

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

In the Matter of:

JEFFREY BRUCE STEINBACK,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 2718189.

Commission No. 2022PR00088

NOTICE OF FILING

To: Matthew D. Lango (mlango@iardc.org) (ardceservice@iardc.org)
Evette L. Ocasio (eocasio@iardc.org)
Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission
130 East Randolph Drive, #1500
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6219

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on **March 2, 2023**, we filed with the Clerk of the Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission: **ANSWER TO COMPLAINT**, a copy of which is served upon you herewith.

/s/ Adrian Vuckovich

Counsel for Respondent

Adrian Vuckovich (av@cb-law.com)
Kathryne Hates (khayes@cb-law.com)
COLLINS BARGIONE & VUCKOVICH
1 North LaSalle Street, Suite 300
Chicago, Illinois 60602
(312) 372-7813

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure [735 ILCS 5/1-109], the undersigned certifies that they served the foregoing document(s) by causing copies to be delivered to the above stated SERVICE LIST by **email** on **March 2, 2023**.

/s/ Monica Nunez

Monica Nunez

FILED
3/2/2023 10:29 AM
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ANSWER TO COMPLAINT

COMES the Attorney-Respondent, Jeffrey Bruce Steinback, by his counsel, Adrian Vuckovich and Kathyne Hayes and for his Answer to the Administrator's Complaint, states as follows:

STATEMENT PURSUANT TO COMMISSION RULE 231

Respondent was licensed to practice law in the State of Illinois on May 9, 1977. Respondent is admitted to the Northern District Court of Illinois, subject to conditions, based on the matter referenced in this Complaint. Respondent is also admitted to the United States District for the Central District and has been admitted to numerous other district courts throughout the country. On many occasions, Respondent has been admitted pro hac vice. Respondent has no other professional licenses.

BACKGROUND

1. At all times related to this complaint, Respondent was a solo practitioner based in Chicago and Roscoe, Illinois, with his practice incorporated under the name Jeffrey B. Steinback, LLC. Respondent was the owner and sole attorney with managerial authority at Jeffrey B. Steinback, LLC. At all times relevant to this complaint, Respondent's practice was

focused on the area of federal criminal defense.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent resides in Roscoe, Illinois and has worked from an office at his home in Roscoe for at least the last 10 years. Admitted that Respondent mainly represents clients in criminal matters which are within the jurisdiction of federal courts for the Northern District of Illinois. Admitted that Respondent practiced as a sole practitioner for many years, including during the time period of the allegations contained in this Complaint. Denied that a limited liability company is incorporated. The remaining allegations state legal conclusions and require no answer.

2. At all times related to this complaint, Respondent designated his spouse, Patti Steinback, as the legal assistant for Jeffrey B. Steinback, LLC. Patti Steinback (“Patti”) is not a lawyer and has never been admitted to practice law in Illinois or any other jurisdiction. At all times related to this complaint, Respondent had direct supervisory authority over Patti and had a duty to make reasonable efforts to ensure that Patti’s conduct was compatible with Respondent’s professional obligations.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent relied upon his spouse Patti Steinback to provide certain unpaid legal assistance. Admitted that Patti is not an attorney and never has been and that in general, with respect to the practice of law only, Respondent was Patti Steinbach’s supervisor. Any remaining allegations are denied.

COUNT I

(Alleged lack of diligence, failure to expedite litigation, failure to correct a false statement of material fact previously made to the tribunal, failure to take reasonable remedial action to avoid or mitigate the consequences of a nonlawyer’s misconduct)

3. On January 8, 2020, a federal grand jury in Cedar Rapids, Iowa returned an indictment against Romel Murphy, (“Murphy”) charging him with wire fraud, mail fraud, and aggravated identity theft. The matter was docketed as *United States v. Romel Murphy* in the United

States District Court for the Northern District of Iowa as case number 20-CR-00006 and assigned to Judge C.J. Williams.

ANSWER: Denied as alleged. The indictment referenced is not attached. See Exhibit A. The indictment returned on January 8, 2020 charged Mr. Murphy with wire fraud (Counts 1 -7) and aggravated identity theft (Count 7). Admitted that 20-cr-00006 was assigned to Judge Williams and referred to Magistrate Judge Roberts.

