

THIS REPORT IS NOT A FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE\*

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS  
BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY  
AD HOC HEARING COMMITTEE



FILED

Sep 15 2025 12:00pm

In the Matter of:	:	Board on Professional Responsibility
	:	D.C. App. No. 24-BG-0438
RACHELLE S. YOUNG,	:	Board Docket No. 25-BD-021
	:	Disciplinary Docket Nos. 2021-
Respondent.	:	D020, 2021-D021, 2022-D208
	:	
An Administratively Suspended	:	
Member of the Bar of the	:	
District of Columbia Court of Appeals	:	
(Bar Registration No. 997809)	:	
	:	
JOHN P. MAHONEY,	:	D.C. App. No. 24-BG-0466
	:	Board Docket No. 25-BD-021
Respondent.	:	Disciplinary Docket Nos. 2021-
	:	D054, 2021-D172, 2022-D209,
	:	2023-D089
A Member of the Bar of the	:	
District of Columbia Court of Appeals	:	
(Bar Registration No. 442839)	:	

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF  
THE AD HOC HEARING COMMITTEE

This consolidated matter was referred to the Hearing Committee by the D.C. Court of Appeals after Respondents opposed Disciplinary Counsel's motions to revoke probation that had been imposed through negotiated discipline. After a contested hearing was scheduled, Respondents stipulated to the facts that formed the basis for Disciplinary Counsel's motions and consented to having their probation revoked. Having considered Respondents' stipulations, the evidence submitted by Disciplinary Counsel, and the representations made at the abbreviated hearing held

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\* Consult the 'Disciplinary Decisions' tab on the Board on Professional Responsibility's website ([www.dcattorneydiscipline.org](http://www.dcattorneydiscipline.org)) to view any subsequent decisions in this case.

on August 25, 2025, the Hearing Committee recommends that Respondents' probation be revoked and that they be required to serve thirty-day suspensions.

## I. PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On June 13, 2024, the Court of Appeals approved Petitions for Negotiated Discipline agreed-to by Respondents, who are members of the same firm, based on related misconduct. *See In re Mahoney*, 316 A.3d 885 (D.C. 2024) (per curiam); *In re Young*, 316 A.3d 884 (D.C. 2024) (per curiam). Respondent Young was suspended for thirty days, fully stayed in favor of one year of probation with conditions, for failure to represent her clients diligently and zealously, failure to keep her clients reasonably informed and comply with reasonable requests for information, and failure to explain matters to her clients in three client matters, as well as failure to protect one client's interests during termination of a representation, in violation of D.C. Rules of Professional Conduct ("D.C. Rules") 1.3(a), 1.4(a), 1.4(b), and 1.16(d) and Maryland Attorneys' Rules of Professional Conduct ("Maryland Rules") 19-301.3, 19-301.4(a)(2)-(3), and 19-301.4(b). Respondent Mahoney was suspended for sixty days, with all but thirty days stayed, followed by one year of probation with conditions, for failure to ensure subordinate attorneys complied with their ethical duties and failure to take reasonable remedial action to address the ethical failures of his subordinate attorneys in six client matters (including the three at issue in the Young Petition), as well as failure to personally comply with reasonable requests for information from his clients in four matters, and failure to protect his clients' interests during termination of a representation in three

client matters, in violation of D.C. Rules 1.4(a), 1.16(d), 5.1(b), and 5.1(c)(2), as well as Maryland Rule 19-301.4(a)(3). One of the conditions of probation for each Respondent was that they “not be the subject of a disciplinary complaint that results in a finding that [he or she has] violated the disciplinary rules of any jurisdiction in which [he or she is] admitted or licensed to practice.” *Mahoney*, 316 A.3d at 886; *Young*, 316 A.3d at 885. Each Respondent signed a probation order formally agreeing to those conditions. Disciplinary Counsel’s Exhibits (“DCX”) 13-14.

