

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

In the Matter of	:	No. 2297 Disciplinary Docket No. 3
	:	
ERIN ALMA POHLAND	:	No. 150 DB 2016
	:	
	:	Attorney Registration No. 93477
	:	
PETITION FOR REINSTATEMENT	:	(Westmoreland County)

ORDER

PER CURIAM

AND NOW, this 14th day of September, 2026, the Petition for Reinstatement is granted. Petitioner is ordered to pay the expenses incurred by the Board in the investigation and processing of the Petition for Reinstatement. See Pa.R.D.E. 218(f).

A True Copy Nicole Traini
As Of 09/14/2026

Attest: 
Chief Clerk
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

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	:	No. 150 DB 2016
ERIN ALMA POHLAND	:	
	:	Attorney Registration No. 93477
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PETITION FOR REINSTATEMENT	:	(Westmoreland County)

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

TO THE HONORABLE CHIEF JUSTICE AND JUSTICES
OF THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA:

Pursuant to Rule 218(c)(5) of the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement, The Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania submits its findings and recommendations to your Honorable Court with respect to the above captioned Petition for Reinstatement.

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board makes the following factual findings:

Background

1. Petitioner, Erin Alma Pohland, was born in 1979. She is a graduate of Latrobe High School, the Pennsylvania State University, and Georgetown University Law Center. N.T. 10-11.
2. Pohland was admitted to the Bar of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 2004. N.T. 11.
3. Pohland began her legal career as a litigation associate at K&L Gates in Pittsburgh, where she handled commercial litigation, insurance matters, and toxic-tort defense. N.T. 11-12.
4. After approximately four years of practice, Pohland accepted a position with the Alaska Attorney General's Office and moved to Anchorage in 2008. She was admitted to the Alaska Bar in the fall of 2008. N.T. 12-13.
5. Pohland served as an Assistant Attorney General in Health and Human Services and later as an attorney in the Labor and State Affairs Section. N.T. 13-15.
6. Pohland received excellent reviews during her tenure. Until the conduct underlying her disbarment, she had no professional reprimands, no complaints about her work product, and no disciplinary involvement of any kind. N.T. 15-16.

2011 Conviction for Concealment of Merchandise

7. In January 2010, Pohland met Skye McRoberts, who was a union organizer. Pohland and McRoberts quickly became close friends, to the

extent that Pohland became isolated from other people in her life. N.T. 17-18, 30.

8. During the friendship, Pohland discovered that McRoberts was an experienced shoplifter, a fact that was slowly revealed to Pohland over time. Eventually, McRoberts openly shoplifted in Pohland's presence. Pohland acknowledged that she "knew what [McRoberts] was doing was wrong...I didn't say anything...I should have. And I did not." N.T. 18-20.
9. Eventually, Pohland began participating in the shoplifting. By Pohland's estimate, the incidents of Pohland's shoplifting were "fewer than ten" and occurred over a period of less than a year. N.T. 20-21.
10. In December 2010, Pohland and McRoberts went to a store and both put items into a shopping cart with the intention of not paying for them. McRoberts attempted to push the cart of unpaid merchandise past store registers and was stopped by loss prevention. Pohland was allowed to leave, but within roughly three weeks, she learned that she had been criminally charged. N.T. 20-23.
11. Pohland did not contest the charges. Pohland agreed only to a modification of the original count from shoplifting to concealment of merchandise because the original count would have been categorized under Alaska law as a "barrier crime" and would have disrupted the international adoption of her young son. N.T. 23.

12. Pohland reported to her office the morning after she was charged and resigned her position as an Assistant Attorney General, because, in her words, she "shouldn't have been working there at that point." N.T. 24.
13. In September 2011, Pohland entered a plea of guilty to concealment of merchandise and was sentenced to 90 days in jail with 90 days suspended and three years of probation. She satisfied the terms of her sentence including community service, fines, and restitution. N.T. 33; Petitioner's Exhibit.
14. Pohland agreed to a temporary suspension by the Alaska Bar, which was imposed in December 2011. N.T. 24-25.

