

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA

THE FLORIDA BAR,

Complainant,

v.

HAMMAD RASHID SHEIKH,

Respondent.

Supreme Court Case
No.

The Florida Bar File Nos.

2023-00,453(2A); 2023-00,528(2A);
2024-00,004(2A); 2024-00,256(2A)
2024-00,257(2A); 2024-00,260(2A);
2024-00,266(2A); 2025-00,129(2A)

CONDITIONAL GUILTY PLEA FOR CONSENT JUDGMENT

The undersigned respondent, Hammad Rashid Sheikh, files this
Conditional Guilty Plea for Consent Judgment under R. Regulating Fla. Bar
3-7.9.

1. The respondent is, and at all times relevant to this matter was,
a member of The Florida Bar, subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme
Court of Florida and the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar.

2. The respondent is acting freely and voluntarily in this matter
and tenders this plea without fear or threat of coercion. Respondent is
represented in this matter.

3. As to Florida Bar File Nos. 2023-00,453(2A), 2023-00,528(2A),
2024-00,004(2A), 2024-00,256(2A), 2024-00,257(2A), 2024-00,260(2A),
2024-00,266(2A) and 2025-00,129(2A), respondent waived the right to a

probable cause hearing before a grievance committee and tendered a written waiver of probable cause as to each Florida Bar file listed above.

4. The disciplinary measures to be imposed on the respondent are:

A. Suspension from the practice of law for 1 year, effective immediately, upon entry of the Supreme Court of Florida's order approving the consent judgment.

B. As a condition prior to seeking reinstatement, respondent is directed to undergo a comprehensive psychological evaluation by an approved FLA, Inc. provider, comply with any and all evaluation recommendations and receive a recommendation from FLA, Inc. in support of his reinstatement.

C. Payment of The Florida Bar's costs.

D. On entry of the Court's order, respondent must immediately:

1. accept no new clients from the date of the order;
2. initiate no litigation on behalf of clients from the date of the order;
3. provide a copy of the suspension order to all courts, tribunals, or adjudicative agencies before which respondent is

counsel of record; all state, federal, or administrative bars of which respondent is a member; all clients; all co-counsel; and all opposing counsel, as required by Rule 3-5.1(h);

4. provide a copy of the suspension order to all banks and financial institutions where the respondent maintains any account holding funds of clients or third parties in respondent's possession in connection with representation; and

5. comply with, and provide all documents and testimony responsive to, a subpoena from the bar for trust account records and any related documents necessary for the bar to conduct a trust account audit.

E. Upon entry of the Court's order, respondent must immediately:

1. cease all practice of law in Florida;
2. cease holding respondent out as a Florida Bar member or lawyer and eliminate all indicia of respondent's status as a Florida Bar member or lawyer on websites, social media, telephone listings, stationery, checks, business cards, office signs, email address, and any other indicia of respondent's status as a Florida Bar member or lawyer;

3. cease withdrawing or disbursing any money from any trust account or other financial institution account holding funds of clients or third parties in respondent's possession in connection with legal representation; and

4. not transfer any ownership of any real or personal property purchased in whole or in part with funds of clients or third parties in connection with legal representation; and

5. provide a copy of the suspension order to all courts, tribunals, or adjudicative agencies before which respondent is counsel of record; all state, federal, or administrative bars of which respondent is a member; all clients; all co-counsel; and all opposing counsel, as required by Rule 3-5.1(h).

F. Within 30 days from the date of the Court's order, respondent must provide the bar's headquarters office in Tallahassee with an affidavit listing all of the following that respondent notified of the suspension order: all courts, tribunals, or adjudicative agencies of which respondent is a member; all state, federal, or administrative bars of which respondent is a member; all clients; all co-counsel; and all opposing counsel.

G. Respondent must fully comply with Rule Regulating The Florida Bar 3-5.1(h).

H. Respondent also must fully comply with Rule Regulating The Florida Bar 3-6.1, if applicable.

5. The following allegations and rules provide the basis for the respondent's guilty plea and for the discipline to be imposed in this matter:

COUNT I – TFB FILE NO. 2023-00,453(2A) – COMPLAINT OF MIGUEL ANGEL MARTINEZ BALTAZAR

A. Miguel Angel Martinez Baltazar ("Mr. Baltazar") was detained and released by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on February 8, 2019. Upon his release, Catholic Charities recommended he consult with respondent regarding his immigration matter.

B. On February 12, 2019, Mr. Baltazar hired respondent to represent him in his immigration case and signed a representation agreement.

