

STATE OF MICHIGAN

FILED  
ATTORNEY DISCIPLINE BOARD

# Attorney Discipline Board

2021-Sep-17

GRIEVANCE ADMINISTRATOR,  
Attorney Grievance Commission,

Petitioner/Appellee,

v

Case No. 17-136-GA

CHRISTOPHER S. EASTHOPE, P 53097,

Respondent/Appellant.

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**ORDER AFFIRMING, IN PART, MODIFYING, IN PART, AND REVERSING, IN PART, THE  
HEARING PANEL'S FINDINGS OF MISCONDUCT AND REDUCING DISCIPLINE  
FROM A ONE-YEAR SUSPENSION TO A 180-DAY SUSPENSION**

Issued by the Attorney Discipline Board  
333 W. Fort St., Ste. 1700, Detroit, MI

Washtenaw County Hearing Panel #5 issued an Order of Suspension on October 31, 2019, suspending respondent's license to practice law in Michigan for one year, effective November 22, 2019. Respondent filed a timely petition for review and for a stay of the effective date of the hearing panel's order of suspension. On November 21, 2019, the Board entered an order granting respondent's petition for stay, on an interim basis, pending further consideration by the Board. On December 18, 2019, an order granting respondent's petition for a stay was entered staying the hearing panel's order of suspension, pending completion of the review proceedings before the Board.

The Attorney Discipline Board has conducted review proceedings in accordance with General Order ADB 2020-1, and MCR 9.118, including review of the record before the hearing panel and consideration of the briefs and arguments presented to the Board at a virtual review hearing conducted on June 17, 2020.

**NOW THEREFORE,**

**IT IS ORDERED** that the hearing panel's findings of misconduct are **AFFIRMED, IN PART, MODIFIED, IN PART, AND REVERSED, IN PART**, as set forth in the accompanying opinion.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that discipline in this case is reduced from a one-year suspension of respondent's license to practice law in Michigan to a **180-DAY SUSPENSION EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 16, 2021**, and until further order of the Supreme Court, the Attorney Discipline Board or a hearing panel, and until respondent complies with the requirements of MCR 9.123(B) and (C) and MCR 9.124.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that from the effective date of this order and until reinstatement in accordance with the applicable provisions of MCR 9.123, respondent is forbidden from practicing law in any form; appearing as an attorney before any court, judge, justice, board, commission or other public authority; or holding himself out as an attorney by any means.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that, in accordance with MCR 9.119(A), respondent shall, within seven days after the effective date of this order, notify all of his active clients, in writing, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, of the following:

1. the nature and duration of the discipline imposed;
2. the effective date of such discipline;
3. respondent's inability to act as an attorney after the effective date of such discipline;
4. the location and identity of the custodian of the clients' files and records which will be made available to them or to substitute counsel;
5. that the clients may wish to seek legal advice and counsel elsewhere; provided that, if respondent was a member of a law firm, the firm may continue to represent each client with the client's express written consent;
6. the address to which all correspondence to respondent may be addressed.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that in accordance with MCR 9.119(B), respondent must, on or before the effective date of this order, in every matter in which respondent is representing a client in litigation, file with the tribunal and all parties a notice of respondent's disqualification from the practice of law.

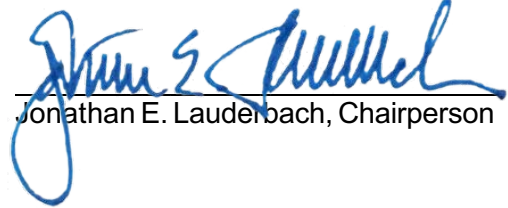
**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that, respondent shall, within 14 days after the effective date of this order, file with the Grievance Administrator and the Attorney Discipline Board an affidavit of compliance as required by MCR 9.119(C).

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that respondent's conduct after the entry of this order but prior to its effective date, shall be subject to the restrictions set forth in MCR 9.119(D); and respondent's compensation for legal services shall be subject to the restrictions described in MCR 9.119(F).

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that respondent shall, on or before **October 16, 2021**, pay costs in the amount of **\$5,660.63**, consisting of costs assessed by the hearing panel in the amount of \$5,480.63 and court reporting costs incurred by the Attorney Discipline Board in the amount of \$180.00 for the review proceedings conducted on June 17, 2020. Please refer to the attached cost payment instruction sheet for method and forms of payment accepted.

ATTORNEY DISCIPLINE BOARD

By:

  
Jonathan E. Lauderbach, Chairperson

DATED: September 17, 2021

Board members Michael B. Rizik, Jr., Barbara Williams Forney, Karen D. O'Donoghue, Linda S. Hotchkiss, MD, Michael S. Hohausser, and Peter A. Smit concur in this decision.

Board member James A. Fink did not participate in this decision.

Board members Jonathan E. Lauderbach, and John W. Inhulsen were absent and did not participate in this decision.