

FILED

Jan 23, 2026

Disciplinary
Board

Docket # 019

DISCIPLINARY BOARD
WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

In re
ALICE BAGIROVA,
Lawyer (Bar No. 49294).

Proceeding No. 25#00005
ODC File No(s). 22-01500
STIPULATION TO REPRIMAND
Following settlement conference conducted
under ELC 10.12(h)

Under Rule 9.1 of the Washington Supreme Court's Rules for Enforcement of Lawyer Conduct (ELC), and following a settlement conference conducted under ELC 10.12(h), the following Stipulation to reprimand is entered into by the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) of the Washington State Bar Association (Association) through disciplinary counsel Claire Carden, Respondent's Counsel Jeffrey T. Kestle, and Respondent lawyer Alice Bagirova.

Respondent understands that Respondent is entitled under the ELC to a hearing, to present exhibits and witnesses on Respondent's behalf, and to have a hearing officer determine the facts, misconduct and sanction in this case. Respondent further understands that Respondent is entitled under the ELC to appeal the outcome of a hearing to the Disciplinary Board, and, in certain cases, the Supreme Court. Respondent further understands that a hearing and appeal could result in an outcome more favorable or less favorable to Respondent. Respondent chooses to resolve this

1 proceeding now by entering into the following stipulation to facts, misconduct and sanction to
2 avoid the risk, time, and expense attendant to further proceedings.

3 **I. ADMISSION TO PRACTICE**

4 1. Respondent was admitted to practice law in the State of Washington on June 5, 2015.

5 **II. STIPULATED FACTS**

6 2. J.M. hired Respondent to represent J.M. in a personal injury lawsuit.

7 3. At all relevant times, Elina Benin was a contract paralegal for Respondent.

8 4. At all relevant times, Respondent had direct supervisory authority over Benin.

9 5. On December 10, 2021, Respondent filed a personal injury complaint on behalf of
10 J.M.

11 6. On February 10, 2022, Defendants served a set of discovery requests on
12 Respondent.

13 7. Respondent did not respond to those discovery requests within 30 days as required
14 by court rule.

15 8. Defense counsel attempted twice to conduct a CR 26(i) conference with
16 Respondent in order to obtain responses to the discovery requests.

17 9. On July 15, 2022, defense counsel emailed Respondent and requested the
18 discovery responses by the end of the week and threatened motion to compel.

19 10. On August 4, 2022, J.M. delivered handwritten discovery responses to
20 Respondent's office.

21 11. Respondent did not transmit those responses to the defendants.

22 12. On or around August 8, 2022, Respondent received the defendants' motion to
23 compel discovery responses.

1 13. The motion to compel was scheduled without oral argument for August 18, 2022.

2 14. Respondent did not respond to the motion to compel.

3 15. Respondent did not produce discovery responses before the August 18, 2022
4 hearing.

5 16. On August 19, 2022, the court entered an order compelling J.M. to produce
6 discovery within ten days and to pay \$750 to the defendants to cover their fees and costs incurred
7 in bringing the motion.

8 17. Respondent did not produce discovery within ten days of the entry of the order
9 compelling discovery.

10 18. On September 7, 2022, the defendants emailed the court to request a court date for
11 a motion to dismiss J.M.'s lawsuit for discovery violations.

12 19. Respondent was included on the September 7, 2022 email.

13 20. On September 9, 2022, defense counsel emailed Benin and Respondent and
14 explained that the defendants were filing a motion to dismiss for violating the order compelling
15 discovery responses.

16 21. Respondent received the September 9, 2022 email.

17 22. Later on September 9, 2022, Benin emailed Defendants purporting to send
18 discovery via a Dropbox link.

19 23. Respondent checked the Dropbox link and found it contained no documents.

20 24. Respondent sent a text message to Benin informing Benin the folder is empty.

21 25. Benin responded to Respondent that the files were uploading.

22 26. Respondent never checked the Dropbox link again.

23 27. Respondent took no additional steps to ensure the discovery had been provided.

1 28. At the time Benin purported to send the discovery responses, Respondent had not
2 reviewed or signed the discovery responses.

3 29. On September 12, 2022, defense counsel emailed Respondent and Benin
4 informing both that the Dropbox link was empty and demanded discovery by the end of the day.

5 30. Respondent received the September 12, 2022 email. Respondent did not respond
6 to the email or send the discovery responses to defense counsel.

7 31. On September 13, 2022, Defendants e-filed a motion to dismiss for failure to
8 respond to discovery requests, and a note for hearing for October 28, 2022. Respondent received
9 a copy of the motion and note for hearing via email.

