

SUPREME COURT OF WISCONSIN

Office of Lawyer Regulation v. Webber Hicks

345 Wis. 2d 265 (2013) · Decided January 23, 2013

SUMMARY

The Wisconsin Supreme Court imposed a public reprimand on Attorney Lisa A. Webber Hicks as reciprocal discipline for a public censure imposed by the Supreme Court of Tennessee. The court also noted that her Wisconsin law license remained suspended for administrative and prior disciplinary reasons. Hicks did not respond to the Office of Lawyer Regulation's complaint or the order to show cause, and the court found no basis to depart from identical reciprocal discipline under SCR 22.22.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Wisconsin
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per curiam
JURISDICTION	Wisconsin
DECIDED	January 23, 2013
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The Office of Lawyer Regulation filed a complaint and motion seeking reciprocal discipline after the Supreme Court of Tennessee publicly censured Attorney Lisa A. Webber Hicks. The Wisconsin Supreme Court ordered Hicks to show cause why identical discipline should not be imposed; she did not respond.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Wisconsin Supreme Court opinion; precedential.
PARTIES	Office of Lawyer Regulation v. Webber Hicks

TOPICS

administrative law

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

legal ethics

attorney discipline

reciprocal discipline

professional responsibility

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Wisconsin should impose reciprocal discipline identical to the public censure imposed by the Supreme Court of Tennessee.

2. Whether any SCR 22.22(3) exception made identical reciprocal discipline unwarranted.

HOLDINGS

1. The Wisconsin Supreme Court must impose discipline identical to that imposed by another jurisdiction unless one of the exceptions in SCR 22.22(3) applies; because Hicks did not assert or establish any exception, reciprocal discipline was warranted.
2. Failure to notify the Office of Lawyer Regulation within 20 days of the effective date of discipline imposed by another jurisdiction constitutes misconduct under SCR 22.22(1).

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Accordingly, we conclude that the imposition of reciprocal discipline against her is warranted.” (§ 6)

“IT IS ORDERED that Lisa A. Webber Hicks is publicly reprimanded as reciprocal discipline to that imposed by the Supreme Court of Tennessee.” (§ 7)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Supreme Court of Tennessee publicly censured Lisa A. Webber Hicks for agreeing to represent a divorce client while her license was suspended, failing to disclose the suspension, failing to file the divorce, misrepresenting that a decree had been obtained, failing to communicate, and failing to return fees. Hicks was also admitted to practice in Wisconsin, where her license was already suspended for administrative and disciplinary reasons. She did not notify the Wisconsin Office of Lawyer Regulation of the Tennessee discipline within 20 days and did not respond to the Wisconsin reciprocal-discipline proceeding.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Office of Lawyer Regulation initiated an original reciprocal-discipline proceeding under SCR 22.22. After the court issued an amended show-cause order, Hicks failed to respond to the complaint or order. The Wisconsin Supreme Court imposed a public reprimand reciprocal to the Tennessee public censure.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- In re Disciplinary Proceedings Against Webber Hicks, 2012 WI 101, 343 Wis. 2d 411, 816 N.W.2d 316