On April 30, 2025, Disciplinary Counsel filed motions asking the Court of Appeals to direct each Respondent to show cause why their probation should not be revoked after having received a disciplinary complaint from a former client of Respondents’ firm, Erica Valdes, in connection with her employment discrimination matter against the U.S. Marshals Service. Based on Ms. Valdes’s complaint, Disciplinary Counsel alleged that Respondents violated the requirement that they not be the subject of complaints resulting in findings that they violated disciplinary rules during their terms of probation.

In response, Respondents contended that Disciplinary Counsel’s motions were premature, as the disciplinary complaint was still under investigation, and thus there was no “finding” that they had violated any Rules. Disciplinary Counsel countered that it did not need to prove Rule violations by clear and convincing evidence in order to initiate a probation revocation proceeding under Board Rule 18.3(d). On May 27, 2025, the Court granted Disciplinary Counsel’s motions, referred the matters to a Hearing Committee pursuant to Board Rule 18.3(c), and

extended Respondents' period of probation pending resolution of the matter. With the parties' consent, the Board consolidated the probation revocation proceedings so they could be heard by a single Hearing Committee.

The parties filed their witness and exhibit lists on July 28, 2025. On August 20, 2025, Respondents submitted Stipulations of Fact, admitting to several Rule violations and relevant underlying facts, and Disciplinary Counsel filed a Consent Motion to Recommend Probation Revocation, in which it requested that the previously scheduled hearing be cancelled and that the Committee recommend revocation of probation based on the stipulations. The parties' stipulations also included an agreement that Respondents' suspensions should be served consecutively, rather than concurrently.<sup>1</sup>

A hearing was held on August 25, 2025, in accordance with Board Rule 18.3(c). At the hearing, the Respondents' counsel confirmed that Respondents stipulated to facts and violations arising from the Valdes complaint, and have reached an agreement with Disciplinary Counsel to seek to resolve the Valdes allegations in a "separate resolution, agreed-upon resolution." Hearing Transcript ("Tr.") 8-9. Respondents' counsel also clarified that the parties requested that the two suspensions be staggered in order to avoid disruption to the firm. Tr. 11.

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<sup>1</sup> The parties also agree that Respondent Mahoney will reimburse Ms. Valdes \$5,677.50. Mahoney Stipulations at 6; Young Stipulations at 7. The agreement to reimburse Ms. Valdes is outside the scope of this proceeding, which is focused on whether probation should be revoked and Respondents should be required to serve the stayed portions of their suspensions.

Respondents did not waive their right to appeal an adverse outcome in these proceedings. Tr. 12. After the hearing, Disciplinary Counsel submitted DCX 3-4, 7-8, 10-14, 18-19, 29-30, 37, 40-42, 46-51, 53-69, and 77. Those exhibits are hereby admitted into evidence.

## II. FINDINGS OF FACT

The following stipulations of fact<sup>2</sup> have been proven by a preponderance of the evidence based on the parties' stipulations and the cited exhibits.

### A. Respondent Young

1. On September 14, 2023, Disciplinary Counsel charged Respondent with neglecting certain client matters. DCX 77.

2. On February 7, 2024, the parties filed an amended petition for negotiated discipline. DCX 7. Pursuant to Respondent Young's affidavit in support of the amended petition, she acknowledged that she had neglected clients in three separate matters by failing to keep her clients informed and comply with reasonable requests for information, failing to explain matters to her clients, failing to represent her clients diligently and zealously, and, in one of the matters, failing to protect the interests of the client when the representation ended. DCX 7 at 18, ¶ 4, affirming the conduct stipulated to at DCX 7 at 2-9.

3. The parties agreed that Respondent had violated Rules 1.3(a), 1.4(a), 1.4(b), and 1.16(d) as well as Maryland Attorneys' Rules of Professional Conduct

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<sup>2</sup> The Committee has added minor corrections to some of the stipulated facts based on the record.