10 32. On September 13, 2022, defense counsel emailed the court to confirm the October
11 28, 2022, hearing date. Defense counsel copied Respondent on the email.

12 33. Respondent left for an extended trip overseas on September 13, 2022.

13 34. Respondent did not respond to the motion to dismiss.

14 35. Respondent did not inform J.M. that a motion to dismiss had been filed.

15 36. Respondent did not appear at the October 28, 2022 hearing.

16 37. On October 28, 2022, the court dismissed J.M.'s lawsuit with prejudice for
17 discovery violations.

18 III. STIPULATION TO MISCONDUCT

19 42. By failing to produce information responsive to discovery requests and by failing to
20 comply with the court's order compelling production of information, Respondent violated RPC
21 3.4(c) and RPC 3.4(d).

22 43. By failing to adequately supervise Benin, Respondent violated RPC 5.3(b).

23 44. By failing to respond to discovery requests, failing to respond to the motion to compel

1 and motion to dismiss, and failing to appear at the motion to dismiss hearing, Respondent violated
2 RPC 1.3 and RPC 3.2.

3 45. By failing to keep J.M. informed about the status of the matter, Respondent violated
4 RPC 1.4(a).

5 **IV. APPLICATION OF ABA STANDARDS**

6 46. The following American Bar Association Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions
7 (1991 ed. & Feb. 1992 Supp.) apply to this case

8 ***4.4 Lack of Diligence***

9 4.41 Disbarment is generally appropriate when:

10 (a) a lawyer abandons the practice and causes serious or potentially serious
injury to a client; or

11 (b) a lawyer knowingly fails to perform services for a client and causes
serious or potentially serious injury to a client; or

12 (c) a lawyer engages in a pattern of neglect with respect to client matters
and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client.

13 4.42 Suspension is generally appropriate when:

14 (a) a lawyer knowingly fails to perform services for a client and causes
injury or potential injury to a client, or

15 (b) a lawyer engages in a pattern of neglect and causes injury or potential
injury to a client.

16 4.43 Reprimand is generally appropriate when a lawyer is negligent and does not
act with reasonable diligence in representing a client, and causes injury or
potential injury to a client.

17 4.44 Admonition is generally appropriate when a lawyer is negligent and does
not act with reasonable diligence in representing a client, and causes little
or no actual or potential injury to a client.

18 ***6.2 Abuse of the Legal Process***

19 6.21 Disbarment is generally appropriate when a lawyer knowingly violates a
court order or rule with the intent to obtain a benefit for the lawyer or
another, and causes serious injury or potentially serious injury to a party or
causes serious or potentially serious interference with a legal proceeding.

20 6.22 Suspension is generally appropriate when a lawyer knows that he or she is
violating a court order or rule, and causes injury or potential injury to a
client or a party, or causes interference or potential interference with a legal
proceeding.

21 6.23 Reprimand is generally appropriate when a lawyer negligently fails to
comply with a court order or rule, and causes injury or potential injury to
22
23

1 a client or other party, or causes interference or potential interference with
2 a legal proceeding.

3 6.24 Admonition is generally appropriate when a lawyer engages in an isolated
4 instance of negligence in complying with a court order or rule, and causes
5 little or no actual or potential injury to a party, or causes little or no actual
6 or potential interference with a legal proceeding.

7 **7.0 Violations of Duties Owed as a Professional**

8 7.1 Disbarment is generally appropriate when a lawyer knowingly engages in
9 conduct that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional with the intent
10 to obtain a benefit for the lawyer or another, and causes serious or
11 potentially serious injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

12 7.2 Suspension is generally appropriate when a lawyer knowingly engages in
13 conduct that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional and causes
14 injury or potential injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

15 7.3 Reprimand is generally appropriate when a lawyer negligently engages in
16 conduct that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional and causes
17 injury or potential injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

18 7.4 Admonition is generally appropriate when a lawyer engages in an isolated
19 instance of negligence that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional,
20 and causes little or no actual or potential injury to a client, the public, or
21 the legal system.

22 47. Respondent caused J.M. actual injury in the form of the dismissal with prejudice of
23 J.M.'s lawsuit.

24 48. Respondent acted knowingly in failing to produce information responsive to discovery
requests and failing to comply with the court's order compelling discovery.