Conflict of Interest Matter

15. Within Pohland's work at the Attorney General's Office, she represented the Alaska Labor Relations Agency. N.T. 34.
16. In or about June 2010, the staff of the Alaska Labor Relations Agency met with Pohland to discuss their concerns about whether McRoberts had submitted forged interest cards on a union-organizing petition. Pohland gave the Agency legal advice to dismiss the petition, which advice ran contrary to McRoberts' interests. N.T. 34-35. However, Pohland, in violation of her ethical obligations, never disclosed her friendship with McRoberts to the Agency or that McRoberts was her landlord. Further, Pohland communicated with McRoberts about the matter while the Agency proceeding remained pending. N.T. 35.

Pohland acknowledged that she had a conflict of interest and she should have disclosed the relationship with McRoberts. N.T. 35-36.

17. The State of Alaska criminally charged Pohland with official misconduct related to this conflict. N.T. 33. Following a 2015 trial, Pohland was convicted. She appealed. N.T. 36. In 2019, the Alaska Court of Appeals reversed Pohland's conviction, holding that her computer had been searched in violation of the Fourth Amendment. The State elected to dismiss the charges against Pohland. N.T. 35, 65.

18. Pohland stipulated to disbarment and by Order dated April 15, 2016, the Supreme Court of Alaska disbarred Pohland, retroactive to May 6, 2013. N.T. 38.

19. Pohland reported her disbarment to disciplinary authorities in Pennsylvania. N.T. 65. By Order dated November 9, 2016, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania disbarred Pohland reciprocal to the Alaska discipline. Petitioner's Exhibit.

Pohland's Rehabilitation Efforts

20. Pohland began therapy in January 2011, immediately after she was criminally charged in the retail theft matter. N.T. 42-43. Seeking a fresh start, Pohland returned to Pennsylvania in October 2011 with her newly-adopted son. N.T. 33, 39. Later, when her son's developmental and emotional needs caused Pohland to further examine her life, she

returned to therapy in 2017 or 2018, which continued for some years.
N.T. 43-45.

21. Pohland was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder ("PTSD") by both her treating therapist and by an independent forensic psychiatrist she later retained for purposes of her Alaska bar reinstatement. N.T. 45.

22. Pohland's therapy taught her that her people-pleasing tendencies and impulse to "fawn" before a dominant personality were patterns laid down from her childhood. N.T. 27-28. However, Pohland did not raise these issues to excuse her misconduct but rather to explain the context of her situation and what she learned in therapy. She admitted that her misconduct "is on me." N.T. 32.

Pohland's Employment, Community Service, and Continuing Legal Education

23. Pohland has remained engaged in law-related activity since she returned to Pennsylvania in October 2011. She has not represented any clients nor appeared in court, and has never held herself out as a practicing lawyer.

24. Pohland worked for her father's law firm on a limited basis and for the past 15 years has been "ghost writing" for licensed attorneys across the country under their direction and supervision. Pohland drafted motions,

briefs, and complaints, among other documents. Pohland also wrote content for law firm websites and blog posts. N.T. 46-52.

25. No attorney for whom Pohland has worked has ever complained about her conduct or her work product. N.T. 52-53.

26. Pohland has engaged in community service during her disbarment period. She volunteered with the Blackburn Center, Westmoreland County's domestic and sexual violence agency; she was later retained as a contract employee at the Center, where she has worked for over a decade on social media, blog content, grant-proposal writing and outreach. N.T. 53, 88-89.

27. Pohland has been a leader of Voice of Westmoreland, a grassroots political organization, and involved with CORES (Communities Organizing for Racial Equality in Schools). N.T. 54. Additionally, she has volunteered at her son's schools and with his sports activities, and is finishing her tenure as president of her son's wrestling boosters organization. *Id.*

28. Pohland has stayed current in the law. She has completed more than the required number of Continuing Legal Education ("CLE") credits, including more than the required ethics credits. N.T. 55.

29. Pohland supplemented her CLE studies with coursework directly relevant to areas of practice that she is interested in pursuing if she is reinstated, one of which is criminal defense work. Pohland believes she

brings a valuable perspective to that area of law due to her own circumstances. She acknowledged that while she is very comfortable with her writing and research skills, she would want to work for other attorneys at the outset for trial court guidance. N.T. 55-56, 60.

Alaska Reinstatement Proceedings

30. Pohland was eligible to apply for reinstatement to the Alaska bar in 2018 but decided she was not ready at that time. Pohland later petitioned for reinstatement in Alaska in 2023. The Alaska bar counsel did not oppose her reinstatement. Pohland was granted reinstatement in Alaska in November 2024. N.T. 57-59, 66.

