

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

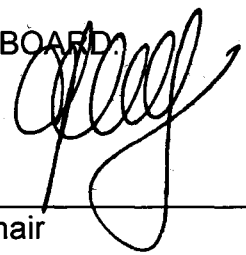
OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL : No. 12 DB 2022
Petitioner :
v. : Attorney Registration No. 92253
STEVEN RONALD SAVOIA :
Respondent : (Monroe County)

ORDER

AND NOW, this 5th day of August, 2022, in accordance with Rule 215(g), Pa.R.D.E., the three-member Panel of the Disciplinary Board having reviewed and approved the Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent filed in the above captioned matter; it is

ORDERED that STEVEN RONALD SAVOIA be subjected to a **PUBLIC REPRIMAND** by the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as provided in Rule 204(a) and Rule 205(c)(9) of the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement.

BY THE BOARD



Board Chair

TRUE COPY FROM RECORD

Attest:



Marcee D. Sloan
Board Prothonotary
The Disciplinary Board of the
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL,	:	
Petitioner	:	
	:	12 DB 2022
v.	:	
	:	Attorney Reg. No. 92253
STEVEN RONALD SAVOIA,	:	
Respondent	:	(Monroe County)

JOINT PETITION IN SUPPORT OF DISCIPLINE ON CONSENT
PURSUANT TO Pa.R.D.E. 215(d)

Petitioner, Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) by Thomas J. Farrell, Chief Disciplinary Counsel, and Kristin A. Wells, Disciplinary Counsel, and Respondent, Steven Ronald Savoia, Esquire, respectfully petition the Disciplinary Board in support of discipline on consent, pursuant to Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement (“Pa.R.D.E.”) 215(d), and in support thereof state:

1. ODC, whose principal office is located at the Pennsylvania Judicial Center, 601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 2700, P.O. Box 62485, Harrisburg, PA 17106, is invested, pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 207, with the power and the duty to investigate all matters involving alleged misconduct of an attorney in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and to prosecute all disciplinary proceedings brought in accordance with the various provisions of the aforesaid Rules.

2. Respondent, Steven Ronald Savoia, was born on September 4, 1958, and was admitted to practice law in Pennsylvania on January 28, 2004. Respondent is on active status. His registered address is 621 Ann Street, P.O. Box 263, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania 18360.

3. Pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 201(a)(1), Respondent is subject to the disciplinary jurisdiction of the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

SPECIFIC FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS ADMITTED

4. Respondent's affidavit stating, *inter alia*, his consent to the recommended discipline is attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

The Dabrowski Matter

5. In or about November 2020, Kathryn Dabrowski retained Respondent to represent her in seeking to recoup a security deposit from her and her partner, Dmitry Cruz's, prior landlord.

6. On November 10, 2020, Ms. Dabrowski paid Respondent \$760.75 for his services, which included his \$600.00 fee and \$160.75 anticipated court filing fee.

7. On December 21, 2020, Respondent filed a complaint, initiating ***Kathryn Dabrowski, Dmitry Cruz v. Glenn Plass, Stephanie Plass***, MJ-43401-CV-0000244-2020.

8. The Plasses failed to file an answer.

9. By Order dated April 15, 2021, the court entered judgment in favor of Ms. Dabrowski and Mr. Cruz in the amount of \$6,161.75.

10. On May 3, 2021, the Plasses filed a Notice of Appeal, initiating ***Dabrowski, et al. v. Plass, et al.***, 002160-CV-2021 (Monroe C.P.).

11. The Plasses served Respondent with the Notice of Appeal by certified mailing sent April 24, 2021, and delivered to Respondent's office address — P.O. Box 263, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania 18360 — on May 3, 2021.

12. By email dated May 4, 2021, Respondent advised Ms. Dabrowski that the Plasses had filed an appeal and requested that she call him to discuss.

13. If this matter were to proceed to a hearing, it is anticipated that Ms. Dabrowski would testify that, following her receipt of Respondent's May 4, 2021, email, she repeatedly attempted to contact Respondent via telephone and email.