49. The presumptive sanction under ABA Standard 6.22 is suspension.

50. Respondent acted negligently in failing to supervise Benin.

51. The presumptive sanction under ABA Standard 7.3 is reprimand.

52. Respondent acted knowingly in failing to respond to discovery, failing to respond to
the motion to compel and motion to dismiss, and failing to appear at the motion to dismiss hearing.

53. The presumptive sanction under ABA Standard 4.42 is suspension.

54. Respondent acted knowingly in failing to keep J.M. informed about the status of J.M.'s

1 matter.

2 55. Respondent caused J.M. actual injury because J.M. was uninformed about the status
3 of the case and unable to pursue other options, such as finding new counsel.

4 56. The presumptive sanction under ABA Standard 4.42 is suspension.

5 57. No aggravating factors apply under ABA Standard 9.22.

6 58. The following mitigating factors apply under ABA Standard 9.32:

7 (a) absence of a prior disciplinary record;

8 (c) personal or emotional problems as described in Appendix A, filed under seal;

9 (g) character and reputation; and

10 (l) remorse.

11 59. It is an additional mitigating factor that Respondent has agreed to resolve this matter
12 at an early stage of the proceedings.

13 60. Based on the factors set forth above, the presumptive sanction should be mitigated to
14 reprimand.

15 V. STIPULATED DISCIPLINE

16 61. The parties stipulate that Respondent shall receive a reprimand.

17 VI. CONDITIONS OF PROBATION

18 62. Respondent will be subject to probation for a period of two years beginning when this
19 stipulation receives final approval and shall comply with the specific probation terms set forth
20 below:

21 Practice Monitor

22 a) During the period of probation, Respondent's practice will be supervised by a practice
23 monitor. The practice monitor must be a WSBA member with no record of public
discipline and who is not the subject of a pending public disciplinary proceeding.

- 1 b) The role of the practice monitor is to consult with and provide guidance to Respondent
2 regarding case management, office management, and avoiding violations of the Rules
3 of Professional Conduct, and to provide reports and information to the Probation
4 Administrator regarding Respondent's compliance with the terms of probation and
5 the RPC. The practice monitor does not represent the Respondent.
- 6 c) At the beginning of the probation period, the Probation Administrator will select a
7 lawyer to serve as practice monitor for the period of Respondent's probation.
- 8 i) Initial Challenge: If, within 15 days of the written notice of the selection of
9 a practice monitor, Respondent sends a written request to the Probation
10 Administrator that another practice monitor be selected, the Probation
11 Administrator will select another practice monitor. Respondent need not
12 identify any basis for this initial request.
- 13 ii) Subsequent Challenges: If, after selection of a second (or subsequent)
14 practice monitor, Respondent believes there is good cause why that individual
15 should not serve as practice monitor, Respondent may, within 15 days of
16 notice of the selected practice monitor, send a written request to the Probation
17 Administrator asking that another practice monitor be selected. That request
18 must articulate good cause to support the request. If the Probation
19 Administrator agrees, another practice monitor will be selected. If the
20 Probation Administrator disagrees, the Office of Disciplinary Counsel will
21 submit its proposed selection for practice monitor to the Chair of the
22 Disciplinary Board for appointment pursuant to ELC 13.8(a)(2), and will also
23 provide the Chair with the Respondent's written request that another practice
24 monitor be selected.
- d) In the event the practice monitor is no longer able to perform the practice monitor's
duties, the Probation Administrator will select a new practice monitor at the Probation
Administrator's discretion.
- e) During the period of probation, Respondent must cooperate with the named practice
monitor. Respondent must meet with the practice monitor at least once per quarter.
Respondent must communicate with the practice monitor to schedule all required
meetings.
- f) The Respondent must bring to each meeting a current, complete written list of all
pending client legal matters being handled by the Respondent. The list must identify
the current status of each client matter and any problematic issues regarding each
client matter. The list may identify clients by using the client's initials rather than the
client's name.
- g) At each meeting, the practice monitor will discuss with Respondent practice issues
that have arisen or are anticipated. In light of the conduct giving rise to the imposition
of probation, ODC recommends that the practice monitor and Respondent discuss
whether Respondent is diligently making progress on each client matter, whether

1 Respondent is in communication with each client, whether Respondent needs to
2 consider withdrawing from any client matters. Meetings may be in person or by
3 telephone at the practice monitor's discretion. The practice monitor uses discretion
4 in determining the length of each meeting.