4. In or about 2019, Murphy and Respondent agreed that Respondent would represent him with regard to any possible federal criminal charges and prior to the Iowa grand jury returning an indictment against him. On January 22, 2020, after the indictment was filed, Respondent moved to appear *pro hac vice* as retained counsel for Murphy. On January 23, 2020, Judge Williams granted Respondent's motion. Respondent did not have local counsel in the matter.

ANSWER: Admitted. Respondent represented Mr. Murphy with regard to an investigation into possible criminal misconduct.

5. In the District Court's initial scheduling order, Judge Williams set the trial for the two-week period beginning April 6, 2020. On March 9, 2020, Respondent filed an unopposed motion to extend deadlines for plea entry and trial, based on "serious family health concerns" which required him to be out of town. Judge Williams granted the motion and continued the trial to June 1, 2020.

ANSWER: Denied as alleged. The order referenced in paragraph number 5 is not identified by date or docket entry number. Admitted that Judge William's initial scheduling order (Dkt. # 14) set the trial to begin on April 6, 2020.

Admitted that on March 9, 2020, Respondent filed an unopposed motion to extend

(Dkt. # 16.) As set forth in Respondent's motion, Respondent's brother was suffering from cancer and Respondent wanted to be with and assist his brother.

Respondent states that Judge Roberts (not Judge Williams) granted Respondent's motion and the trial was continued to May 26, 2020 (Dkt. # 17).

Respondent further states that on April 29, 2020, Judge Roberts entered an order pursuant to Administrative Order 20-AO-0005-P continuing the cause until June 1, 2020 (Dkt. # 18.)

Respondent further states that this time period was the beginning of the Covid pandemic. Any remaining allegations are denied.

6. On May 7, 2020, Respondent filed an unopposed motion to extend deadlines for plea entry and trial, based on COVID-19 restrictions which prevented Respondent from meeting with Murphy in person to discuss aspects of the plea agreement. Judge Williams granted the motion and continued the trial to August 3, 2020.

ANSWER: Admitted that paragraph number 6 contains some of the explanation set forth in the Motion to Extend Deadlines for Plea Entry and Trial (Dkt # 19). As further set forth in the motion referenced in paragraph 6, Respondent's client (Mr. Murphy) also had childcare responsibilities. The Motion referenced in paragraph 6 was granted on May 8, 2020 by Judge Roberts (not Judge Williams). A copy of the order is attached as Exhibit B. As set forth in the order, there were no criminal jury trials pending further order of the Court because of Covid-19. Judge Roberts' May 8, 2020 order continued the trial until August 3, 2020. Any remaining allegations are denied.

7. On July 10, 2020, Respondent filed an unopposed motion to extend deadlines for plea entry and trial, again based on COVID-19 restrictions which prevented Respondent from

meeting with Murphy in person to discuss aspects of the plea agreement. Judge Williams granted the motion and continued the trial to October 5, 2020.

ANSWER: Admitted that such a motion was filed (Dkt # 21) and that the basis for the motion also included Mr. Murphy's family responsibilities. A copy of the order allowing the motion was entered by Judge Roberts (not Judge Williams) and is attached as Exhibit C. The order summarizes the Covid shutdown of the court system.

8. On September 15, 2020, Respondent filed another unopposed motion to extend deadlines for plea entry and trial, based on COVID-19 restrictions which prevented Respondent from meeting with Murphy in person to discuss aspects of the plea agreement and Respondent's need to assist an ill family member. The District Court granted the motion and continued the trial to January 4, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted. The motion (Dkt # 24) is attached as Exhibit D and sets forth the bases for the motion.

9. On December 11, 2020, Respondent filed an unopposed motion to extend deadlines for plea entry and trial, based on COVID-19 restrictions which, again, prevented Respondent from meeting with Murphy in person to discuss aspects of the plea agreement. Respondent also cited to the recent birth of his grandson. On December 14, 2020, the District Court denied the motion.