31. As conditions to reinstatement in Alaska, Pohland paid bar dues and took a three-hour ethics class. She currently is a member in good standing of the Alaska bar. If she ever returns to practice in Alaska, Pohland will be required to take the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE) and have a mentor for three years. N.T. 59.

Pennsylvania Reinstatement Proceedings at No. 150 DB 2016

32. On October 25, 2025, Pohland filed a Petition for Reinstatement and accompanying Reinstatement Questionnaire.

33. Office of Disciplinary Counsel (“ODC”) filed a response on November 18, 2025, and reserved the right to review Pohland’s testimony and

evidence at a hearing before taking a final position on the Petition for Reinstatement.

34. This matter was assigned to a Hearing Committee and a prehearing conference was held on February 2, 2026.

35. The Hearing Committee conducted a reinstatement hearing on March 30, 2026. Pohland appeared with counsel. She testified on her own behalf and introduced the testimony of five additional witnesses. Pohland introduced exhibits without objection. ODC offered no witnesses or exhibits.

36. Pohland testified credibly about the underlying misconduct, her rehabilitation efforts, and her acceptance of responsibility and remorse.

37. As to her conviction of concealment of merchandise, Pohland accepted responsibility for her criminal acts. She made clear that she knew her actions were wrong at the time she was engaged in the conduct, that she had never engaged in such conduct before, and that she has never engaged in it since. N.T. 21-22, 25.

38. Pohland accepted disbarment as the appropriate sanction for her concealment of merchandise conviction and her conflict of interest. She testified, "I committed a crime of dishonesty, which I admitted to and pled guilty to. I also violated my ethical rules regarding conflict of interest. So, I have never once and still to this day I don't contest the fact that

they were exactly right imposing discipline, particularly disbarment was right." N.T. 38-39, 56.

39. Pohland expressed deep shame and regret for her misconduct. N.T. 39, 56, 63. She addressed the Committee as follows: "I want to express my deep regret. I carried a ton of shame and guilt about what happened. I felt I was just a terrible person for what happened. I think I worked hard to move past some of that. But is it still something I carry with me. I don't want to be here on this side of the table. That is not something I ever envisioned when I went to law school or graduated from law school. ... I made the decisions I made, I regret them. I wish I hadn't. I'm ultimately responsible for what I did. N.T. 62-63.

40. While she acknowledged the negative effect that her conduct had on her family, her finances, and her personal life, she fully recognized and acknowledged the detrimental impact of her actions on the Alaska Attorney General's Office, the public, and the legal profession as a whole. N.T. 56-57.

41. Pohland assured the Hearing Committee that she will not repeat her misconduct as she has worked hard to understand the underlying causes and address them. N.T. 62.

42. Pohland presented the testimony of five character witnesses.

43. Dennis Rafferty, Esquire, an attorney with an office in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, testified credibly on behalf of Pohland. Attorney Rafferty

has been admitted to the practice of law in Pennsylvania for more than 50 years. N.T. 70.

44. Attorney Rafferty has known Pohland for her entire life, as he and his family members were close friends with her family members. His regular contact with Pohland has occurred in the last five to six years. N.T. 70.

45. Attorney Rafferty testified that he was familiar with the reasons why Pohland was disbarred from practicing law, as Pohland's father shared those reasons with him. N.T. 70-71.

46. When Pohland returned to Pennsylvania from Alaska, Attorney Rafferty employed her as a researcher for cases that he was involved in, because he knew her to be a very bright person, and to have had very good skills with regard to legal analysis and legal issues. N.T. 71.

47. Attorney Rafferty estimated that Pohland worked on approximately two dozen different matters for him, where she provided legal research and analysis for both criminal cases and civil litigation matters. Pohland has also drafted briefs which he then edits. Attorney Rafferty characterized the quality of Pohland's professional work as "excellent." N.T. 72, 73.

48. In response to a question as to whether he had ever heard anyone say anything negative about Pohland's honesty, trustworthiness, or her character, Attorney Rafferty stated, "No. Not at all." He described Pohland's character as "excellent." N.T. 73, 74.