C. Mr. Baltazar agreed to a fee of \$13,000.00. He paid an initial payment of \$3,000.00, to be followed by monthly payments.

D. At the onset of the representation, respondent was responsive and returned calls and messages promptly.

E. In or around November 2022, respondent became unresponsive and failed to respond to requests for information.

F. On February 24, 2023, respondent sent Mr. Baltazar's wife a message that Mr. Baltazar had a video hearing on March 3, 2023. Respondent requested to come to their house for the hearing.

G. On March 1, 2023, the Baltazars left a message for respondent questioning why the Executive Office for Immigration Review's (EOIR) online system reflected that the hearing was scheduled for March 2, 2023. They received no response from respondent.

H. Mr. Baltazar's daughter then called respondent and inquired about the hearing date. Respondent told her not to worry, that it was an online mistake. He reassured her that the hearing was in fact scheduled for March 3, 2023.

I. On March 3, 2023, respondent arrived at the Baltazars' home around noon, at which time he advised Mr. Baltazar that the judge's assistant informed him that no hearing was scheduled for that day.

J. Later that day, Mr. Baltazar's wife sent respondent a screenshot of the EOIR's online system, which showed that Mr.

Baltazar's deportation had been ordered by the immigration judge on March 2, 2023.

K. According to the Baltazars, respondent assured them that this was an error.

L. Respondent then stopped answering messages and calls from Mr. Baltazar and his family.

M. When the Baltazars called from their daughter's phone number, respondent replied with a text message asking if he could call back the following day. No return call was received.

N. Mr. Baltazar tried calling respondent on April 20 and April 21, 2023, to no avail.

O. Since that date, neither Mr. Baltazar nor his family ever received a return call or reply message from respondent.

P. On April 21, 2023, the Baltazars consulted with another attorney. She contacted the immigration court, which confirmed that Mr. Baltazar was ordered deported on March 2, 2023, and that nothing had been filed on Mr. Baltazar's behalf since.

Q. Respondent admits to violating the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: 4-1.3 (Diligence), 4-1.4 (Communication),

4-1.5 (Excessive Fees), 4-1.16 (Declining or Terminating Representation) and 4-3.2 (Expediting Litigation).

**COUNT II – TFB FILE NO. 2023-00,528(2A) – COMPLAINT
OF JAVARIE HANLAN**

R. In late August 2022, Javarie Hanlan (“Mr. Hanlan”) hired respondent to represent him in an immigration matter and paid \$4,000.00.

S. On September 7, 2022, Mr. Hanlan received an email from respondent with a link to a form he needed to complete. He emailed the completed form to respondent on September 23, 2022.

T. A few weeks later, respondent assured Mr. Hanlan that the paperwork was sent to USCIS ahead of the December 2022 submission deadline.

U. In March 2023, respondent informed Mr. Hanlan that he should be hearing from USCIS soon.

V. Between March and May 2023, respondent was unresponsive and failed to reply to Mr. Hanlan’s calls and texts.

W. On May 31, 2023, Mr. Hanlan went to respondent’s office and found that it had closed.

X. Mr. Hanlan subsequently received an email from respondent advising that he was on medical leave and would call by the weekend. Respondent did not call.

Y. Mr. Hanlan then contacted USCIS and was informed that they had not received anything on his behalf.

Z. Respondent admits to violating the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: 4-1.3 (Diligence), 4-1.4 (Communication), 4-1.5 (Excessive Fees), 4-1.16 (Declining or Terminating Representation), and 4-3.2 (Expediting Litigation).

**COUNT III – TFB FILE NO. 2024-00,004(2A) – COMPLAINT
OF MICHAEL ANTHONY MORGAN**

AA. Michael Anthony Morgan (“Mr. Morgan”) is a Texas-licensed attorney, practicing immigration law since 2014. He filed this complaint on behalf of Rey Alejandro Branas-Gonzalez (“Mr. Branas-Gonzalez”) and Madelaine Rodriguez-Naranjo (“Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo”).

BB. In August of 2022, Mr. Branas-Gonzalez and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo retained respondent to jointly represent them in their immigration cases.

CC. They signed the representation agreement and provided respondent with a \$2,000.00 initial payment. The remaining

\$6,000.00 was to be paid in \$250.00 monthly installments, to commence in September of 2022.

DD. In February of 2023, Mr. Branas-Gonzalez and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo appeared via WebEx for a Master Calendar Hearing. The Judge instructed respondent to file certain documents within 60 days of the hearing.

