

**IN RE: DANIEL K. WEBSTER**

**BBO # 567996**

**NO. BD-2021-001**

**Order (Term Suspension) entered by the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers of the Supreme Judicial Court on January 19, 2021, with an effective date of February 18, 2021.<sup>1</sup>**

*The respondent stipulated to a suspension of two and a half years for varied misconduct, including failing to comply with a Court Order, filing a false affidavit, negligent misuse of client funds, intentional submission of false records to bar counsel, and accounting violations.*

**SUMMARY<sup>2</sup>**

The respondent stipulated to misconduct described in two counts of the Petition for Discipline. In Count One, he admitted that after a 2013 suspension, which imposed certain obligations on him, he continued to use his IOLTA account but falsely certified that he had closed it. For over a year, he kept no IOLTA records. Once reinstated, he made at least four cash withdrawals from the IOLTA account, and held personal funds in it. This misconduct violated Mass. R. Prof. C. 3.4(c); 8.4(b), (c), (d) and (h); 1.15(f)(1)(B), (C) and (E); 1.15(b)(2); and 1.15(e)(4), all as in effect prior to July 1, 2015; and 1.15(e)(4) and (b)(2).

Count Two describes misconduct in an estate matter. The respondent deposited funds into his IOLTA account on the estate's behalf, but failed for years to pay two of the beneficiaries. He withdrew his own fee without delivering written notice to his client. He negligently withdrew client funds and used them for his own personal and/or business purposes, causing a negative account balance. He deposited personal funds into the account in order eventually to pay the beneficiaries. The respondent failed to produce trust records in response to bar counsel's subpoena. He submitted bank records to bar counsel that he had tampered with and knew were false. The respondent's Count Two misconduct violated rules 1.15(c); 1.15(b)(1); 1.15(f)(1)(C), all as in effect prior to July 1, 2015, and rules 8.1(a) and (b), and 8.4 (c), (d), and (h).

There were no mitigating factors. In aggravation, the respondent had prior discipline - a term suspension for nine months for intentional misuse of client funds, failure to hold trust funds in a trust account, and failure to keep records as required by Mass. R. Prof. C. 1.15. Matter of Webster, 29 Mass. Att'y Disc. R. 663 (2013). The Board accepted the parties' stipulation on December 14, 2020.

On January 19, 2021, Justice Georges ordered the respondent suspended for two and a half years.

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<sup>1</sup> The complete order of the Court is available by contacting the Clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court for Suffolk County.

<sup>2</sup> Compiled by the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers' Office of General Counsel based on the record filed with the Supreme Judicial Court.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

SUFFOLK, SS.

SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT  
FOR SUFFOLK COUNTY  
BD-2021-001

IN RE: Daniel K. Webster

ORDER OF TERM SUSPENSION

This matter came before the Court, Georges, Jr., J., on an Information and Record of Proceedings pursuant to S.J.C. Rule 4:01, § 8(6), with the Recommendation and Vote of the Board of Bar Overseers (Board) and the stipulation of the parties filed by the Board on January 13, 2021. Upon consideration thereof, it is ORDERED that:

1. Daniel K. Webster is hereby suspended from the practice of law in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a period of two-and-one-half years. In accordance with S.J.C. Rule 4:01, §17(3), the suspension shall be effective thirty days after the date of the entry of this Order. The lawyer, after the entry of this Order, shall not accept any new retainer or engage as a lawyer for another in any new case or legal matter of any nature. During the period between the entry date of this Order and its effective date, however, the lawyer may wind up and complete, on behalf of any client, all matters which were pending on the entry date.

It is FURTHER ORDERED that:

2. Within fourteen (14) days of the date of entry of this Order, the lawyer shall:

a) file a notice of withdrawal as of the effective date of the suspension with every court, agency, or tribunal before which a matter is pending, together with a copy of the notices sent pursuant to paragraphs 2(c) and 2(d) of this Order, the client's or clients' place of residence, and the case caption and docket number of the client's or clients' proceedings;

b) resign as of the effective date of the suspension all appointments as guardian, executor, administrator, trustee, attorney-in-fact, or other fiduciary, attaching to the resignation a copy of the notices sent to the wards, heirs, or beneficiaries pursuant to paragraphs 2(c) and 2(d) of this Order, the place of residence of the wards, heirs, or beneficiaries, and the case caption and docket number of the proceedings, if any;

c) provide notice to all clients and to all wards, heirs, and beneficiaries that the lawyer has been suspended; that he is disqualified from acting as a lawyer after the effective date of the suspension; and that, if not represented by co-counsel, the client, ward, heir, or beneficiary should act promptly to substitute another lawyer or fiduciary or to seek legal advice elsewhere,

calling attention to any urgency arising from the circumstances of the case;

d) provide notice to counsel for all parties (or, in the absence of counsel, the parties) in pending matters that the lawyer has been suspended and, as a consequence, is disqualified from acting as a lawyer after the effective date of the suspension;

e) make available to all clients being represented in pending matters any papers or other property to which they are entitled, calling attention to any urgency for obtaining the papers or other property;

f) refund any part of any fees paid in advance that have not been earned; and

g) close every IOLTA, client, trust or other fiduciary account and properly disburse or otherwise transfer all client and fiduciary funds in his possession, custody or control.

All notices required by this paragraph shall be served by certified mail, return receipt requested, in a form approved by the Board.

3. Within twenty-one (21) days after the date of entry of this Order, the lawyer shall file with the Office of the Bar Counsel an affidavit certifying that the lawyer has fully complied with the provisions of this Order and with bar

disciplinary rules. Appended to the affidavit of compliance shall be:

a) a copy of each form of notice, the names and addresses of the clients, wards, heirs, beneficiaries, attorneys, courts and agencies to which notices were sent, and all return receipts or returned mail received up to the date of the affidavit. Supplemental affidavits shall be filed covering subsequent return receipts and returned mail. Such names and addresses of clients shall remain confidential unless otherwise requested in writing by the lawyer or ordered by the court;

b) a schedule showing the location, title and account number of every bank account designated as an IOLTA, client, trust or other fiduciary account and of every account in which the lawyer holds or held as of the entry date of this Order any client, trust or fiduciary funds;

c) a schedule describing the lawyer's disposition of all client and fiduciary funds in the lawyer's possession, custody or control as of the entry date of this Order or thereafter;

d) such proof of the proper distribution of such funds and the closing of such accounts as has been requested by the bar counsel, including copies of checks and other instruments;

e) a list of all other state, federal and administrative jurisdictions to which the lawyer is admitted to practice; and

f) the residence or other street address where communications to the lawyer may thereafter be directed.

The lawyer shall retain copies of all notices sent and shall maintain complete records of the steps taken to comply with the notice requirements of S.J.C. Rule 4:01, §17.

4. Within twenty-one (21) days after the entry date of this Order, the lawyer shall file with the Clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court for Suffolk County:

a) a copy of the affidavit of compliance required by paragraph 3 of this Order;

b) a list of all other state, federal and administrative jurisdictions to which the lawyer is admitted to practice; and

c) the residence or other street address where communications to the lawyer may thereafter be directed.

By the Court, (Georges, Jr., J.)

/s/ Maura S. Doyle

Maura S. Doyle, Clerk

Entered: January 19, 2021