49. Attorney Rafferty further credibly testified that if Pohland is reinstated, he would have no qualms with engaging her to assist him or referring others to her. N.T. 74.
50. Dr. Erin Reese, an emergency medicine physician in the Erie area, testified credibly on behalf of Pohland. N.T. 77-79.
51. Dr. Reese has known Pohland for over 30 years, since high school. N.T. 78.
52. Since high school, Dr. Reese has communicated with Pohland over the years by texting frequently, talking on the phone every couple of weeks, and visiting in person a handful of times per year. N.T. 79.
53. Dr. Reese is familiar with the reasons why Pohland was disbarred from practicing law because Pohland shared those reasons with her. N.T. 79.
54. Dr. Reese credibly testified that Pohland has expressed remorse about the events that led to her disbarment. N.T. 80.
55. Dr. Reese indicated that Pohland has worked hard in her employment, volunteering in her community organizations, and helping friends and family, and in each situation has displayed a high level of integrity. N.T. 80.
56. Dr. Reese further testified that based on her knowledge of Pohland over the years, the events that led to Pohland's disbarment were out of character for Pohland. Further, Dr. Reese would feel comfortable

engaging Pohland to assist her with a legal problem or referring others to her for assistance, if she were reinstated to the practice of law. N.T. 81.

57. Sara Revitsky testified credibly on behalf of Pohland. N.T. 82.

58. Ms. Revitsky is close friends with Pohland and has known her since approximately 1995, when both were in high school. N.T. 83.

59. Ms. Revitsky has kept in regular contact with Pohland over the years. N.T. 83.

60. Pohland shared with Ms. Revitsky the reasons why she was disbarred from practicing law. N.T. 83.

61. Ms. Revitsky testified credibly that she has witnessed Pohland grow into the role of being a mom, while also continuing to work in some capacity in the legal field. N.T. 84.

62. Ms. Revitsky has never heard anyone say anything negative about Pohland's honesty, trustworthiness or character; Ms. Revitsky considers Pohland to be a trustworthy person. N.T. 84.

63. Ms. Revitsky concluded her testimony by stating that she sees Pohland as someone who can fulfill the duties of her job in an ethical manner, sharing the observation that Pohland is knowledgeable and has become an advocate for her own son, friends she has met in the adoption community, and parents of children with special needs. N.T. 85.

64. Ann Emmerling testified credibly on behalf of Pohland. Ms. Emmerling also testified previously on behalf of Pohland for her Alaska bar reinstatement.
65. Ms. Emmerling has known Pohland since Pohland was a child, as Pohland's mother is Ms. Emmerling's first cousin. In addition, Ms. Emmerling has known Pohland in a professional capacity from January 2013 through June 2022. N.T. 88.
66. Ms. Emmerling worked at the Blackburn Center in Westmoreland County, which is a victim services program. Pohland came to the Blackburn Center first as a volunteer and then as a contract employee to do social media work. Ms. Emmerling worked with Pohland in that capacity for over nine years and had frequent contact, weekly or daily, with Pohland. N.T. 88.
67. Ms. Emmerling characterized Pohland's work as very professional, very reliable, and very appropriate. This included Pohland's interactions with board members, committee members, and community members. N.T. 89.
68. Ms. Emmerling credibly testified that Pohland shared the reasons why she was disbarred from practicing law, and that she took full responsibility for her actions. N.T. 89-90.

69. Ms. Emmerling has never heard anyone say anything negative about Pohland with regard to her honesty, trustworthiness or character. Ms. Emmerling herself finds Pohland to be very honest. N.T. 90.
70. Ms. Emmerling entrusted Pohland with tasks that put the agency's reputation on the line and testified that Pohland performed those tasks successfully. Ms. Emmerling further testified that if Pohland was reinstated to the practice of law in Pennsylvania, Ms. Emmerling would feel comfortable engaging her with legal problems or referring others to her for assistance. N.T. 91.
71. Jamie McGrady, Esquire, the Federal Public Defender for the District of Alaska, testified credibly on behalf of Pohland. N.T. 94.
72. Attorney McGrady estimated that she has known Pohland for nearly twenty years, by way of the Anchorage legal community, as well as mutual ties to the Pittsburgh area. N.T. 95.
73. Attorney McGrady kept in touch with Pohland after she left Alaska and sees her a couple of times a year. N.T. 95.
74. Attorney McGrady testified that Pohland shared the reasons for her disbarment and it was common knowledge in Alaska. N.T. 95.
75. Attorney McGrady observed Pohland change and grow from the time she was disbarred, by attending therapy, devoting herself to her adopted son, and taking care of her elderly parents. N.T. 97.