14. Conversely, it is anticipated that Respondent would testify that he received no communication from Ms. Dabrowski following his May 4, 2021, email, until June 14, 2021, and assumed that she had retained alternative counsel for purposes of the appeal.

15. At no point did other counsel contact Mr. Savoia for purposes of taking over representation of Ms. Dabrowski and Mr. Cruz or file any documentation for this purpose.

16. Respondent failed to file a complaint on Ms. Dabrowski and Mr. Cruz's behalf or inform them of his intent not to file a complaint.

17. On May 25, 2021, the Plasses sent Respondent a notice of intent to request default judgment, which required Respondent to file a complaint within 10 days.

18. Respondent received the notice.

19. Respondent failed to inform Ms. Dabrowski and/or Mr. Cruz of the notice, file a complaint on their behalf, or take any action to preserve their rights.

20. On June 11, 2021, the Plasses filed a Praecipe for Judgment Non Pros.

21. Respondent received the Praecipe for Judgment Non Pros.

22. Respondent failed to inform Ms. Dabrowski and/or Mr. Cruz of the Praecipe or take any action to preserve their rights.

23. By Order dated June 11, 2021, the Court entered Judgment of Non Pros against Ms. Dabrowski and Mr. Cruz.

24. Respondent received the Judgment.

25. Respondent failed to inform Ms. Dabrowski and/or Mr. Cruz of the Judgment.

26. On or about June 14, 2021, Ms. Dabrowski and Mr. Cruz received notice of the Judgment.

27. By email dated June 14, 2021, Ms. Dabrowski informed Respondent that they

received notice of the Judgment and requested information concerning what happened in the case.

28. Respondent received the email and failed to respond.

29. Between June 14, 2021, and June 16, 2021, Ms. Dabrowski attempted to contact Respondent numerous times via phone, without success.

ODC Investigation

30. On September 24, 2021, ODC sent to Respondent a DB-7 Request for Statement of Respondent's Position letter ("DB-7 letter") concerning the above allegations.

31. The DB-7 letter advised Respondent that if he did not respond or provide good cause for failing to respond within 30 days, ODC may seek to impose discipline for his violation of Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7).

32. Respondent received the DB-7 letter.

33. Respondent failed to submit a response to the DB-7 letter allegations within the 30-day response period or provide good cause for his failure to respond.

34. By letter dated November 9, 2021, ODC reminded Respondent of the DB-7 letter and provided him with an additional 10 days to respond.

35. Respondent received ODC's November 9, 2021, letter.

36. Respondent failed to respond to the allegations contained in the DB-7 letter or communicate with ODC in any fashion.

37. On January 27, 2022, Office of Disciplinary Counsel Auditor/Investigator Suzanne Kreider personally served Respondent at his residence in East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, with the Petition for Discipline filed in this matter.

38. Respondent failed to file a response to the Petition for Discipline within 20 days, as required by Pa.R.D.E. 208(b)(3), request additional time in which to submit a response, or

communicate with ODC in any fashion.

**SPECIFIC RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND RULES OF
DISCIPLINARY ENFORCEMENT VIOLATED**

39. Respondent violated the following Pennsylvania Rules of Professional Conduct and Rule of Disciplinary Enforcement:

- a. RPC 1.3, which states that a lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client;
- b. RPC 1.4(a)(1), which states that a lawyer shall promptly inform the client of any decision or circumstance with respect to which the client's informed consent, as defined in Rule 1.0(e), is required by these Rules;
- c. RPC 1.4(a)(2), which states that a lawyer shall reasonably consult with the client about the means by which the client's objectives are to be accomplished;
- d. RPC 1.4(a)(3), which states that a lawyer shall keep the client reasonably informed about the status of the matter; and
- e. RPC 8.4(d), which states that it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice.
- f. Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7), which states that failure by a respondent-attorney without good cause to respond to Disciplinary Counsel's request or supplemental request under Disciplinary Board Rules, § 87.7(b) for a statement of the respondent-attorney's position shall be a ground for discipline.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION FOR DISCIPLINE
PUBLIC REPRIMAND