EE. Following the February court appearance, Mr. Branas-Gonzalez and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo immediately contacted respondent in an attempt to address their concerns and again received no response.

FF. Mr. Branas-Gonzalez and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo subsequently left multiple voicemails and sent text messages and emails, with no substantive responses.

GG. They ceased payment of the monthly installments in April of 2023, after respondent failed to respond to numerous attempts to communicate.

HH. On May 2, 2023, Mr. Branas-Gonzalez and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo retained Michael Morgan, who attempted to contact respondent to obtain a copy of the case files, to no avail.

II. Mr. Morgan attempted to substitute as Mr. Branas-Gonzalez's and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo's attorney; however, as of the date the complaint was filed, respondent was still listed as their attorney of record.

JJ. On June 15, 2023, Mr. Morgan advised Mr. Branas-Gonzalez and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo that he reviewed the online court docket and discovered that the immigration judge issued removal orders on May 23, 2023.

KK. Mr. Branas-Gonzalez and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo were never informed of a court hearing on May 23, 2023.

LL. Mr. Branas-Gonzalez and Mrs. Rodriguez-Naranjo paid respondent a total of \$4,000.00 toward the \$6,000.00 fee.

MM. Respondent failed to provide copies of their case files, as requested.

NN. Respondent admits to violating the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: 4-1.3 (Diligence), 4-1.4 (Communication), 4-1.5 (Excessive Fees), 4-1.16 (Declining or Terminating Representation) and 4-3.2 (Expediting Litigation).

**COUNT IV – TFB FILE NO. 2024-00,256(2A) – COMPLAINT
OF NELSON GEOVANY MENDEZ BATEN**

OO. On October 5, 2019, Nelson Geovany Mendez Baten (“Mr. Mendez Baten”) hired respondent to represent his brother in his immigration matter.

PP. Respondent charged Mr. Mendez Baten a fee of \$7,000.00. He initially paid \$1,000.00 toward the fee and agreed to make monthly payments.

QQ. Subsequently, communication with respondent became sporadic.

RR. In September 2023, Mr. Mendez Baten attempted unsuccessfully to contact respondent.

SS. Respondent was not at his office, would not answer his phone and his voicemail was full.

TT. That same month, Mr. Mendez Baten’s wife reviewed correspondence from respondent, which included a letter written in English. Neither Mr. Mendez Baten nor his wife understood English.

UU. The letter, which was neither signed nor dated, advised that due to a mental health issue, respondent could no longer represent Mr. Mendez Baten’s brother. Respondent also advised that

a new lawyer should be retained immediately, and that respondent would transfer the file upon notification.

VV. A friend of Mr. Mendez Baten's, Dr. Christian Halloy, who is bilingual, sent emails to respondent inquiring about the status of the immigration case and an accounting of the fees that had been paid. According to Dr. Halloy, respondent's replies were confusing and incoherent.

WW. Respondent failed to provide a copy of the file or an accounting.

XX. Mr. Mendez Baten paid respondent approximately \$6,200.00 toward the \$7,000.00 fee.

YY. Respondent admits to violating the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: 4-1.3 (Diligence), 4-1.4 (Communication), 4-1.5 (Excessive Fees), 4-1.16 (Declining or Terminating Representation), and 4-3.2 (Expediting Litigation).

**COUNT V – TFB FILE NO. 2024-00,257(2A) – COMPLAINT
OF KARLA PATRICIA PACHECO CANTARERO**

ZZ. In October 2019, Karla Patricia Pacheco Cantarero ("Ms. Pacheco Cantarero") hired respondent to represent herself and her son in their immigration matters.

AAA. Respondent and Ms. Pacheco Cantarero agreed to a fee of \$9,000.00. She initially paid \$300.00 toward the fee and agreed to make monthly payments.

BBB. Subsequently, communication with respondent became sporadic.

CCC. In September 2023, Ms. Pacheco attempted unsuccessfully to contact respondent.

DDD. Respondent was not at his office, would not answer his phone and his voicemail was full.

EEE. Around this time, Ms. Pacheco Cantarero learned that another family had received a letter from respondent indicating that he was closing his office and they needed to find another attorney.

FFF. Respondent failed to complete Ms. Pacheco Cantarero's case or notify her that he could no longer represent her.

GGG. Ms. Pacheco Cantarero paid respondent approximately \$5,300.00 toward the \$9,000.00 fee.

HHH. Respondent admits to violating the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: 4-1.3 (Diligence), 4-1.4 (Communication), 4-1.5 (Excessive Fees), 4-1.16 (Declining or Terminating Representation), and 4-3.2 (Expediting Litigation).

