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NEWS RELEASE

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EOIR Announces Latest Disciplinary Actions Under Rules of Professional Conduct *Six Attorneys Immediately Suspended; Ten Receive Final Orders*

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has recently taken disciplinary action against 16 attorneys for violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct for immigration practitioners.

EOIR announces these disciplinary actions to inform the public about practitioners who are no longer authorized to represent clients before an immigration tribunal. In most cases, EOIR has disciplined the practitioner based on a sanction imposed by another jurisdiction or a criminal conviction.

Disciplinary proceedings begin when the Office of the General Counsel of either EOIR or the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), files a Notice of Intent to Discipline with EOIR's Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). The disciplinary action can result in the suspension or expulsion of a practitioner before the immigration courts, the BIA, and DHS. The BIA must reinstate a suspended or expelled attorney before the attorney can resume the practice of law before the immigration courts, the BIA, and DHS.

EOIR has recently taken the following disciplinary actions:

Immediate Suspensions

The BIA ordered the immediate suspension of the following attorneys:

- **James D. Christo:** He was convicted in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York of conspiracy to commit immigration fraud. The BIA granted the government's petition for immediate suspension on June 26, 2009, based on his conviction in New York and pending final disposition of his case.

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- **Roberto E. De La Garza, a.k.a. Eddie De La Garza:** The State Bar of Texas suspended him from the practice of law for one year for failing to protect a client's interests and engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation. The BIA granted the government's petition for immediate suspension on July 28, 2009, based on his one-year suspension in Texas and pending final disposition of his case.
- **Tian Li:** The Michigan Attorney Discipline Board suspended him from the practice of law for three years for violations of the state's Rules of Professional Conduct, including failure to exercise the safekeeping of property and engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or violation of criminal law. The BIA granted the government's petition for immediate suspension on July 16, 2009, based on his three-year suspension in Michigan and pending final disposition of his case.
- **Manjit Kaur Rai, a.k.a. Manjit Kaur Kang:** She was convicted in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California of multiple counts involving conspiracy to defraud the United States and making false statements in asylum applications. The BIA granted the government's petition for immediate suspension on July 27, 2009, based on her conviction in California and pending final disposition of her case.
- **Jagdip Singh Sekhon:** He was convicted in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California of multiple counts involving conspiracy to defraud the United States and making false statements in asylum applications. The BIA granted the government's petition for immediate suspension on July 27, 2009, based on his conviction in California and pending final disposition of his case.
- **Jagprit Singh Sekhon:** He was convicted in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California of multiple counts involving conspiracy to defraud the United States and making false statements in asylum applications. The BIA granted the government's petition for immediate suspension on July 27, 2009, based on his conviction in California and pending final disposition of his case.

Final Orders of Discipline

- **Li Nan Chiang:** The Supreme Court of Illinois suspended him from the practice of law for numerous violations of the state's Rules of Professional Conduct. The BIA granted the government's petition for immediate suspension on June 25, 2009, based on his suspension in Illinois and pending final disposition of his case. A final order of July 28, 2009, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for 120 days, effective June 25, 2009, based on his suspension in Illinois.

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- **Lester Walter Czapelski:** A final order of July 16, 2009, expels him from practice before immigration tribunals, effective Feb. 18, 2004, based on his disbarment in New Jersey.
- **Ravindra Singh Kanwal, a.k.a. Ravi Kanwal:** A final order of July 8, 2009, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for two years, based on an adjudicating official's findings that he engaged in unethical and unprofessional conduct, worked without authorization as an attorney in Colorado, failed to comply with the conditions of his non-immigrant visitor visa for business, remained in the United States illegally since 1995, and is currently in removal proceedings.
- **Barry Roy Nager:** A final order of July 14, 2009, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for five years, effective June 2, 2009, based on his disbarment in Florida.
- **Dennis Freestone Olsen:** A final order of July 14, 2009, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for six years, effective Feb. 21, 2006, based on his disbarment in Washington state.
- **Natalia V. Poliakova:** A final order of June 25, 2009, suspends her from practice before immigration tribunals for 90 days, effective April 17, 2009, based on her 30-day suspension in Florida.
- **Julie M. Prado:** A final order of June 25, 2009 suspends her indefinitely from practice before immigration tribunals, effective May 5, 2009, based on her indefinite suspension in Massachusetts.
- **Mark W. Scher:** A final order of July 14, 2009, suspends him indefinitely from practice before immigration tribunals, effective June 2, 2009, based on his indefinite suspension in New York.
- **Karen Lee Sims:** A final order of June 30, 2009, expels her from practice before immigration tribunals, effective June 2, 2009, based on her disbarment in Colorado.
- **Michael H. Sneed:** A final order of July 14, 2009, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for two years, effective April 17, 2009, based on his 18-month suspension in Tennessee and his failure to divulge his suspension to an immigration judge.

Background

The Rules of Professional Conduct appear in Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR Parts 1003 and 1292). They include provisions specifying grounds for disciplinary

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action, requirements for receiving and investigating complaints, and procedures for conducting hearings. The rules also authorize the BIA to suspend immediately 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. The Rules of Professional Conduct are available at http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/vll/fedreg/2000_2001/fr27jn00R.pdf and http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/vll/fedreg/2008_2009/fr18dec08c.pdf.

A “List of Disciplined Practitioners” is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/profcond/chart.htm>. In an effort to provide more detailed information about individual attorney discipline cases, every immediate suspension or final order issued can be accessed through this list by clicking on the highlighted “date” link.

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/09/AttorneyDisciplineFactSheet.pdf>.

— EOIR —

The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) is an agency within the Department of Justice. Under delegated authority from the Attorney General, immigration judges and the Board of Immigration Appeals interpret and adjudicate immigration cases according to United States immigration laws. EOIR’s immigration judges conduct administrative court proceedings in immigration courts located throughout the nation. They determine whether foreign-born individuals—who are charged by the Department of Homeland Security with violating immigration law—should be ordered removed from the United States or should be granted relief from removal and be permitted to remain in this country. The Board of Immigration Appeals primarily reviews appeals of decisions by immigration judges. EOIR’s Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to ensuring fairness in all of the cases it adjudicates.