

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF RICHMOND

**IN THE MATTER OF
NEAL ORION REID**

**CASE NO. CL19-4220-7
VSB DOCKET NO. 19-031-113956**

**AGREED DISPOSITION MEMORANDUM ORDER
FOR A SIX-MONTH SUSPENSION WITHOUT TERMS**

This matter came to be heard on Friday, September 27, 2019, before a Circuit Court Three-Judge panel, upon the joint request of the parties for the Court to accept the Agreed Disposition endorsed by the parties and offered to the Court as provided by the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The panel consisted of the Honorable Gordon F. Willis, Judge of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, Designated Chief Judge, the Honorable Claude V. Worrell, Judge of the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, and the Honorable Catherine C. Hammond, Retired Judge of the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit. Neal Orion Reid was present and was not represented by counsel. The Virginia State Bar appeared through its Bar Counsel, Renu M. Brennan. The Chief Judge polled the members of the panel as to whether any of them were aware of any personal or financial interest or bias which would preclude any of them from fairly hearing the matter to which each judge responded in the negative. Court Reporter, Angela Sidener, Chandler and Halasz, P.O. Box 9349, Richmond, Virginia 23227, telephone (804) 730-1222, after being duly sworn, reported the hearing and transcribed the proceedings.

WHEREFORE, upon consideration of the Agreed Disposition, the Certification, Respondent's answer, Respondent's answer providing available dates, Respondent's Disciplinary Record, the arguments of the parties, and after due deliberation,

It is **ORDERED** that the Circuit Court accepts the Agreed Disposition and the Respondent shall receive a six-month suspension. The Agreed Disposition, is attached to, and incorporated in this Memorandum Order.

It is further **ORDERED** that the sanction is effective September 27, 2019.

The Respondent must comply with the requirements of Part Six, § IV, ¶ 13-29 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The Respondent shall forthwith give notice by certified mail of the Revocation or Suspension of his or her license to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia, to all clients for whom he or she is currently handling matters and to all opposing attorneys and presiding Judges in pending litigation. The Respondent shall also make appropriate arrangements for the disposition of matters then in his or her care in conformity with the wishes of his or her clients. The Respondent shall give such notice within 14 days of the effective date of the Revocation or Suspension, and make such arrangements as are required herein within 45 days of the effective date of the Revocation or Suspension. The Respondent shall also furnish proof to the Bar within 60 days of the effective day of the Revocation or Suspension that such notices have been timely given and such arrangements made for the disposition of matters.

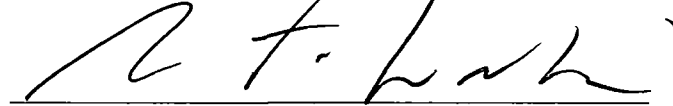
It is further **ORDERED** that if the Respondent is not handling any client matters on the effective date of the Revocation or Suspension, he or she shall submit an affidavit to that effect within 60 days of the effective date of the Revocation or Suspension to the Clerk of the Disciplinary System at the Virginia State Bar. All issues concerning the adequacy of the notice and arrangements required by Paragraph 13-29 shall be determined by the Virginia State Bar Disciplinary Board, which may impose a sanction of Revocation or additional Suspension for failure to comply with the requirements of this subparagraph.

The Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs pursuant to ¶13-9 E. of the Rules.

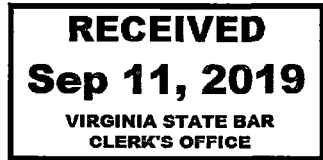
A copy teste of this Order shall be mailed, to the Respondent, Neal Orion Reid, at his last address of record with the Virginia State Bar, Law Offices of Neal O. Reid, P.C., 4914 Radford Ave., Ste. 308, Richmond, VA 23230, with an attested copy to: Bar Counsel, Renu M. Brennan, Virginia State Bar, 1111 East Main Street, Suite 700, Richmond, Virginia 23219-0026, and to the Clerk of the Disciplinary System, Virginia State Bar, 1111 East Main Street, Suite 700, Richmond, VA 23219-0026.

ENTERED THIS 30 DAY OF September, 2019

CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF RICHMOND

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon F. Willis", written over a horizontal line.

Gordon F. Willis, Chief Judge
Three-Judge Circuit Court



VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF RICHMOND

VIRGINIA STATE BAR, ex rel.
THIRD DISTRICT COMMITTEE
VSB Docket No. 19-031-113956

Complainant,

Case No. CL19-4220-

7

v.
NEAL ORION REID.

Respondent

**AGREED DISPOSITION
SIX-MONTH SUSPENSION**

Pursuant to the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part 6, § IV, ¶ 13-6.H, the Virginia State Bar, by Renu M. Brennan, Bar Counsel, and Neal Orion Reid, Respondent, *pro se*, hereby enter into the following agreed disposition arising out of the referenced matter.