**COUNT VI – TFB FILE NO. 2024-00,260(2A) – COMPLAINT
OF LETICIA GORETI RAMIREZ ROJAS**

III. On October 5, 2019, Leticia Goreti Ramirez Rojas (“Ms. Ramirez Rojas”) hired respondent to represent her son in his immigration matter.

JJJ. Respondent and Ms. Ramirez Rojas agreed on a fee of \$7,000.00. She initially paid \$1,000.00 toward the fee and agreed to make monthly payments.

KKK. Subsequently, communication with respondent became sporadic.

LLL. In September 2023, Ms. Ramirez Rojas attempted unsuccessfully to contact respondent.

MMM. Respondent was not at his office, would not answer his phone and his voicemail was full.

NNN. That same month, Ms. Ramirez Rojas reviewed correspondence from respondent, which included a letter written in English. Ms. Ramirez Rojas does not understand English.

OOO. The letter, which was neither signed nor dated, advised that due to a mental health issue, respondent could no longer represent Mr. Mendez Baten. The letter also advised that a new

lawyer should be retained immediately, and that respondent would transfer the file upon notification.

PPP. A friend of Ms. Ramirez Rojas, Dr. Christian Halloy, who is bilingual, sent emails to respondent inquiring about the status of the immigration case and an accounting of the fees that had been paid. According to Dr. Halloy, respondent's replies were confusing and incoherent.

QQQ. Respondent failed to provide a copy of the file or an accounting.

RRR. Ms. Ramirez Rojas paid respondent approximately \$6,200.00 toward the \$7,000 fee.

SSS. Respondent admits to violating the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: 4-1.3 (Diligence), 4-1.4 (Communication), 4-1.5 (Excessive Fees), 4-1.16 (Declining or Terminating Representation), and 4-3.2 (Expediting Litigation).

**COUNT VII – TFB FILE NO. 2024-00,266(2A) – COMPLAINT
OF JULIETA V. RAMOS LOPEZ**

TTT. In March 2019, Julieta V. Ramos Lopez ("Ms. Ramos Lopez") hired respondent to represent her and her son in their immigration cases for a fee of \$7,000.00 for both matters.

UUU. Ms. Ramos Lopez's last communication with respondent was on June 3, 2022, when he picked up a payment of \$200.00.

VVV. In September 2023, Ms. Ramos Lopez attempted to contact respondent, to no avail. He failed to return phone calls or reply to email messages and his voicemail was full.

WWW. In September 2023, Ms. Ramos Lopez reviewed correspondence from respondent, which included a letter written in English. Ms. Ramos Lopez does not understand English.

XXX. The letter, which was neither signed nor dated, advised that due to a mental health issue, respondent could no longer represent her. The letter also advised that a new lawyer should be retained immediately, and that respondent would transfer the file upon notification.

YYY. A friend of Ms. Ramos Lopez, Dr. Christian Halloy, who is bilingual, sent emails to respondent inquiring about the status of the immigration case and requesting an accounting. According to Dr. Halloy, respondent's replies were confusing and incoherent.

ZZZ. Respondent failed to provide a copy of the file or an accounting.

AAAA. Ms. Ramos Lopez paid respondent approximately \$3,400.00 toward the \$7,000.00 fee.

BBBB. Respondent admits to violating the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: 4-1.3 (Diligence), 4-1.4 (Communication), 4-1.5 (Excessive Fees), 4-1.16 (Declining or Terminating Representation) and 4-3.2 (Expediting Litigation).

**COUNT VIII – TFB FILE NO. 2025-00,129(2A) – COMPLAINT
OF GABRIELA BERNALES WUAN**

CCCC. In 2021, Gabriela Bernales Wuan (“Ms. Wuan”) hired respondent to represent her regarding her application for permanent residency.

DDDD. Respondent provided her with documentation to sign in support of her application for permanent residency and a copy of an employment authorization card he claimed to have received from USCIS.

EEEE. In August 2021, Ms. Wuan and her husband relocated from Knoxville, Tennessee to Miami, Florida.

FFFF. Ms. Wuan accepted a job and provided her employer with a copy of the employment authorization card, along with a signed statement from respondent, attesting to the validity of the original document which he claimed to have in his possession.

GGGG. Respondent had also provided Ms. Wuan with notifications that indicated her appearance had been waived by USCIS for her biometrics appointment and interview.

HHHH. In addition, respondent sent a document dated February 15, 2023, that indicated Ms. Wuan had been granted lawful permanent resident status by USCIS.