76. Attorney McGrady further testified that she has not heard anyone say anything negative about Pohland with regard to her honesty, trustworthiness or character generally. Furthermore, Attorney McGrady believes Pohland to be trustworthy, honest, dependable, and a good friend. N.T. 97-98.

77. Attorney McGrady concluded her testimony by credibly testifying that if Pohland were to be reinstated, she would feel comfortable engaging Pohland to assist her with legal problems or referring others to her for assistance. N.T. 98.

78. Following the close of the record, on April 27, 2026, Pohland submitted a post-hearing brief in support of her reinstatement.

79. On May 1, 2026, ODC filed a letter in lieu of a brief stating that it did not oppose Pohland's reinstatement.

80. The Board adjudicated this matter at the meeting on July 23, 2026.

II. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The misconduct for which Pohland was disbarred is not so egregious as to preclude the consideration of her Petition for Reinstatement. *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. John Keller*, 506 A.2d 872, 875 (Pa. 1986).

2. Pohland has proven by clear and convincing evidence that she has engaged in a sufficient period of rehabilitation during her disbarment. *In the Matter of Jerome J. Verlin*, 731, A.2d 600, 602 (Pa. 1999).

3. Pohland has proven by clear and convincing evidence that she has the moral qualifications, competency and learning in the law required for reinstatement to the bar and that her resumption of practice within the Commonwealth will be neither detrimental to the integrity and standing of the bar or the administration of justice nor subversive of the public interest. Pa.R.DE 218(c)(3).

III. DISCUSSION

Pohland seeks readmission to the practice of law in Pennsylvania following her reciprocal disbarment by Order of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania on November 9, 2016. For the reasons that follow, we conclude Pohland satisfied the *Keller* threshold standard and met her reinstatement burden under Pa.R.D.E. 218(c)(3) and recommend that the Petition for Reinstatement be granted.

The primary purpose of the lawyer disciplinary system is to protect the public from unfit attorneys and to maintain the integrity of the legal system. *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. John Rodes Christie*, 639 A.2d 782, 785 (Pa. 1994). When a disbarred attorney seeks reinstatement, the Board must first examine whether the magnitude of the breach of trust committed by the attorney is so egregious that it precludes further consideration of the petition for reinstatement. *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. John Keller*, 506 A.2d 872 (Pa. 1986).

The nature of Pohland's breach of trust that triggered her disbarment in Alaska and reciprocal discipline in Pennsylvania is two-fold: her 2011 criminal conviction for concealment of merchandise and her separate failure to reveal a conflict of interest

that arose during her employment with the Alaska Attorney General's Office, which occurred in 2010.

The record reveals that Pohland moved from Pittsburgh to Alaska in 2008 after accepting employment with the Alaska Attorney General's Office. In early 2010, Pohland met McRoberts and quickly developed a close friendship with her that increasingly isolated Pohland from other friends. Pohland discovered over time that McRoberts shoplifted merchandise; however, Pohland did not object and continued her friendship with McRoberts. Eventually, Pohland began shoplifting with McRoberts and was involved in "fewer than ten" incidents over a period of less than a year. Pohland's criminal activity caught up with her in December 2010, when she was charged with shoplifting following an incident where Pohland and McRoberts attempted to push a cart of unpaid merchandise past the registers and were stopped by loss prevention. In September 2011, Pohland pled guilty to a modified charge of concealment of merchandise and was sentenced to 90 days in jail with 90 days suspended and three years of probation, along with community service, fines and restitution.

