

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

JAVARON DARNELL BUCKLEY,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6326645.

Commission No. 2023PR00037

ANSWER TO COMPLAINT

Javaron Darnell Buckley, Respondent, by his attorney, Stephanie Stewart, of Robinson, Stewart, Montgomery & Doppke LLC, answers the complaint filed by the Administrator in this matter, as follows:

Criminal Conviction for Providing Alcohol to a Minor and Renting a Hotel Room for Liquor Consumption by a Minor

1. At all times alleged in this complaint, there was in effect a criminal statute in Illinois, Chapter 235, Section 5/6-16(a)(iii) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes, which made it a misdemeanor offense to purchase or otherwise obtain alcoholic liquor and sell, give, or deliver the alcoholic liquor to a person under 21 years of age, unless in the performance of a religious ceremony or service.

ANSWER: Admitted.

2. At all times alleged in this complaint, there was in effect a criminal statute in Illinois, Chapter 235, Section 5/6-16(d) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes, which made it a misdemeanor offense to rent a hotel or motel room from the proprietor or agent thereof for the purpose of or with

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the knowledge that such room shall be used for the consumption of alcoholic liquor by a person under 21 years of age.

ANSWER: Admitted.

3. In December 2019, M.W., who was 17 years of age at the time, attended court at the McHenry County Courthouse with her mother.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that in December 2019 M.W. was at the McHenry County Courthouse. Respondent neither admits nor denies the remainder of the allegations due to lack of knowledge.

4. Respondent, who was 35 years of age at the time, was also at the McHenry County Courthouse when he approached M.W., introduced himself, and began having a conversation with M.W. Respondent provided M.W. with his business card and telephone number. Approximately two weeks after meeting Respondent, M.W. contacted Respondent, and the two communicated via text message and telephone.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent and M.W. met at the courthouse and that they both exchanged numbers. M.W. said that her phone was broken, but that she would call Respondent after it was fixed. On or about January 15, 2020, M.W. contacted Respondent and invited him to come over to her residence. M.W.'s mother was present, and her mother already knew that Respondent was an attorney and asked him legal questions. Thereafter, M.W. invited Respondent into her room to listen to music, with her mother's knowledge. M.W. had a bottle of Hennessy alcohol in her room, and she drank and smoked cigarettes while they listened to music. Respondent did not bring any alcohol or cigarettes to M.W.'s residence. Based on the circumstances, Respondent assumed that M.W. was at

least in her mid-twenties. Had Respondent known that M.W. was under 21, he would not have exchanged numbers with M.W. or agreed to go to her house.

5. On January 17, 2020, Respondent arranged for M.W., who had recently turned 18 years old, to be picked up by a ride-share company and brought to the McHenry County Courthouse. While at the McHenry County Courthouse, M.W. accompanied Respondent while he conducted business in various courtrooms.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that on January 17, 2020, M.W. contacted him again and asked him if he wanted to “hang out.” She indicated that she was drinking, but she did not want to stay at home. As a result, they agreed to meet at the McHenry County Courthouse. Respondent denies that he knew M.W.’s age.

6. After Respondent completed his court appearances, he and M.W. left the courthouse, and Respondent took M.W. to a hotel located in Woodstock, where he proceeded to rent a room.

ANSWER: Admitted. In further answering, M.W. brought her own bottle of Hennessy to the courthouse when she met Respondent (as she admits in the police report).

7. After Respondent rented the room, Respondent and M.W. went to a convenience store in Woodstock. Respondent entered the store, purchased a 750-milliliter bottle of Hennessy (an alcoholic liquor), a bottle of Coca-Cola, and condoms. Respondent and M.W. then returned to Respondent’s hotel room and M.W. began consuming alcohol.

ANSWER: Admitted, except that Respondent denies that M.W. first began consuming alcohol after it was purchased by Respondent. In further answering, as noted previously M.W. brought her own bottle of Hennessy alcohol with her when she met Respondent on January 17, 2020. M.W. drank her own alcohol and requested that they leave

the hotel to purchase cigarettes. When they went to the convenience store, they decided to purchase additional alcohol. Respondent and M.W. then returned to the hotel. Respondent does not know how much of M.W.'s own alcohol she drank before they decided to purchase additional alcohol.