(“Maryland Rules”) 19-301.3, 19-301.4(a)(2)-(3), and 19-301.4(b). The parties also agreed that, based on the stipulated facts and the law, the appropriate sanction was a thirty-day suspension fully stayed in favor of one year of probation with conditions. DCX 7 at 9-10.

4. The Hearing Committee recommended approval of the negotiated discipline and, on June 13, 2024, the Court entered an order imposing a thirty-day suspension fully stayed in favor of a one-year period of probation with conditions. DCX 12. The Board issued a probation order on June 14, 2024, and Respondent accepted it on June 26, 2024. DCX 13.

5. One of the terms of Respondent’s probation was that, while on probation, she could not be the subject of a disciplinary complaint that results in a finding that she violated the disciplinary rules of any jurisdiction in which she is admitted or licensed to practice. DCX 12 at 3, ¶ (ii); DCX 13 at 2, ¶ (ii).

6. Respondent’s one-year probation began on July 13, 2024, and originally was scheduled to end on July 13, 2025. However, on May 27, 2025, the Court of Appeals ordered Respondent’s probation to be extended so that this Hearing Committee could determine whether Respondent violated the terms of her probation in the course of Respondent’s representation of former client, Erica Valdes. DCX 3 at 1.

7. On February 24, 2025, Erica Valdes filed a bar complaint against Respondent alleging that Respondent had neglected her employment discrimination case by failing to communicate with her and failing to respond to her employer’s

discovery requests, resulting in the filing of a motion to compel and the scheduling of a hearing on the motion. DCX 18. The investigation of Ms. Valdes's complaint also revealed that Respondent failed to appear at the hearing and unreasonably charged Ms. Valdes for work on the draft discovery responses that she never provided. Young Stipulations ¶ 7.

8. Respondent represented Ms. Valdes before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC"). Before the parties served discovery requests upon one another, agency counsel told Respondent that the EEOC had not accepted two of Ms. Valdes's discrimination claims and asked Respondent whether Ms. Valdes had abandoned the claims. Ms. Valdes asked Respondent about agency counsel's inquiry. Respondent did not respond to agency counsel or Ms. Valdes. Young Stipulations ¶ 8.

9. Because of Respondent's failure to confirm to the agency that Ms. Valdes had not abandoned these two claims, the agency did not seek discovery about them. Ms. Valdes and the agency are still trying to resolve whether the claims were abandoned and whether discovery is available on the claims in the ongoing case. Young Stipulations ¶ 9.

10. The agency served discovery requests on Respondent on October 15, 2024, and Ms. Valdes's responses were due on November 14, 2024. DCX 29; DCX 30.

11. Respondent requested and received \$10,000 in advance fees from Ms. Valdes in November 2024. DCX 40 at 1; DCX 42.

12. Respondent belatedly asked for and was granted several enlargements of time to respond, agreed to delay Ms. Valdes's deposition to provide more time to provide her discovery responses, but still failed to serve Ms. Valdes's responses before the rescheduled December 9, 2024 deposition. *See* DCX 37; DCX 41; DCX 46; DCX 47.

13. On or about the day of the deposition, Respondent promised Ms. Valdes that she would provide Ms. Valdes's discovery responses but failed to do so. Young Stipulations ¶ 13.

14. Thereafter, Respondent failed to respond to the agency's discovery requests despite charging Ms. Valdes over \$5,000 for work preparing the responses. Respondent failed to complete the discovery responses; did not respond to questions from Ms. Valdes about when the discovery responses would be completed and served; did not respond to an email from agency counsel seeking to confer about dates for a hearing on the agency's motion to compel (caused by Respondent's failure to respond to discovery); did not respond to communications from the EEOC about scheduling a hearing on the agency's motion to compel; and failed to attend the March 3, 2025 hearing on the motion. *See* DCX 68 at 6 (entries from November 21 and 22, 2024); DCX 69 at 6 (entry for December 8, 2024); DCX 48; DCX 49; DCX 50; DCX 53; DCX 54; DCX 55; DCX 56; DCX 57; DCX 58; DCX 59; DCX 60; DCX 61; DCX 62; DCX 63; DCX 66; DCX 67.

