

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA**  
(Before a Referee)

**THE FLORIDA BAR,**

Complainant,

**v.**

**RAYMOND SITAR,**

Respondent.

**Supreme Court Case  
No. SC2026-0037**

The Florida Bar File  
No. 2025-00,247(2A)

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**REPORT OF REFEREE ACCEPTING CONSENT JUDGMENT**

**I. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS**

The undersigned was appointed as referee under R. Regulating Fla. Bar 3-7.6 to preside over the proceedings in this case.

On January 9, 2026, The Florida Bar (the bar) filed its complaint against respondent in these proceedings. The Supreme Court of Florida entered an order on January 13, 2026, designating the Chief Judge of the Second Judicial Circuit of Florida to appoint a referee in this case. Chief Judge Francis J. Allman appointed the undersigned to serve as the referee on January 13, 2026. The undersigned executed the certificate by referee in accordance with Rules Regulating The Florida Bar, Rule 3-7.6 on January 14, 2026. The undersigned held a case management conference on March

10, 2026, via Zoom. The parties subsequently entered into a conditional guilty plea for consent judgment on March 24, 2026.

Throughout these proceedings, the bar was represented by Bar Counsel Lauren Michelle Williams. Respondent was *pro se*.

All of the pleadings, responses, exhibits received in evidence, and this report constitute the record in this case and are filed with the Supreme Court of Florida.

## II. FINDINGS OF FACT

A. Jurisdictional Statement. Respondent is, and at all times mentioned during these proceedings was, a member of The Florida Bar, subject to the jurisdiction and Rules Regulating The Florida Bar adopted by the Supreme Court of Florida. In addition to licensure in Florida, respondent is, and at all times mentioned during these proceedings was, a member of The Connecticut Bar subject to the jurisdiction and rules of the Statewide Grievance Committee.

B. Narrative Summary of Case. The following allegations and rules provide the basis for respondent's guilty plea and for the discipline to be imposed in this matter:

This is a reciprocal discipline action, based on the Grievance Panel Finding of Probable Cause, dated August 19, 2022, the Proposed

Disposition Pursuant to Practice Book §2-82(b) dated June 22, 2023, and the Letter of Approval from the Statewide Grievance Committee, dated September 8, 2023, which imposed a reprimand. The reprimand was based on the following conduct:

(a) Lauren Merritt (“Ms. Merritt”) filed a small claims lawsuit against a former employer.

(b) Respondent represented the employer in that lawsuit.

(c) During a virtual hearing before a magistrate, respondent made disparaging, sexually inappropriate remarks concerning Ms. Merritt.

(d) Respondent filed a timely answer in which he admitted inappropriate comments. He stated that he made the comments to his client unaware that his computer was not muted.

(e) Respondent violated Connecticut Rules of Professional Conduct: 4.4 (Respect for Rights of Third Persons) and 8.4(7) (Misconduct: Engage in conduct that the lawyer knows or reasonably should know is harassment or discrimination ... in conduct related to the practice of law....)

(f) Although respondent denied some or all of the material facts alleged in the complaint, he acknowledged that there was

sufficient evidence to prove by clear and convincing evidence the material facts constituting a violation of Connecticut Rules of Professional Conduct: 4.4 and 8.4(7) and agreed to a reprimand.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO GUILT

By operation of R. Regulating The Florida Bar 3-4.6, I find that respondent be found guilty of violating the following Connecticut Rules of Professional Conduct: 4.4 (Respect for Rights of Third Persons) and 8.4(7) (Misconduct), by operation of Rule 3-4.6, Rules Regulating The Florida Bar.

### IV. PERSONAL HISTORY AND PAST DISCIPLINARY RECORD

Before recommending discipline under R. Regulating Fla. Bar 3-7.6(m)(2)(D), I considered the following personal history of respondent:

Age: 82

Date admitted to the Bar: October 3, 1996.

Prior Discipline: None in Florida.

### V. STANDARDS FOR IMPOSING LAWYER SANCTIONS

I considered the following Florida Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions before recommending discipline:

7.1 Deceptive Conduct or Statements and Unreasonable or Improper Fees  
(c) Public reprimand is appropriate when a lawyer negligently engages in conduct that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional and causes injury or potential injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

I find the following aggravating factors: (9) substantial experience in the practice of law.

I find the following mitigating factors: (1) absence of a prior disciplinary record; (5) full and free disclosure to the bar or cooperative attitude towards the proceedings; (12) remorse.

## VI. CASE LAW

I considered the following case law before recommending discipline:

In The Florida Bar v. Gaines, 2025 WL 2876810 (Fla. Oct. 9, 2025) (Unpublished Disposition) – The Court approved a conditional agreement for diversion to Ethics School. The lawyer represented the wife/mother in a family law case. The lawyer engaged in unprofessional conduct during the pendency of the matter. The lawyer obtained documents from opposing counsel’s divorce case. The lawyer attached one of the pleadings to an email to her and stated, “be careful where you tread. . .”

In The Florida Bar v. Sztynodor, 2021 WL 5504988 (Fla. Nov. 24, 2021) (Unpublished Disposition) – the Court ordered the lawyer to be publicly reprimanded by the Board of Governors, directed her to attend a professionalism workshop, and placed her on probation for two years. During the representation of multiple cases, the lawyer made unprofessional and sarcastic remarks about opposing counsel and witnesses. The statements were made orally, in pleadings, and via email.

In The Florida Bar v. Allen, 2021 WL 401950 (Fla. Feb. 4, 2021) (Unpublished Disposition) – the Court approved a consent judgment for a public reprimand and completion of professionalism workshop as a result of three separate instances of inappropriate behavior. In one case, the lawyer became unprofessional in his questioning of the witness. In a second case, the trial court entered an order stating it had to intervene and set case management directives for both the lawyer and opposing counsel due to their engaging in unprofessional behavior during the litigation. In a third matter, the trial court entered an order finding that the lawyer engaged in unprofessional and aggressive behavior.

VII. RECOMMENDATION AS TO DISCIPLINARY MEASURES TO BE IMPOSED

I recommend that respondent be found guilty of misconduct justifying disciplinary measures and be disciplined by:

- a. Public reprimand and the disposition order will be published in the *Southern Reporter*; and
- b. Payment of The Florida Bar's costs.

VIII. STATEMENT OF COSTS AND MANNER IN WHICH COSTS SHOULD BE TAXED

I find the following costs were reasonably incurred by The Florida Bar:

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Administrative Fee   | \$1,250.00        |
| Court Reporter Costs | 75.00             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>\$1,325.00</b> |

I recommend that the above costs be charged to respondent and that interest accrue at the statutory rate. If respondent does not satisfy the cost judgment within 30 days of the judgment becoming final, respondent will be delinquent and ineligible to practice law under R. Regulating Fla. Bar 1-3.6, unless otherwise deferred by the Board of Governors of The Florida Bar.

Dated this 25th day of March, 2026.

  
/s/Lance E. Neff  
Judge Lance E. Neff, Referee

Filed with the Supreme Court of Florida via the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal with copies served via the Portal to:

- Raymond Sitar, Respondent, [sitaratty@yahoo.com](mailto:sitaratty@yahoo.com)
- Lauren Michelle Williams, Bar Counsel, [lwilliams@floridabar.org](mailto:lwilliams@floridabar.org)
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