- 5 h) The practice monitor will provide the Probation Administrator with quarterly written
6 reports regarding Respondent's compliance with probation terms and the RPC. Each
7 report must include the date of each meeting with Respondent, a brief synopsis of the
8 discussion topics, and a brief description of any concerns the practice monitor has
9 regarding the Respondent's compliance with the RPC. The report must be signed by
10 the practice monitor. Each report is due within 30 days of the completion of the
11 quarter.
- 12 i) If the practice monitor believes that Respondent is not complying with any of
13 Respondent's ethical duties under the RPC or if Respondent fails to schedule or attend
14 a monthly meeting, the practice monitor will promptly communicate that to the
15 Probation Administrator.
- 16 j) Respondent must make payments totaling \$1,000 to the Washington State Bar
17 Association to defray the costs and expenses of administering the probation, as
18 follows:
- 19 i) \$250 due within 30 days of the start of the probation;
 - 20 ii) \$250 due within 6 months of the start of the probation period;
 - 21 iii) \$250 due within 12 months of the start of the probation period; and
 - 22 iv) \$250 due within 18 months of the start of the probation period.

23 All payments should be provided to the Probation Administrator for processing.

24 Ethics School

- 25 k) Respondent shall attend Ethics School by webinar (approximately 7.5 hours), or by
26 obtaining the recorded product, and to pay registration costs of \$150 plus applicable
27 sales tax. Respondent will receive all applicable approved CLE credits for time in
28 attendance at the Ethics School.
- 29 l) Attendance at Ethics School is in addition to and shall not fulfill any continuing legal
30 education (CLE) requirements set out in this stipulation.
- 31 m) Respondent shall contact the Ethics School Administrator, currently Claire Carden,
32 at (206) 727-8220 or clairec@wsba.org, two weeks from entry of this stipulation to
33 confirm enrollment in Ethics School and related logistics.

- 1 n) Respondent shall complete the ethics school requirement within 30 days from entry
2 of this stipulation.
- 3 o) Respondent shall provide evidence of completion of ethics school to the Probation
4 Administrator no later than 30 days after the conclusion of the course. Proof of
5 attendance shall include the program brochure, evidence of payment, and a written
6 statement that includes the date and time of attendance.
- 7 p) Respondent may contact the Ethics School administrator directly to enroll in Ethics
8 School and administrative communications, e.g. regarding registration, payment,
9 program content and schedule, and CLE credits, may be sent directly to Respondent.
- 10 q) The Ethics School administrator may respond to inquiries from the Probation
11 Administrator regarding Respondent's compliance with these conditions.

12 VII. RESTITUTION

13 63. Within 30 days of the entry of this stipulation, Respondent shall pay \$750 to the
14 defendants in J.M.'s lawsuit or to any other individual or entity the defendants or the defendants'
15 counsel designate for receipt of such payment.

16 VIII. COSTS AND EXPENSES

17 64. In light of Respondent's willingness to resolve this matter by stipulation at an early
18 stage of the proceedings, Respondent shall pay attorney fees and administrative costs of \$1,500
19 in accordance with ELC 13.9(i). The Association will seek a money judgment under ELC 13.9(l)
20 if these costs are not paid within 30 days of approval of this stipulation.

21 IX. VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT

22 65. Respondent states that prior to entering into this Stipulation Respondent has consulted
23 independent legal counsel regarding this Stipulation, that Respondent is entering into this
24 Stipulation voluntarily, and that no promises or threats have been made by ODC, the Association,
nor by any representative thereof, to induce the Respondent to enter into this Stipulation except
as provided herein.

1 Respondent is not admitted to practice law in any other jurisdictions.

2 72. If this Stipulation is not approved by the Hearing Officer, this Stipulation will have no
3 force or effect, and neither it nor the fact of its execution will be admissible as evidence in the
4 pending disciplinary proceeding, in any subsequent disciplinary proceeding, or in any civil or
5 criminal action.

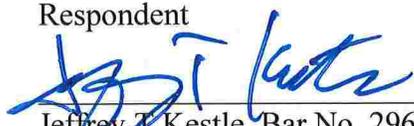
6 WHEREFORE the undersigned being fully advised, adopt and agree to this Stipulation to
7 Reprimand as set forth above.

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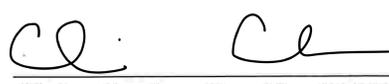
Alice Bagirova, Bar No. 49294
Respondent

Dated: 12/23/2025



Jeffrey T. Kestle, Bar No. 29648
Counsel for Respondent

Dated: 12/23/25



Claire Carden, Bar No. 50590
Disciplinary Counsel

Dated: 12/29/25