

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

ORDER

On March 17, 2020 the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Board (“Board”) entered an Order indicating that the Board would follow the Supreme Court of Virginia’s directives contained in its March 16, 2020 Order Declaring a Judicial Emergency in Response to COVID-19 Emergency. On December 3, 2020, the Supreme Court of Virginia entered its Fourteenth Order Extending the Declaration of Judicial Emergency through January 3, 2021.

In its May 6, 2020 Order Declaring a Judicial Emergency in Response to COVID-19 Emergency, and subsequent extension Orders, the Supreme Court of Virginia advised tribunals “to conduct as much business as possible by means other than in-person court proceedings.” More specifically, the Court “encouraged [tribunals] to continue and even increase the use of video conferencing, telephone, teleconferencing, email, or other means that do not involve in-person contact. These methods are preferred over in-person court proceedings.”

In light of this directive, the continuing health risk posed by in-person hearings, and the likelihood that the Supreme Court of Virginia will extend the directive, the Board hereby ORDERS that the proceedings set for hearing before the Board on January 22, 2021 shall be conducted via video conferencing, utilizing the Microsoft Teams platform. All current deadlines shall remain in full force and effect. Parties shall notify the Clerk of the Disciplinary System, within five (5) days of this Order, of any concerns or impediments to participating electronically. The Clerk of the Disciplinary System will provide the Board, counsel, the Respondent, and witnesses with information regarding the hearing platform and guidelines and protocols in advance of the hearing.

It is so Ordered this 3rd day of December 2020.

VIRGINIA STATE BAR DISCIPLINARY BOARD

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Yvonne S. Gibney, Chair