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NEWS RELEASE

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EOIR Announces Latest Disciplinary Actions Under Rules of Professional Conduct

Two Receive Final Orders; Five Others, Immediate Suspensions

The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has taken disciplinary action against seven attorneys after charging them with violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct for Immigration Practitioners provided in Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR Parts 3 and 292). The attorneys' rule violations arose out of sanctions imposed by other jurisdictions.

Disciplinary proceedings began in each case with a Petition for Immediate Suspension and Notice of Intent to Discipline filed with the Board of Immigration Appeals (the Board) by EOIR's Office of the General Counsel. The Board then ordered each attorney's immediate suspension from practice before the Immigration Courts, the Board, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and required the attorney to respond to the alleged violations.

Final Orders

By order of Deputy Chief Immigration Judge H. Jere Armstrong dated August 31, 2001, **Alexis Irizarry-Vega** was suspended *nunc pro tunc* from August 24, 2000, until such time as the Board finds the respondent properly reinstated by the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico. The order notes that Irizarry's 6-month suspension by the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico has expired and that the matter has been forwarded to the Board with a recommendation that he be reinstated to practice before the three immigration tribunals.

The Board issued a Final Order of Discipline against **Jose Luis Ramos** after he failed to respond as required to the Notice of Intent to Discipline. The Final Order suspends him from practice before the Board, the Immigration Courts and the Service for a period of 42 months effective July 31, 2001.

Immediate Suspensions

The Board ordered immediate suspensions of the following attorneys for the reasons stated:

Frank A. K. Awuah, indefinitely suspended from practice in Maryland and the District of Columbia by each jurisdiction's Court of Appeals;

Paul Ira Freedman, suspended from practice by the Supreme Judicial Court for Suffolk County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, based on his conviction of a Class E felony (conspiring to file false asylum applications) by the U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York;

Miguel Gadda, ordered by the California State Bar Court, Hearing Department, to be placed on involuntary inactive enrollment with a recommendation that he be disbarred;

John Roger Snow, suspended from practice of law by the Supreme Court of Florida; and,

Robert A. Wilkinson, disbarred by the Supreme Court of Georgia for misconduct in representing clients with immigration matters.

In each of the disciplinary matters cited above, the suspended attorney was directed “to promptly notify, in writing, any clients with cases currently pending before the Board, the Immigration Courts, or the Service” that he or she may no longer represent clients before these tribunals.

The rules of professional conduct, in Title 8, Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR), include provisions specifying grounds for disciplinary action, requirements for receiving and investigating complaints, and procedures for conducting hearings. The rules also authorize the Board to immediately suspend a practitioner who has been subject to disbarment, suspension, or resignation with an admission of misconduct as imposed by a State or Federal court, pending a summary proceeding and final sanction.

EOIR announces these disciplinary actions to inform the public about practitioners who are not authorized to represent any matter before an immigration tribunal. EOIR also posts a list of suspended and expelled practitioners on its Web site at www.usdoj.gov/eoir.