Respondent fully admits to his misconduct in violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct and Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement and expresses remorse for his failure to respond to the DB-7 letter and Petition for Discipline. Respondent's misconduct in this matter is aggravated by his disciplinary history, which includes two informal admonitions for misconduct similar to the instant case. In 2016, Respondent received a summary informal admonition with condition for violating RPC 1.3, RPC 1.4(a)(4), RPC 1.15(e), RPC 1.16(d), RPC 8.1(b), and Pa.R.D.E. 203(b)(7) based on his complete neglect of one client matter and failure to respond to ODC's DB-7 letter. As a condition of the informal admonition, Respondent was required to refund the entirety of the advanced fee paid by the client, in the amount of \$500.00. Respondent complied with this condition only after he was contacted by ODC six months after imposition of the informal admonition. In 2020, Respondent received a summary informal admonition with condition for violating RPC 1.3, RPC 1.4(a)(3), RPC 1.15(b), RPC 1.15(i), RPC 1.15(m), RPC 3.2 and RPC 8.4(d) based on his neglect of one client matter and failure to deposit and maintain the client's \$310.00 advanced filing fees in a trust account. As a condition of the informal admonition, Respondent was required to refund the \$310.00 advanced filing fee paid by the client. Respondent timely complied with the condition. It is clear that prior disciplinary intervention has not been sufficient to abate Respondent's misconduct, suggesting more serious discipline is necessary.

Precedent supports the imposition of public discipline, without suspension, for attorneys who engage in neglect and failure to communicate and have a record of private discipline. In *Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Neil Anthony Grover*, No. 128 DB 2014 (D. Bd. Rpt.

8/29/2014), the Board Ordered a Public Reprimand based on Respondent's violations of RPC 1.1, RPC 1.3, RPC 1.4 and Pa.R.D.E 203(b)(7). Like Respondent Savoia, Respondent Grover's misconduct involved his neglect of one client matter and failure to respond to ODC, and was aggravated by his history of prior discipline for similar misconduct. Given the limited nature of Respondent Savoia's misconduct and lack of any evidence of mishandling of client funds, greater discipline in the form of a suspension is not warranted in this case. *See Office of Disciplinary Counsel v. Tangie Marie Boston*, No. 99 DB 2018 (D. Bd. Rpt. 12/10/2019) (S. Ct. Order 2/12/2020) (one-year and one-day suspension for misconduct in four client matters comprising incompetence, neglect, lack of communication, failure to refund unearned fees, and conduct prejudicial to administration of justice).

WHEREFORE, Petitioner and Respondent respectfully request, pursuant to Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement 215(e), 215(g) and 215(i), a three member panel of the Disciplinary Board review and approve the Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent, enter an appropriate order and arrange to have Respondent appear before a designated panel of three members selected by the Board Chair for the purpose of receiving a public reprimand, and that Respondent pay the necessary expenses incurred in the investigation and prosecution of this matter as a condition to the grant of the Petition.

Respectfully submitted,

Office of Disciplinary Counsel
Thomas J. Farrell
Chief Disciplinary Counsel

Date: 6/16/22

By: 
Kristin A. Wells

Disciplinary Counsel
Attorney Registration No. 312080
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 5800
P.O. Box 62675
Harrisburg, PA 17106-2675
Telephone (717) 772-8572

Date: 6/16/22

By: 
Steven Ronald Savoia

Respondent
621 Ann St.
P.O. Box 263
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
Telephone (570)972-2060

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

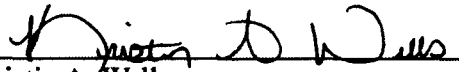
OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL, :
Petitioner :
: 12 DB 2022
v. :
: Attorney Reg. No. 92253
STEVEN RONALD SAVOIA, :
Respondent : (Monroe County)