8. Approximately two hours later, Respondent and M.W. were video-recorded and observed by hotel staff in the lobby of the hotel. M.W. was incoherent and unable to walk without assistance. Respondent pulled M.W. out of a hotel lobby chair. As Respondent and M.W. left the hotel, M.W. fell to the ground.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent and M.W. stayed in the hotel room for approximately two hours. Both M.W. and Respondent were fully clothed at all times in the hotel room and no sexual activity occurred. After M.W. showed Respondent that she was wearing an ankle monitor bracelet and indicated she was on house arrest and had to be home by six p.m., Respondent took her home. Respondent acknowledges that M.W. was intoxicated when they left and that he had to assist her.

9. Respondent then drove M.W. to her home where he was video-recorded holding M.W. upright while he opened the door to her residence. Respondent then dragged M.W. through the home and struggled to get her up the stairs. Respondent told M.W. to "get up" as she moaned and groaned.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent drove M.W. to her home and rang the doorbell, but no one answered. As a result, he opened the door, helped M.W. to her room, and left.

10. M.W. told investigating officers that while she and Respondent were at the hotel, she consumed alcohol until she lost consciousness and does not recall what happened prior to

waking up in the hospital. During her time with Respondent M.W., suffered a broken ankle but does not know how or when that occurred.

ANSWER: Respondent neither admits nor denies these allegations due to lack of knowledge.

11. On June 29, 2021, a complaint was filed in the Circuit Court of the Twenty-Second Judicial Circuit of McHenry County charging Respondent with the offenses of providing liquor to a minor, a class A misdemeanor, in violation of 235 ILCS 5/6-16(a)(iii); battery, a class A misdemeanor, in violation of 720 ILCS 5/12-3(a)(2); and renting a hotel room for liquor consumption by a minor, a class A misdemeanor, in violation of 235 ILCS 5/6-16(c). The matter was captioned *People of the State of Illinois v. Javaron D. Buckley, Sr.*, case number 2021CM000584. On September 28, 2021, the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office filed a superseding information adding three additional counts to the June 29, 2021 complaint.

ANSWER: Admitted.

12. Count I of the superseding information charged that Respondent violated 235 ILCS 5/6-16(a)(iii), in that on or about January 17, 2020, Respondent purchased or acquired an alcoholic liquor and intentionally gave or delivered the alcoholic liquor to M.W., a person under the age 21.

ANSWER: Admitted that the Information charged as stated.

13. Count II of the superseding information charged that Respondent violated 720 ILCS 5/12-3(a)(2), in that on or about January 17, 2020, Respondent knowingly and without legal justification, intentionally made physical contact of an insulting and provoking nature with M.W. in that Respondent placed his hands on M.W.'s buttocks.

ANSWER: Admitted that the Information charged as stated.

14. Count III of the Superseding Information charged that Respondent violated 235 ILCS 5/6-16(d) in that on or about January 17, 2020, Respondent rented a hotel room for the purpose of consuming alcoholic liquor or with the knowledge that the room was going to be used to consume alcoholic liquor by M.W., who was under 21 years of age.

ANSWER: Admitted that the Information charged as stated.

15. On July 15, 2022, Respondent pled guilty in case number 2021CM000584 before the Honorable Tiffany E. Davis. Respondent pled guilty to violating sections 235 ILCS 5/6-16(a)(iii) and 235 ILCS 5/6-16(d) of the Liquor Control Act of 1934, and the McHenry County State's Attorney agreed to dismiss the remaining counts. Judge Davis accepted Respondent's guilty plea, and she set the matter for a sentencing hearing.

ANSWER: Admitted.

16. On August 10, 2022, the court held a sentencing hearing on Respondent's violations of sections 235 ILCS 5/6-16(a)(iii) and 235 ILCS 5/6-16(d) of the Liquor Control Act of 1934 and sentenced Respondent to a concurrent sentence of one-year conditional discharge and 30 days in McHenry County jail. The court ordered Respondent to have no contact with M.W or her family and ordered him to pay a \$500 fine and mandatory court costs.

ANSWER: Admitted.

17. By reason of the conduct described above, Respondent engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on Respondent's honesty, trustworthiness or fitness as a lawyer in other respects, by conduct including committing and being convicted of the offense of providing alcoholic liquor to a person under 21 years of age, in violation of 235 ILCS 5/6-16(a)(iii) and committing and being convicted of the offense of renting a hotel room with purpose of or with the

knowledge that the hotel room would be used for the consumption of alcoholic liquor by a person under 21 years of age, in violation of 235 ILCS 5/6-16(d), in violation of Rule 8.4(b) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

ANSWER: As this paragraph calls for a legal conclusion, no answer is required.

Respondent admits that he made a grave error in assuming M.W. was of age and he deeply regrets his error.

Respectfully submitted,
Javaron Darrell Buckley

/s/ Stephanie Stewart
Stephanie Stewart

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