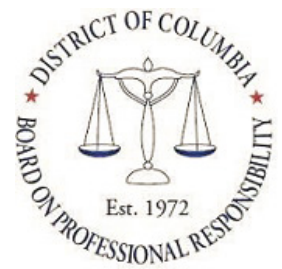


THIS REPORT IS NOT A FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE*

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS
BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY



Issued
June 25, 2024

In the Matter of: :
: :
SARA J. KING, :
: :
Respondent. : D.C. App. No. 24-BG-0275
: Board Docket No. 24-BD-020
: Disc. Docket No. 2023-D086
A Suspended Member of the Bar of the :
District of Columbia Court of Appeals :
(Bar Registration No. 1033988) :

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
OF THE BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

This matter is before the Board on Professional Responsibility (the “Board”) following Respondent’s guilty plea in the United States District Court for the Central District of California to wire fraud (18 U.S.C. § 1343) and money laundering (18 U.S.C. § 1957).

BACKGROUND

Respondent was admitted to the District of Columbia Bar on October 17, 2016, and assigned Bar Number 1033988. On June 12, 2023, in the United States District Court for the Central District of California, Respondent entered into a plea agreement, pleading guilty to wire fraud (18 U.S.C. § 1343) and money laundering (18 U.S.C. § 1957). Respondent’s sentencing is scheduled for October 21, 2024.

On March 21, 2024, Disciplinary Counsel reported Respondent’s guilty plea to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals (the “Court”). On March 29, 2024, the

* Consult the ‘Disciplinary Decisions’ tab on the Board on Professional Responsibility’s website (www.dcattorneydiscipline.org) for more information about this case.

Court suspended Respondent and directed the Board to institute a formal proceeding to determine the nature of Respondent’s offenses and whether the crimes involve moral turpitude within the meaning of D.C. Code § 11-2503(a) (2001).¹ On April 23, 2024, Disciplinary Counsel filed a statement with the Board recommending Respondent’s disbarment based on her conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude *per se*. Respondent did not file a response to Disciplinary Counsel’s statement, the time for doing so having expired.

For the reasons that follow, the Board recommends that the Court disbar Respondent pursuant to D.C. Code § 11-2503(a) based on her conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude *per se*.

ANALYSIS

D.C. Code § 11-2503(a) requires the disbarment of a member of the District of Columbia Bar convicted of a crime of moral turpitude. The legal standard for moral turpitude was established in *In re Colson*, 412 A.2d 1160 (D.C. 1979) (en banc). In *Colson*, the Court held that a crime involves moral turpitude if “the act denounced by the statute offends the generally accepted moral code of mankind,” if it involves “baseness, vileness or depravity in the private and social duties which a man owes to his fellow men or to society in general, contrary to the accepted and customary rule of right and duty between man and man,” or if the act is “contrary to justice, honesty, modesty, or good morals.” *Id.* at 1168 (internal citations omitted).

¹ As of April 30, 2024, Respondent had not filed the affidavit required by D.C. Bar R. XI, § 14(g). *See* Disciplinary Counsel’s Corrected Notice of Non-filing.

Once the Court determines that a particular crime involves moral turpitude *per se*, the Board must adhere to that ruling and disbarment must be imposed. *Id.* at 1165.

The Court “has previously concluded that both mail and wire fraud are crimes of moral turpitude *per se*.” *In re Miller*, 258 A.3d 834, 834 (D.C. 2021) (per curiam); *see In re Bryant*, 46 A.3d 402, 402 (D.C. 2012) (per curiam) (“[B]oth mail fraud and wire fraud are crimes of moral turpitude *per se*.” (quoting *In re Evans*, 793 A.2d 468, 469 (D.C. 2002) (per curiam))).

The Court has not yet determined whether a conviction under 18 U.S.C. § 1957 involves moral turpitude *per se*. However, “[w]hen an attorney is convicted of multiple offenses, disbarment is imposed if any one of them involves moral turpitude *per se*.” *See In re Hoover-Hankerson*, 953 A.2d 1025, 1026 (D.C. 2008) (per curiam). Thus, we need not analyze whether 18 U.S.C. § 1957 involves moral turpitude *per se*.

Disciplinary Counsel represents that Respondent’s sentencing is scheduled for October 21, 2024. The fact that Respondent has not been sentenced should not delay the Board’s recommendation here; but, the Court should defer final action until after sentencing because a defendant “is not convicted until the sentence is imposed.” *In re Gardner*, 625 A.2d 293, 297 (D.C. 1993) (appended Board Report). Disciplinary Counsel should file a certified copy of the final judgment of conviction with the Court following Respondent’s sentencing so that the Court may take final action in this matter. *See, e.g., In re Allison*, Bar Docket No. 388-08, at 3 n.1 (BPR June 30, 2009), *recommendation approved*, 990 A.2d 467 (D.C. 2010) (per curiam)

(respondent disbarred following receipt of final judgment of conviction); *see also In re Hirschfeld*, 622 A.2d 688, 689 n.1 (D.C. 1993).

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the Board recommends that, upon receipt of a certified copy of the final judgment of conviction, the Court disbar Respondent pursuant to D.C. Code § 11-2503(a) based on her conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude *per se*.

BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

By: 
William V. Hindle, M.D.

All members of the Board concur in this Report and Recommendation.