The second facet of Pohland's misconduct that formed the basis of her disbarment was her impermissible conflict of interest in her capacity as a lawyer for the Alaska Attorney General's Office. In approximately June 2010, while working within the scope of her responsibilities as legal counsel, Pohland was involved in a discussion with the Alaska Labor Relations Agency concerning an individual who had submitted what appeared to be forged interest cards on a union-organizing petition. The individual was McRoberts, who not only was Pohland's close friend but was also her landlord. Pohland

provided legal advice to the Labor Relations Agency to dismiss the petition, which advice ran contrary to McRoberts' interests. However, Pohland violated her ethical duties by failing to reveal her relationship with McRoberts and communicating with McRoberts about the matter while the proceeding remained pending. The State of Alaska criminally charged Pohland with official misconduct related to this conflict. Pohland went to trial in 2015, was convicted, and later appealed. In 2019, the Alaska Court of Appeals reversed her conviction, holding that her computer had been searched in violation of the Fourth Amendment. The State elected to dismiss the charges against Pohland. To be clear, the official misconduct conviction did not play a part in her Alaska discipline; rather, the conduct that supported the conflict of interest formed the basis for disciplinary action.

There is no doubt that Pohland's misconduct was serious and adversely impacted the profession and the public. Nevertheless, we conclude, as did the Committee below, that Pohland's misconduct is not so egregious that it should foreclose consideration of her reinstatement request. While there is no case that squares with the particular facts of Pohland's misconduct, precedent establishes that attorneys who were disbarred for serious criminal activity were found to have satisfied the *Keller* standard. See *In the Matter of David Tevis Shulick*, No. 117 DB 2018 (D. Bd. Rpt. 3/7/2026) (S. Ct. Order 7/7/2026) (disbarred on consent for convictions of conspiracy to embezzle from a program receiving federal funds, making a false statement to a bank, and filing false tax returns; the misconduct was not so egregious that it prevented reinstatement); *In the Matter of Brian Joseph Salisbury*, No. 73 DB 2014 (D. Bd. Rpt. 9/6/2025) (S. Ct. Order 11/18/2025) (disbarred on consent for convictions of possession with intent to deliver

heroin and possession of a controlled substance; this conduct was not so egregious to prevent Salisbury's reinstatement).

The Board's analysis of Pohland's reinstatement qualifications does not end with the determination of the *Keller* threshold issue. A reinstatement proceeding is a "searching inquiry into a lawyer's present professional and moral fitness to resume the practice of law. The object of concern is not solely the transgressions which gave rise to the lawyer's suspension or disbarment, but rather, the nature and extent of the rehabilitative efforts he has made since the time the sanction was imposed and the degree of success achieved in the rehabilitative process." *Philadelphia News, Inc. v. Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania*, 363 A.2d 779, 780-781 (Pa. 1976). We therefore consider pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 218(c)(3), whether Pohland has established by clear and convincing evidence that she has the moral qualifications, competency and learning in the law required for admission to practice law in Pennsylvania and that her readmission would not have a detrimental impact on the integrity and standing of the bar, the administration of justice nor be subversive of the public interest. To meet this burden, Pohland must demonstrate that a sufficient amount of time has passed since her misconduct, during which she engaged in rehabilitative efforts such that the detrimental impact of her serious misconduct on the public trust has been dissipated. *Matter of Verlin*, 731 A.2d 600, 602 (Pa. 1999).

Initially, we observe that Pohland approached the reinstatement process, starting with the filing of her Petition and Questionnaire and continuing through her direct

testimony and cross-examination, with the full candor and transparency necessary for the Board to accurately assess her rehabilitative efforts.

More than nine years have passed since Pohland's reciprocal disbarment in Pennsylvania on November 9, 2016. Approximately fifteen years have passed since her underlying criminal activity and conflict of interest. The record reflects that Pohland has deep regret and shame for her misconduct. Pohland offered forthright and truthful testimony to establish that she fully comprehends that her concealment of merchandise conviction and her conflict of interest were serious acts of misconduct appropriately addressed by disbarment. Relative to the criminal conviction, Pohland assumed responsibility for her actions after she was charged by not contesting the charges, immediately resigning from the Attorney General's Office, and later entering a guilty plea to concealment of merchandise. Pohland satisfied all terms and conditions of her criminal sentence. Significantly, as to both the criminal conviction and the conflict of interest, Pohland understands that the consequences of those actions did not affect her only; they negatively impacted the Alaska Attorney General's Office and the public and were detrimental to the integrity of the legal profession.

