

Lawyer Regulation Glossary of Terms

Disposition

Definition

Dismissal

Dismissal of a charge occurs when there is no basis to conclude that sanctionable misconduct occurred. A dismissed charge is a public record for six-months from the date of dismissal.

Diversion

Diversion is an alternative to formal discipline. Diversion is designed to remedy the lawyer's problem and prevent recurrence. Diversion is confidential.

Admonition

An admonition may be imposed for a lawyer's conduct in violation of his/her duties and obligations as a lawyer. It is the lowest form of discipline that may be imposed on a lawyer. Admonition is public and remains on the lawyer's permanent record with the State Bar. This sanction is not displayed on the State Bar's website unless accompanied by a term of probation. Admonition with probation is posted on the State Bar's website for two years. Prior to January 1, 2011, an admonition was named an informal reprimand.

Probation

Probation is a public discipline sanction that is on a lawyer's permanent record with the State Bar of Arizona. A lawyer may be placed on probation for up to two years and the term may be renewed under certain circumstances. The lawyer may continue to practice while on probation. Probation is typically imposed with another sanction. This sanction is posted on the State Bar's website for two years.

Restitution

Restitution is generally ordered if a person has been financially injured by a lawyer's unethical conduct. Restitution is a form of discipline that is public and remains on the lawyer's permanent record with the State Bar of Arizona. This sanction is posted on the State Bar's website for two years.

Costs and Expenses	A lawyer may be ordered to pay the State Bar of Arizona for the costs and expenses incurred in pursuing a disciplinary proceeding. This sanction is typically imposed with another sanction. This is a public sanction and is posted on the State Bar's website for two years.
Reprimand	A reprimand is a sanction imposed for a lawyer's conduct in violation of his/her duties and obligations as a lawyer. This sanction can only be imposed by the Arizona Supreme Court, the presiding disciplinary judge, or a hearing panel. A reprimand is a public sanction and remains on the lawyer's permanent record with the State Bar. Reprimands are posted on the State Bar's website indefinitely. Prior to January 1, 2011, a reprimand was named a censure.
Suspension	Suspension is a sanction that may be imposed by the Arizona Supreme Court, the presiding disciplinary judge or a hearing panel for a fixed period of time not to exceed five years. A suspended lawyer may not practice law in this state. A lawyer remains suspended until reinstated by order of the Arizona Supreme Court. Suspensions are posted on the State Bar's website indefinitely.
Disbarment	Disbarment is the most severe sanction available in the disciplinary system. A disbarred lawyer is no longer entitled to the rights and privileges of a lawyer and can no longer practice law in this state. A disbarred lawyer may apply for reinstatement but is not eligible to apply until five years after being disbarred. A lawyer remains disbarred until reinstated by order of the Arizona Supreme Court. Disbarments are posted on the State Bar's website indefinitely.
Reinstatement	A lawyer who has been suspended, disbarred or transferred to disability inactive status must apply for reinstatement to active membership. Upon meeting the requirements, a lawyer may be reinstated to active membership. Reinstatements are posted on the State Bar's website indefinitely.
Interim Suspension	A lawyer may be suspended pending the outcome of disciplinary proceedings if the lawyer has been convicted of a felony or other serious misdemeanor; is misappropriating funds; engaging in conduct that would result in substantial harm, loss or damage to the public, the legal profession or the administration of justice. While on interim suspension a lawyer may not practice law in this state. An interim suspension is posted on the State Bar's website indefinitely.

Contempt

Contempt is a ruling that a lawyer violated a Supreme Court discipline order and it is posted on the State Bar's website for five years.

Disability

A lawyer may be transferred to disability inactive status if the lawyer's physical or mental condition adversely affects the lawyer's ability to practice law.

**Probable Cause
Order**

A probable cause order authorizes the State Bar to prepare and file a formal disciplinary complaint against a lawyer. Filing of the complaint starts formal disciplinary proceedings.

*Sanctions that are only posted on the State Bar's website for a specified period are available by using the Request Lawyer History form on the website.