VERIFICATION


The statements made in the foregoing Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent Pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 215(d) are true and correct to the best of my knowledge or information and belief. This statement is made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904 relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 6/16/22

By: 
Kristin A. Wells
Disciplinary Counsel
Attorney Registration No. 312080
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 5800
P.O. Box 62675
Harrisburg, PA 17106-2675
Telephone (717) 772-8572

Date: 6/16/22

By: 
Steven Ronald Savoia
Respondent
621 Ann St.
P.O. Box 263
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
Telephone (570)972-2060

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL,	:	
Petitioner	:	
	:	12 DB 2022
v.	:	
	:	Attorney Reg. No. 92253
STEVEN RONALD SAVOIA,	:	
Respondent	:	(Monroe County)

RESPONDENT’S AFFIDAVIT UNDER RULE 215(d) OF THE
PENNSYLVANIA RULES OF DISCIPLINARY ENFORCEMENT

I, Steven Ronald Savoia, Respondent in the above-captioned matter, being duly sworn according to law, deposes and hereby submits this affidavit consenting to the recommendation of discipline in the form of a public reprimand in conformity with Pa.R.D.E. 215(d) and further states as follows:

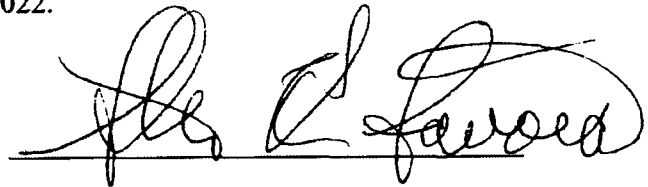
1. I am an attorney actively licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, having been admitted to the bar on or about January 28, 2004.
2. I desire to submit a Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent pursuant to Pa.R.D.E. 215(d).
3. My consent is freely and voluntarily rendered; I am not being subjected to coercion or duress; I am fully aware of the implications of submitting the consent;
4. I am aware there is presently pending a proceeding involving allegations that I have been guilty of misconduct as set forth in the Joint Petition in Support of Discipline on Consent of which this affidavit is attached hereto;
5. I acknowledge that the material facts set forth in the Joint Petition are true;

6. I consent because I know that if the charges continued to be prosecuted in the pending proceeding, I could not successfully defend against them; and

7. I am aware of my right to retain counsel in the instant proceeding. I have not retained, consulted, or acted upon the advice of counsel in connection with my decision to execute the Joint Petition.

It is understood that the statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S.A. §4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

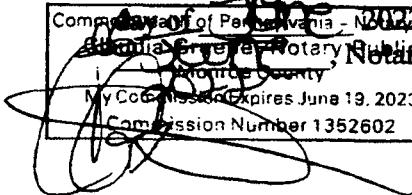
Signed this 15th day of June, 2022.



STEVEN RONALD SAVOIA

Subscribed and sworn this 15

day of June, 2022, before
Steven R. Savoia, Notary Public
Montgomery County
My Commission Expires June 19, 2023
Commission Number 1352602



BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL, :
Petitioner :
v. : 12 DB 2022
STEVEN RONALD SAVOIA, :
Respondent : Attorney Reg. No. 92253
(Monroe County)

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE


I hereby certify that I am this day serving the foregoing document upon all parties of record in this proceeding in accordance with the requirements of Disciplinary Board Rules and Procedures § 89.22 (service by a participant).

First Class Mail and email as follows:

Steven Ronald Savoia
621 Ann St.
P.O. Box 263
Stroudsburg, PA 18360

ssavoia@ptd.net

Date: 6/21/22

By: 
Kristin A. Wells
Disciplinary Counsel
Attorney Registration No. 312080
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 5800
P.O. Box 62675
Harrisburg, PA 17106-2675
Telephone (717) 772-8572

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania: Case Records of the Appellate and Trial Courts* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by: Office of Disciplinary Counsel

Signature: Kristin A. Wells

Name: Kristin A. Wells

Attorney No. (if applicable): 312080