with professional liability filing; he is not a member in good standing of the Virginia State Bar. The respondent was suspended from the District of Columbia Bar on September 30, 2003, for non-payment of dues, and has not been reinstated to the practice of law in that jurisdiction.

Consequently, on June 10, 2004, the Department of Homeland Security (the "DHS," formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Service), initiated disciplinary proceedings against the respondent and petitioned for the respondent's immediate suspension from practice before the DHS. On June 29, 2004, 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 August 4, 2004, 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)(i). 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)(ii).

The Notice recommends that the respondent be suspended from practicing before the DHS for a period of 2 years. The Office of General Counsel of EOIR asks that we extend that discipline to practice before it as well. Because 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)(ii). Since the recommendation is appropriate in light of the sanctions in Virginia and the District of Columbia, we will honor it. Accordingly, we hereby suspend the respondent from practice before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the DHS for a period of 2 years. As the respondent is currently under our August 4, 2004, order of suspension, we will deem the respondent's suspension to have commenced on that date.

After the suspension period expires, the respondent may petition this Board for reinstatement to practice before the Board, Immigration Courts, and DHS. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.107(a); 1292.3(f). 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.* Therefore, the respondent must show that he has been reinstated to practice law in Virginia and the District of Columbia before he may be reinstated by the Board. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 1001.1(f) (stating that term “attorney” does not include any individual under order suspending him from the practice of law). The respondent may seek earlier reinstatement under appropriate circumstances. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.107(b); 1292.3(f).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. H. K.', is written over a horizontal line.

FOR THE BOARD