IIII. In April 2023, having not received her permanent resident card and being unable to reach respondent, Ms. Wuan called USCIS regarding her approved I-485 application. She was informed by USCIS that the receipt numbers provided by respondent did not pertain to her or her case.

JJJJ. At this point, Ms. Wuan suspected that the documentation provided by respondent was fraudulent.

KKKK. In response to her inquiry, respondent told Ms. Wuan that he had an intern, Rosa Hernandez, who had falsified the documentation. He provided her a copy of a letter he claimed to have sent to USCIS asserting the same and requesting that this not be held against Ms. Wuan.

LLLL. After learning that she was not authorized to work in the United States, Ms. Wuan disclosed this information to her employer and was terminated due to her employment ineligibility.

MMMM. Ms. Wuan subsequently hired new counsel in Florida.

NNNN. Respondent admits to violating the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: 4-1.3 (Diligence), 4-1.4 (Communication), 4-1.5 (Excessive Fees), 4-1.16 (Declining or Terminating Representation), 4-3.2 (Expediting Litigation) and 4-5.3(c) (Responsibilities Regarding Nonlawyer Assistants).

6. The Florida Bar has approved this proposed plea as required by R. Regulating Fla. Bar 3-7.9.

7. If this plea is not finally approved by the Board of Governors of The Florida Bar and the Supreme Court of Florida, then it has no effect and may not be used by the parties in any way.

8. If this plea is approved, the respondent agrees to pay all reasonable costs associated with this case under Rule 3-7.6(q) in the amount of \$1,250.00. These costs are due within 30 days of the court order. The respondent agrees that if the costs are not paid within 30 days of this court's order becoming final, the respondent will pay interest on any

unpaid costs at the statutory rate. The respondent further agrees these disciplinary costs are not dischargeable in any future proceedings, including, but not limited to, a petition for bankruptcy. Respondent will be delinquent and ineligible to practice law if respondent does not satisfy the cost judgment within 30 days of this order, unless The Florida Bar Board of Governors defers payment under R. Regulating Fla. Bar 1-3.6.

9. Respondent acknowledges the obligation to pay the costs of this proceeding, any agreed restitution and any Client Security Fund claims paid out as a result of this disciplinary matter, and that payment is evidence of strict compliance with the conditions of any disciplinary order or agreement and is evidence of good faith and fiscal responsibility.

10. If the Supreme Court of Florida approves this Conditional Guilty Plea for Consent Judgment, the respondent agrees not to seek future modification of its terms.

11. This Conditional Guilty Plea for Consent Judgment fully complies with all requirements of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar.

Dated this 6th day of February, 2025.

/s/ Hammad Rashid Sheikh

Hammad Rashid Sheikh, Respondent
6515 Clinton Highway, Suite 216
Knoxville, TN 37912-1122
Florida Bar No. 124847
h.sheikh@sheikhlawoffices.com

Dated this 6th day of February, 2025.

/s/ D. Culver Smith, III

D. Culver Smith, III
Counsel for Respondent
1555 Palm Beach Lakes Boulevard
Suite 1440
West Palm Beach, FL 33401-2311
(561) 301-3800
Florida Bar No. 105933
csmith@culversmithlaw.com

Dated this 12th day of February, 2025.



Shaneé L. Hinson, Bar Counsel
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The Florida Bar
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2024-00,266(2A); 2025-00,129(2A)

_____/

STIPULATION TO ENTRY OF AGREED ORDER

The Florida Bar and Hammad Rashid Sheikh, stipulate to the entry of the attached order in this case, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court of Florida and states:

Respondent is and, at all times relevant to this matter was, a member of The Florida Bar, subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Florida.

Respondent is simultaneously tendering a conditional guilty plea under an agreement with The Florida Bar for a consent judgment.

If the conditional guilty plea is approved, Respondent agrees to the terms and conditions in the agreed consent judgment and attached order.

It is therefore stipulated by The Florida Bar and Respondent that the attached order should be entered on approval of the Supreme Court of Florida.

Dated this 6th day of February, 2025.

/s/ Hammad Rashid Sheikh

Hammad Rashid Sheikh
6515 Clinton Highway, Suite 216
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(865) 258-9884
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hammadsheikh.law@gmail.com

Approved by:

/s/ D. Culver Smith, III

D. Culver Smith, III
Counsel for Respondent
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West Palm Beach, FL 33401-2311
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Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shaneé L. Hinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' and 'H'.

Shaneé L. Hinson, Bar Counsel
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