15. Agency counsel deposed Ms. Valdes on December 9, 2024, despite Respondent's failure to provide a response to the agency's discovery requests.



During the deposition, agency counsel asked Ms. Valdes to respond to several interrogatories and requests for admission that the agency had served on her. Ms. Valdes was forced to answer questions without the benefit of Respondent's legal advice and with Respondent making few substantive objections. DCX 51 at 118, line 9, to 131, line 3. Respondent's conduct put Ms. Valdes at a strategic disadvantage.

16. Respondent did not communicate with Ms. Valdes about her case after December 10, 2024, despite Ms. Valdes's attempts to talk with her about the discovery responses. Ms. Valdes sent Respondent at least six emails, called and left phone messages, and sent several text messages, all of which Respondent ignored. *See* DCX 50; DCX 54; DCX 55; DCX 56; DCX 57; DCX 61; DCX 64.

17. Because of Respondent's conduct, Ms. Valdes was unrepresented at the hearing on the agency's motion to compel and vulnerable to sanction. Young Stipulations ¶ 17.

18. Respondent did not tell Ms. Valdes that she was terminating the representation. Nor did the Respondent withdraw as counsel for Ms. Valdes. Young Stipulations ¶ 18.

19. On March 5, 2025, the EEOC Administrative Judge ordered Ms. Valdes to answer the agency's discovery requests, giving her two weeks to do so. DCX 67.

20. Respondent was served with a copy of the Administrative Judge's order compelling Ms. Valdes's response to discovery. *Id.* at 2; DCX 66. But Respondent

did not communicate with Ms. Valdes about the order or complete her work on the draft discovery responses. Young Stipulations ¶ 20.

21. Because Respondent had not responded to Ms. Valdes's calls, texts, and emails, and had not appeared at the March 3 hearing, Ms. Valdes sought legal representation elsewhere. New counsel charged Ms. Valdes \$25,000 to represent her and respond to the agency's discovery requests on short notice. Young Stipulations ¶ 21.

22. Respondent did not provide Ms. Valdes with her client file, the draft discovery responses, or an accounting for the advance fees she had paid. Young Stipulations ¶ 22.

23. Based on the above conduct, Respondent Young violated D.C. Rules 1.3(a) (diligence and zeal), 1.3(c) (reasonable promptness), 1.4(a) (communication), 1.4(b) (failure to explain matter to client), 1.5(a) (unreasonable fee), 1.16(d) (termination of representation), 3.4(d) (failure to comply with proper discovery requests), and 8.4(d) (serious interference with the administration of justice). Young Stipulations ¶ 23.

24. Because Respondent violated D.C. Rules 1.3(a), 1.3(c), 1.4(a), 1.4(b), 1.5(a), 1.16(d), 3.4(d), and 8.4(d) during her representation of Ms. Valdes, she violated the terms of her probation. Young Stipulations ¶ 24.

B. Respondent Mahoney

Respondent Mahoney stipulates to Paragraphs 8-23 of Respondent Young's Stipulations, in addition to the following facts:

1. Respondent is the sole owner and managing partner of the Law Firm of John P. Mahoney. On September 14, 2023, Disciplinary Counsel charged Respondent with neglecting a client, failing to properly end representation of clients; and failing to properly supervise other attorneys who worked for him on certain client matters. DCX 8.

2. On October 14, 2023, the parties filed an amended petition for negotiated discipline. DCX 10. Pursuant to Respondent Mahoney's affidavit in support of the amended petition, he acknowledged that he had failed to supervise legal staff who had neglected client matters and failed to take remedial action in six client matters. He also failed to personally comply with reasonable requests for information from clients in four matters and failed to protect clients' interests when terminating the firm's representation in three matters. DCX 10 at 38, ¶ 4, affirming the conduct stipulated to at DCX 10 at 2-28.