I. STIPULATIONS OF FACT

1. Respondent was licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1994.
2. On May 30, 2013, De'Shawn Hunt retained Respondent to represent him for personal injuries sustained in a May 23, 2013 car accident.
3. Respondent and Mr. Hunt entered into a representation agreement providing for a 30% contingency fee.
4. The representation agreement authorized Respondent to pay all accident related medical bills outstanding at the time of the settlement out of any settlement proceeds.
5. By letter to Respondent dated June 26, 2013 titled "Notice of Lien" Virginia Commonwealth University Health Systems Medical College of Virginia Hospitals ("MCVH") asserted a lien of \$5,138.50 against any settlement proceeds for medical and related services rendered to Mr. Hunt pursuant to Va. Code Section 8.01-66.5.
6. On June 26, 2013, Respondent acknowledged, endorsed, and dated the Notice of Lien.
7. On July 22, 2013, the case settled for \$25,000.
8. On July 24, 2013, Respondent disbursed \$16,200 to Mr. Hunt and \$8,800 to himself, notwithstanding that his settlement statement acknowledged that \$5,138.00 was due MCVH, and notwithstanding that Respondent had acknowledged MCVH's lien in writing, and the Representation Agreement authorized Respondent to pay MCVH its lien.

9. By letter dated September 11, 2013, the Division of Debt Collection of the Office of the Attorney General advised Respondent of its representation of MCVH and requested payment in full of the \$5,138.50 lien.
10. Respondent did not pay the lien.
11. On December 14, 2017, a claims representative in the Office of the Attorney General's Division of Debt Collection advised Respondent that the lien was still outstanding. Respondent indicated he was not sure of the status of the lien and that he had never received a notice of lien.
12. On December 15, 2017, Respondent contacted the representative and advised that he had located the September 11, 2013 letter advising him of the lien. Respondent further advised that funds were disbursed before he received notification of the lien.
13. By letter dated December 23, 2017, Respondent asserted to the representative that the case settled well before he was advised by the Division of Debt Collection that MCVH was claiming a lien. Moreover, Respondent asserted that his client was responsible for the lien and held Respondent harmless for not paying the lien. Respondent further asserted that as it was over three years since the case settled, he considered the matter closed.
14. In September 2018, Assistant Attorney General John Myers contacted Respondent requesting satisfaction of MCVH's lien. Respondent refused to pay and told Myers, "you do what you've gotta do."
15. On October 24, 2018, Assistant Attorney General John Myers filed a bar complaint based on Respondent's failure to pay the lien. In his complaint, Myers states, "The Financial Recovery Section of the Office of the Attorney General has contacted Reid several times over the years attempting to collect on MCVH's lien [REDACTED]. Reid has stated that he had no knowledge of MCVH's lien and that Hunt was responsible for the unpaid bills."
16. After receiving the bar complaint, and more than five years after MCVH first requested payment, Respondent paid the lien.
17. During the bar's investigation of this matter, Respondent asserted he was unaware that he acknowledged the lien until he received the bar complaint, which attached his June 26, 2013 endorsement of the Notice of Lien. Reid acknowledged to the bar's investigator that he had the June 26, 2013 Notice of Lien in his file, but "didn't necessarily know the extent of what I was signing."

II. NATURE OF MISCONDUCT

Such conduct by Respondent constitutes misconduct in violation of the following provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct:

RULE 1.15 Safekeeping Property

(b) Specific Duties. A lawyer shall:

(4) promptly pay or deliver to the client or another as requested by such person the funds, securities, or other properties in the possession of the lawyer that such person is entitled to receive; and

(5) not disburse funds or use property of a client or of a third party with a valid lien or assignment without their consent or convert funds or property of a client or third party, except as directed by a tribunal.

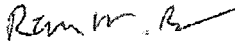
III. PROPOSED DISPOSITION

Accordingly, Bar Counsel and Respondent tender to the Court for its approval the agreed disposition of a Six-Month Suspension as representing an appropriate sanction if this matter were to be heard through an evidentiary hearing. The suspension shall take effect immediately upon entry of any Summary Order approving this agreed disposition.

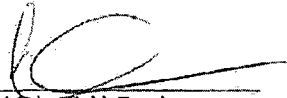
Respondent agrees that if the three-judge court designated to hear this matter accepts this agreed disposition, this matter becomes final and non-appealable. Respondent also agrees that in the event the three-judge court designated to hear this matter declines this agreed disposition: i) the same three-judge court shall hear, preside over, and conclude the hearing of this matter in accordance with the designation by the Supreme Court of Virginia; and ii) Respondent waives any challenge to the composition of the three-judge court based on its consideration and/or rejection of this agreed disposition.

If the agreed disposition is approved, the Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess an administrative fee.

THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR



Renu M. Brennan
Bar Counsel



Neal Orton Reid, Esquire
Respondent