

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

In re Hall

170 N.J. 400 (2002) · No. DRB 00-229 · Decided February 5, 2002

SUMMARY

The New Jersey Supreme Court ordered Sharon Hall suspended from practicing law for three years and until further order of the Court for multiple violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct. The Court also required proof of fitness before reinstatement, completion of continuing legal education courses, supervised practice for three years, compliance with attorney-discipline requirements, and reimbursement of administrative costs.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of New Jersey
JURISDICTION	New Jersey
DECIDED	February 5, 2002
DOCKET	DRB 00-229
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The Supreme Court of New Jersey reviewed a Disciplinary Review Board decision recommending an additional two-year suspension and conditions on reinstatement after respondent failed to appear in response to an order to show cause why she should not be disbarred or otherwise disciplined.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Supreme Court of New Jersey disciplinary order

TOPICS

- administrative law
- agency adjudication
- judicial review of agency action

PRACTICE AREAS

- legal ethics
- attorney discipline
- professional responsibility

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. What discipline should be imposed for respondent's violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct and failure to appear in response to the order to show cause?
2. What conditions should govern respondent's potential reinstatement to the practice of law?

HOLDINGS

1. Respondent shall be suspended from the practice of law for three years, effective immediately, and until further order of the Supreme Court.
2. Before reinstatement, respondent must submit proof of fitness to practice law from a mental health professional approved by the Office of Attorney Ethics; after reinstatement, she must complete specified Skills and Methods courses within six months and practice under approved attorney supervision for three years and until further order.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“It is ORDERED that SHARON HALL is suspended from the practice of law for a period of .three years, and until the further Order of the Court, effective immediately” (401)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Sharon Hall was admitted to the New Jersey bar in 1995 and had been suspended from practicing law since June 23, 1999. The Disciplinary Review Board found that she violated numerous Rules of Professional Conduct, including rules concerning diligence, client communication, frivolous claims, litigation conduct, dishonesty, and conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice. Hall failed to appear in response to the Court's order to show cause concerning further discipline.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Disciplinary Review Board filed its decision in DRB 00-229, finding violations of multiple Rules of Professional Conduct and recommending a further two-year suspension, fitness certification before reinstatement, continuing legal education, and supervised practice. Respondent, who had already been suspended since June 23, 1999, failed to appear on the return date of the Court's order to show cause. The Supreme Court imposed a three-year suspension, continuing until further order, and additional reinstatement and compliance conditions.

DISPOSITION

other

OPINION

PER CURIAM.

ORDER The Disciplinary Review Board having filed with the Court its decision in DRB 00-229, concluding that SHARON HALL of SOUTH ORANGE, who was admitted to the bar of this State in 1995, and who has been suspended from the practice of law since June 23, 1999, pursuant to Orders of this Court, should be suspended from practice for a further period of two years for violating RPC 1.3 (lack of diligence), RPC 1.4(a) (failure to keep client reasonably informed), RPC 1.4(b) (failure to explain matter to client), RPC 3.1 (frivolous claims), RPC 3.2 (failing to

expedite litigation), RPC 3.4(a) (obstructing access to evidence), RPC 3.4(c) (engaging in conduct intended to disrupt tribunal), RPC 3.4(e) (alluding to irrelevant matters in trial), RPC 8.4(c) (dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation), and RPC 8.4(d) (conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice); And the Disciplinary Review Board having concluded that prior to reinstatement to practice respondent should be required to submit proof of her fitness to practice law and that on reinstatement, respondent should be required to complete the Skills and Methods courses offered by the Institute for Continuing Legal Education and to practice law under the supervision of a practicing attorney for a period of three years; And SHARON HALL having failed to appear on the return date of the Order issued by the Court in this matter pursuant to Rule 1:20-16(b) directing respondent to show cause why she should not be disbarred or otherwise disciplined; And good cause appearing; *401It is ORDERED that SHARON HALL is suspended from the practice of law for a period of three years, and until the further Order of the Court, effective immediately, and it is further ORDERED that prior to reinstatement to practice respondent shall submit proof of her fitness to practice law as attested to by a mental health professional approved by the Office of Attorney Ethics; and it is further ORDERED that respondent shall successfully complete the Skills and Methods courses offered by the Institute for Continuing Legal Education within six months after her reinstatement to practice and shall submit proof thereof to the Office of Attorney Ethics; and it is further ORDERED that on reinstatement to practice, respondent shall practice under the supervision of a practicing attorney approved by the Office of Attorney Ethics for a period of three years and until the further Order of the Court; and it is further ORDERED that the entire record of this matter be made a permanent part of respondent's file as an attorney at law of this State; and it is further ORDERED that respondent continue to be restrained and enjoined from practicing law during the period of suspension and that respondent continue to comply with Rule 1:20-20; and it is further ORDERED that respondent reimburse the Disciplinary Oversight Committee for appropriate administrative costs incurred in the prosecution of this matter.