3. The parties agreed that Respondent had violated Rules 1.4(a), 5.1(b), 5.1(c), and 1.16(d), as well as Maryland Rule 19-301.4(a)(3). The parties also agreed that, based on the stipulated facts and Rule violations, the appropriate sanction was a sixty-day suspension with thirty days stayed in lieu of one year of probation and with conditions. DCX 10 at 28-29.

4. The Hearing Committee recommended approval of the negotiated discipline and, on June 13, 2024, the Court entered an order imposing a sixty-day suspension with thirty days stayed in favor of a one-year period of probation with conditions. DCX 11. The Board issued a probation order on June 14, 2024, and Respondent accepted it on June 20, 2024. DCX 14.

5. One of the terms of Respondent's probation was that, while on probation, he could not be the subject of a disciplinary complaint that results in a finding that he violated the disciplinary rules of any jurisdiction in which he is admitted or licensed to practice. DCX 11 at 3, ¶ (ii); DCX 14 at 2, ¶ (ii).

6. Respondent's one-year probation began on August 12, 2024, and originally was scheduled to end on August 12, 2025. However, on May 27, 2025, the Court of Appeals ordered Respondent's probation to be extended so that this Hearing Committee could determine whether Respondent violated the terms of his probation based on his representation of former client, Erica Valdes, and Respondent's supervision of Respondent Young. DCX 4 at 1.

7. On March 3, 2025, Erica Valdes filed a bar complaint against Respondent alleging that he had failed to: inform her of his suspension, supervise Respondent Rachelle Young whom he had assigned to work on her matter; take remedial action when he learned that Respondent Young had neglected her case; communicate with her; ensure that she was represented at a hearing scheduled after Respondent Young had failed to respond to discovery requests; and protect her interests when the representation ended. DCX 19.

8. Respondent consulted with Ms. Valdes in May 2023, and she hired the firm to represent her in an employment discrimination matter against her agency employer. Respondent assigned the matter to Ms. Young, another partner in his firm. Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 8.

9. Despite several enlargements of time, Ms. Young failed to respond to discovery requests originally served in October 2024. Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 9.

10. The agency had to depose Ms. Valdes on December 9, 2024, without having her discovery responses. Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 10.

11. Ms. Young never served Ms. Valdes's discovery responses; she charged over \$5,000 for her work on the discovery responses that she never completed or provided to Ms. Valdes. Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 11.

12. Ms. Young did not respond to Ms. Valdes's many requests for information about the status of her discovery responses; did not respond to agency counsel's attempt to confer before filing a motion to compel; did not respond to the administrative judge's scheduling notice; and did not appear at the March 3, 2025, hearing on the agency's motion to compel. Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 12.

13. Because Ms. Young would not communicate with her, Ms. Valdes sent Respondent two emails in February 2025, prior to the hearing. DCX 64; DCX 65. In those emails, she notified Respondent that Ms. Young had abandoned her, failed to communicate with her, and failed to serve the agency with her discovery responses. DCX 64. She asked Respondent to resolve the matter. *Id.* She also informed Respondent about the March hearing scheduled on the agency's motion to

compel, asked Respondent who would be representing her at the hearing, and asked that he reassign her case to another lawyer. *Id.*; *see also* DCX 65.

14. Respondent did not respond to Ms. Valdes's emails and requests for assistance. He did not appear at the March 3, 2025, hearing, did not ensure that Ms. Young or some other member of his firm attended, and took no steps to protect Ms. Valdes's interests. Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 14.

15. Respondent received \$10,000 in advance fees that Ms. Valdes paid in November 2024. DCX 42. He did not send her an accounting of his handling of the advance fees until March 2025, after Ms. Valdes filed her bar complaint. DCX 68; DCX 69.

16. Respondent took no steps to ensure that his firm gave Ms. Valdes her client file, including any work on the discovery responses (for which the firm billed Ms. Valdes over \$5,000). *See* DCX 68 at 6 (entries from November 21 and 22, 2024); DCX 69 at 6 (entry for December 8, 2024).

