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NEWS RELEASE

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EOIR Announces Latest Disciplinary Actions Under Rules of Professional Conduct *Four Attorneys Immediately Suspended; Two Receive Final Order*

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has taken disciplinary action against six attorneys after charging them with violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct for immigration practitioners. The Rules of Professional Conduct appear in Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR Parts 1003 and 1292). In most cases, the disciplinary action is initiated as a result of sanctions imposed by other jurisdictions or a criminal conviction.

Although the disciplinary process may vary according to the specific circumstances of each case, generally it includes the following steps:

Disciplinary proceedings begin with a Notice of Intent to Discipline filed with the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) by the Office of the General Counsel of either EOIR or the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The BIA requires the attorney to respond to the alleged violations. In some cases, a Petition for Immediate Suspension also is filed and the BIA orders the attorney to be suspended immediately from practice before the immigration courts, the BIA, and the DHS. (DHS joins EOIR in taking the disciplinary action.) Disciplined attorneys are directed to notify promptly, in writing, their clients with pending immigration cases that they may no longer represent them before the BIA, the immigration courts, or the DHS. Disciplined attorneys must petition and be reinstated by the BIA before they can resume the practice of law before the BIA, the immigration courts, and the DHS.

Immediate Suspension

The BIA ordered the immediate suspension of the following attorneys:

- **Virginia Gago:** She was convicted in New York for petit larceny. She was immediately suspended by the BIA on Feb. 2, 2006, based on her criminal conviction, pending final disposition of her case.

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- **Dalia R. Kejbou:** She was convicted in Michigan for attempted improper entry of an alien. She was immediately suspended by the BIA on Feb. 16, 2006, based on her criminal conviction, pending final disposition of her case.
- **Maria Lara Peet:** She was disbarred from the practice of law by the Supreme Court of Florida. She was immediately suspended by the BIA on Feb. 16, 2006, based on her disbarment, pending final disposition of her case.
- **Mitchell L. Singer:** He was suspended from the practice of law by the New York Supreme Court, Appellate Division, First Judicial Department, and was subsequently disbarred based on a felony conviction. He was immediately suspended by the BIA on Feb. 13, 2006, based on his disbarment in New York, and for misrepresentation of his qualifications to the DHS, pending final disposition of his case.

Final Orders of Discipline

The BIA issued a Final Order of Discipline against the following attorney:

- **James Eduard White:** A final order of Feb. 3, 2006, expels him from practice before immigration tribunals, based on his 6-month suspension by the Supreme Court of Oregon for neglect, incompetence, and aiding in the unauthorized practice of law.

An Adjudicating Official from the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge issued a Final Order of Discipline against the following attorney:

- **Antonio Reyes-Vidal:** Based on his repeated failures to appear for scheduled hearings in a timely manner without good cause at the San Antonio Immigration Court, he will be suspended for 90 days, effective April 1, 2006, as stipulated in a Feb. 7, 2006, consent agreement. Following the suspension period, he may request reinstatement by the BIA.

Background

The Rules of Professional Conduct include provisions specifying grounds for disciplinary action, requirements for receiving and investigating complaints, and procedures for conducting hearings. The rules also authorize the BIA to immediately suspend a practitioner who has been subject to disbarment, suspension, or resignation with an admission of misconduct as imposed by a federal or state court, or who has been convicted of a serious crime, pending a summary proceeding and final sanction. They are available on the EOIR website at http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/vll/fedreg/2000_2001/fr27jn00R.pdf.

EOIR announces these disciplinary actions to inform the public about practitioners who are not authorized to represent clients in any matter before an immigration tribunal. EOIR also posts a “List of Disciplined Practitioners” on its website at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/profcond/chart.htm>. In an effort

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to provide more detailed information about individual attorney discipline cases, every new immediate suspension or final order issued beginning June 27, 2005, can be accessed through this list by clicking on the highlighted “date” link. Links to older orders, issued since July 2000, will be included gradually.

Additional information about the Attorney Discipline Program can be found at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcond.htm> and <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcondfaks.htm> on the EOIR website.

EOIR is responsible for adjudicating immigration cases. Specifically, under delegated authority from the Attorney General, EOIR interprets and administers federal immigration laws by conducting immigration court proceedings, appellate reviews, and administrative hearings. EOIR consists of three components: the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, which is responsible for managing the numerous immigration courts located throughout the United States where immigration judges adjudicate individual cases; the Board of Immigration Appeals, which primarily conducts appellate reviews of immigration judge decisions; and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer, which adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to providing fair, expeditious, and uniform application of the nation's immigration laws in all cases.

Information about EOIR immigration proceedings is available on EOIR's website <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/subject.htm>.

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