In the aftermath of the events in Alaska, Pohland engaged in self-reflection and sought to understand her wrongful actions. She began therapy shortly after her criminal charges. She continued to receive therapeutic treatment at various times over the past fifteen years and gained insight into her life and her wrongdoing such that she believes she will not repeat the behavior in the future. Indeed, the record bears out that Pohland's misconduct was an aberration; she was never the subject of any criminal or

disciplinary matter prior to the Alaska incidents and has never had any problems since that time.

Seeking change, in October 2011 Pohland returned to live in Pennsylvania with her newly-adopted son. She obtained employment in the legal field by performing contract research and legal writing for attorneys under their supervision, including longtime family friend Dennis Rafferty, who testified on Pohland's behalf at the reinstatement hearing as to her excellent work product. Pohland also worked in a limited capacity for her father's law firm. None of these activities involved the practice of law, representation of clients, or court appearances. Pohland demonstrated her commitment to continued learning in the law by completing CLE courses required for reinstatement and by taking extra courses in areas of interest to her. Pohland shared that her research and writing projects over the years, as well as her personal circumstances, piqued her interest in criminal defense leading to her decision to pursue that area of the law if reinstated. While Pohland feels comfortable with the quality of her research and writing skills due to her extensive writing experience while disbarred, she recognizes a need to align with established attorneys to gain courtroom experience.

In addition to maintaining employment, Pohland immersed herself in community service during her disbarment period. She volunteered with a domestic and sexual violence agency in Westmoreland County, where she was later retained as a contract employee working on grant proposals, social media projects, and outreach. Pohland has been a leader of a grassroots political organization and involved with an

organization for racial equality in schools, has volunteered at her son's schools, and has held leadership positions related to her son's sports activities.

We further note that during her disbarment in Pennsylvania, Pohland sought and achieved reinstatement to the Alaska bar, where she is currently a member in good standing.

In support of her reinstatement, Pohland presented credible character evidence demonstrating her honesty, trustworthiness, strong work ethic, professionalism, and personal growth since her misconduct. Pohland's five character witnesses represented a range of viewpoints from lifelong friends, supervisors, and community members. These witnesses consistently voiced compelling and unreserved support for Pohland as a person of good character and integrity. Each witness staunchly advocated for Pohland's reinstatement to the bar and further indicated that if she is reinstated, they would entrust her with legal matters and refer others to her.

While Pohland's breach of trust was serious, the record evidence demonstrates that she has engaged in significant rehabilitation that has dissipated the impact of her original misconduct on the public trust. Pohland demonstrated that she is not predisposed to repeat her misconduct as she has confronted her past wrongdoing and demonstrated a genuine commitment to personal and professional development. We conclude that after nine years of disbarment devoted to rehabilitation from her serious misconduct, Pohland's reinstatement at this time would not cause harm to the public or adversely affect the public's perception of the legal profession. *See In the Matter of John Harper Estey*, No. 20 DB 2017 (D. Bd. Rpt. 12/11/2025) (S. Ct. Order 2/6/2026) (Estey

disbarred on consent for wire fraud; eight years of rehabilitation sufficient to dissipate the breach of trust); *In the Matter of Philip G. Gentile*, No. 54 DB 2007 (D. Bd. Rpt. 2/20/2018) (S. Ct. Order 3/16/2018) (Gentile reciprocally disbarred for conviction of grand larceny, cocaine possession, and passing bad checks; ten years of rehabilitation sufficient to address harm to the public); *In the Matter of Robert Eric Hall*, No. 171 DB 2004 (D. Bd. Rpt. 2/19/2015) (S. Ct. 3/17/2015) (Hall convicted of homicide by vehicle; seven and a half years of genuine rehabilitation sufficient to dissipate the impact of the underlying conduct on the public trust).

Upon this record, we conclude Pohland is fit to practice law. Pohland has met her reinstatement burden by clear and convincing evidence that she is morally qualified, competent and learned in the law, and that her reinstatement will not be detrimental to the integrity and standing of the bar or the administration of justice nor subversive of the public interest. We recommend Pohland's reinstatement.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

The Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania unanimously recommends that the Petitioner, Erin Alma Pohland, be reinstated to the practice of law.

The Board further recommends that, pursuant to Rule 218(f), Pa.R.D.E., Petitioner be directed to pay the necessary expenses incurred in the investigation and processing of the Petition for Reinstatement.

Respectfully submitted,

THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

By: 
Joan M. Wright, Member

Date: August 19, 2026