17. Respondent did not refund Ms. Valdes the \$5,677.50 charged for Ms. Young's work on the draft discovery responses. Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 17.

18. Respondent's conduct violated D.C. Rules 1.4(a) (communication), 1.5(a) (unreasonable fee), 1.16(d) (termination of representation), 5.1(b) (failure to ensure that subordinate lawyer conforms to rules), and 5.1(c) (responsibility for rule violation by another). Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 18.

19. Because Respondent violated D.C. Rules 1.4(a), 1.5(a), 1.16(d), 5.1(b), and 5.1(c) during his representation of Ms. Valdes, he violated the terms of his probation. Mahoney Stipulations ¶ 19.

### III. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

#### A. Respondents Violated the Terms of Their Probation

Disciplinary Counsel bears the burden of establishing a violation of the terms and conditions of probation “by a preponderance of the evidence.” Board Rule 18.3(d). The preponderance of evidence standard requires that one “believe that the existence of the contested fact is more plausible than its nonexistence.” *In re Bedi*, 917 A.2d 659, 663 n.5 (D.C. 2007) (internal quotation and citation omitted). Therefore, in the Hearing Committee’s view, Disciplinary Counsel only needed to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that Respondents violated at least one Rule violation. Because Respondents stipulated to several violations, all of which are supported by the documentary evidence<sup>3</sup>, Disciplinary Counsel carried its burden to prove that they violated of the terms of their probation.

#### B. Recommended Disposition

Where a hearing committee finds a violation of the terms or conditions of probation, it may recommend revocation with an imposition of the underlying

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<sup>3</sup> Specifically, Respondent Young violated D.C. Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3(a), 1.3(c), 1.4(a), 1.4(b), 1.5(a), 1.16(d), 3.4(d), and 8.4(d), and Respondent Mahoney violated D.C. Rules of Professional Conduct 1.4(a), 1.5(a), 1.16(d), 5.1(b), and 5.1(c).

sanction imposed in the Court’s order of probation. D.C. Bar R. XI, § 3(a)(7); Board Rule 18.3(g). The Court’s orders approving the petitions for negotiated discipline stated that, as a consequence of a probation violation, Respondent Young would need to serve a thirty-day suspension, and Respondent Mahoney would need to serve the remaining thirty days of his partially stayed sixty-day suspension. *See* DCX 11 at 5; DCX 12 at 4-5. The Court did not impose any other consequences, and the Committee may not recommend “greater discipline . . . than the underlying sanction imposed in the Court’s order of probation.” Board Rule 18.3(g); *see also* D.C. Bar R. XI, § 3(a)(7).

The parties have agreed that Respondents’ probation should be revoked and that they should be required to serve the stayed thirty-day suspensions set forth in the Court’s June 13, 2024 Order. They further propose that Respondent Mahoney should begin serving his thirty-day suspension immediately<sup>4</sup>, and Respondent Young should begin serving her thirty-day suspension immediately *after* Respondent Mahoney completes his thirty-day suspension, to avoid disruption to the firm. *See* Mahoney Stipulations at 6; Young Stipulations at 7; Tr. 11. The Committee agrees that the consequence of Respondents’ probation violation is that they must serve the thirty-day suspensions that were stayed pursuant to the Petitions

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<sup>4</sup> Ordinarily, suspensions are effective thirty days after the Court’s order imposing discipline. *See* D.C. Bar R. XI, § 14(f).



for Negotiated Discipline and that serving the suspensions consecutively is warranted under the circumstances.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the Committee finds that Respondents Mahoney and Young violated the conditions of their probation and, as a result, recommends that they be required to serve thirty-day suspensions, with Respondent Mahoney's thirty-day suspension to begin immediately, followed by Respondent Young's thirty-day suspension.

#### AD HOC HEARING COMMITTEE



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Jonathan Shaw, Chair



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Cecilia Carter Monahan, Public Member



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Joshua Levin, Attorney Member