

The Supreme Court of the State of Louisiana

IN RE: VINCENT WILKINS, JR.

No. 2021-B-00298

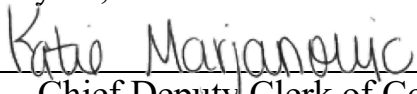
IN RE: Disciplinary Counsel - Applicant Other; Notice of Discipline in Another Jurisdiction Pursuant to Rule XIX, Section 21 and Motion to Initiate Reciprocal Discipline Proceedings;

May 04, 2021

Reciprocal discipline imposed. See per curiam.

SJC
JLW
JDH
JTG
WJC
JBM
PDG

Supreme Court of Louisiana
May 04, 2021



Chief Deputy Clerk of Court
For the Court

05/04/21

SUPREME COURT OF LOUISIANA

NO. 2021-B-0298

IN RE: VINCENT WILKINS, JR.

ATTORNEY DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDING

PER CURIAM

Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule XIX, § 21, the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (“ODC”) has filed a petition seeking the imposition of reciprocal discipline against respondent, Vincent Wilkins, Jr.,¹ an attorney licensed to practice law in Louisiana and the District of Columbia, based upon discipline imposed by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

UNDERLYING FACTS AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On January 7, 2021, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals suspended respondent from the practice of law for a period of ninety days, with sixty days stayed in favor of a one-year period of unsupervised probation with conditions, for failing to provide competent representation to a client. *In re: Wilkins*, 243 A.3d 866 (D.C. 2021).

After receiving notice of the D.C. order of discipline, the ODC filed a motion to initiate reciprocal discipline proceedings in Louisiana, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule XIX, § 21. A copy of the Final Judgment and Order issued by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals was attached to the motion. On March 1, 2021, this court rendered an order giving respondent thirty days to demonstrate why the

¹ In 2011, respondent was deemed ineligible to practice law in Louisiana for failure to pay his bar dues and the disciplinary assessment, and for failure to file a trust account registration statement.

imposition of identical discipline in this state would be unwarranted. Respondent failed to file any response in this court.

DISCUSSION

The standard for imposition of discipline on a reciprocal basis is set forth in Supreme Court Rule XIX, § 21(D). That rule provides:

Discipline to be Imposed. Upon the expiration of thirty days from service of the notice pursuant to the provisions of paragraph B, this court shall impose the identical discipline ... unless disciplinary counsel or the lawyer demonstrates, or this court finds that it clearly appears upon the face of the record from which the discipline is predicated, that:

- (1) The procedure was so lacking in notice or opportunity to be heard as to constitute a deprivation of due process; or
- (2) Based on the record created by the jurisdiction that imposed the discipline, there was such infirmity of proof establishing the misconduct as to give rise to the clear conviction that the court could not, consistent with its duty, accept as final the conclusion on that subject; or
- (3) The imposition of the same discipline by the court would result in grave injustice or be offensive to the public policy of the jurisdiction; or
- (4) The misconduct established warrants substantially different discipline in this state; ...

If this court determines that any of those elements exists, this court shall enter such other order as it deems appropriate. The burden is on the party seeking different discipline in this jurisdiction to demonstrate that the imposition of the same discipline is not appropriate.

In the instant case, respondent has made no showing of infirmities in the D.C. proceeding, nor do we discern any from our review of the record. Furthermore, we feel there is no reason to deviate from the sanction imposed in D.C. as only under **extraordinary circumstances** should there be a significant variance from the sanction imposed by the other jurisdiction. *In re: Aulston*, 05-1546 (La. 1/13/06), 918 So. 2d 461. *See also In re Zdravkovich*, 831 A. 2d 964, 968-69 (D.C. 2003)

(“there is merit in according deference, for its own sake, to the actions of other jurisdictions with respect to the attorneys over whom we share supervisory authority”).

Under these circumstances, we find it is appropriate to defer to the D.C. judgment imposing discipline upon respondent. Accordingly, we will impose reciprocal discipline in the form of a ninety-day suspension from the practice of law, with sixty days deferred, followed by a one-year period of unsupervised probation governed by the conditions set forth by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

DECREE

Considering the Petition to Initiate Reciprocal Discipline Proceedings filed by the Office of Disciplinary Counsel, and the record filed herein, it is ordered that respondent, Vincent Wilkins, Jr., Louisiana Bar Roll number 9208, be and he hereby is suspended from the practice of law in Louisiana for a period of ninety days, with sixty days deferred, followed by a one-year period of unsupervised probation governed by the conditions set forth by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals in its order imposing discipline in *In re Wilkins*, 243 A.3d 866 (D.C. 2021). Any violation of the terms of probation may result in the deferred portion of the suspension becoming executory, or the imposition of different discipline, as appropriate.