ANSWER: Admitted that the motion described in paragraph 9 was filed (Dkt # 26) and was unopposed. As set forth in Respondent's motion, Respondent's youngest daughter suffered from pre-eclampsia, a dangerous and life-threatening complication of pregnancy. As set forth in the motion, the baby was born prematurely and had a compromised immune system. As further set forth in the motion, additional precautions

were required. In further answer, it was December of 2020 and Respondent was living in his home with his wife, daughter, son-in-law and an immune compromised infant.

10. On December 15, 2020, Respondent filed a notice of intent to plead guilty on behalf of Murphy. The District Court scheduled a change of plea hearing for December 21, 2020, which it later rescheduled for January 8, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted.

11. On January 8, 2021, Murphy entered a guilty plea before the magistrate judge assigned to the case. Respondent personally appeared in court with Murphy on that date. The District Court accepted Murphy's guilty plea on January 26, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted.

12. On May 21, 2021, the United States Probation Office filed its final presentence investigation report with regard to Murphy. Judge Williams's courtroom staff contacted Respondent in an attempt to schedule the sentencing hearing for August, but Respondent was unavailable. Judge Williams scheduled the sentencing hearing for September 24, 2021, noting that it would not be continued absent exceptional circumstances.

ANSWER: Admitted that the presentence investigation report was filed on May 21, 2021. Respondent further states that the filing currently appears to be sealed and is not attached to the Administrator's complaint. The second sentence of paragraph 12 is vague and cannot be answered as alleged. Admitted that the Order Setting Sentencing Hearing and Establishing Deadlines (Dkt # 45) was entered on May 26, 2021 and includes language that stating "sentencing will not be continued absent exceptional circumstances." Any remaining allegations are denied.

13. On September 16, 2021, Respondent filed an unopposed motion to extend the

deadline for filing the sentencing memorandum on behalf of Murphy due on September 17, 2021. Judge Williams granted the motion, and extended the filing deadline to September 20, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted.

14. On September 23, 2021, Patti emailed Judge Williams's [sic] staff to advise that "Mr. Steinback is on his way to the emergency room due to violent back spasms and nerve pain." Respondent did not go to an emergency room on September 23, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted that an email was sent to Judge Williams' assistant or clerk in order to inform the Court that Respondent was having medical problems which could affect the court proceedings scheduled for the next day which Judge Williams required to be in person. Denied that Respondent was aware of the email at the time it was sent and denied Respondent authorized that the email be sent. Denied that Respondent did not go to the hospital.

15. On the morning of September 24, 2021, Patti emailed Judge Williams's [sic] staff to advise that Respondent "was given pain medication and anti-inflammatories/muscle relaxers last night and was instructed to limit any travel or physical activity for the next 4-7 days." This statement by Patti was false as Respondent was not given pain medication or muscle relaxers the previous evening, was not treated by any medical professional, and was not instructed to limit travel or physical activity for the next four to seven days. Patti knew that the statements in her email were false at the time she made them.

ANSWER: Denied as alleged. Admitted that Patti sent an email to Judge Williams' chambers on September 24, 2021, at the suggestion of Judge Williams' assistant or clerk (Group Exhibit E). Denied that Respondent was aware of the email at the time it was sent and denied that Respondent authorized the preparation and sending of the email.

Denied the excerpt from the email which is quoted is accurate. The remaining allegations improperly request Respondent to admit or deny allegations concerning the knowledge and mental state of a person other than Respondent and therefore, require no answer. Any remaining allegations are denied.

16. On the morning of September 24, 2021, Patti, on Respondent's behalf, filed an unopposed motion to continue the sentencing hearing. The motion, which contained Respondent's electronic signature, stated, in part:

Defendant's attorney, the undersigned, experienced debilitating back spasms and nerve pain last night, and needed to seek medical attention.

Mr. Steinback taken [sic] to the emergency room and was treated there. He was advised not to travel or participate in any strenuous physical activity for the next 4-7 days and was given medication for the spasms.

Cedar Rapids is approximately 3 ½ hours drive from Mr. Steinback's home. It would require him to drive or to fly, both activities being against doctor's instructions at this time.

ANSWER: Admitted.

17. The statements in the September 24, 2021 motion that Respondent had gone to and received treatment at an emergency room, including medication, in the preceding day and that he was advised not to travel for the next four to seven days, were false because he had not gone to an emergency room, received any treatment, or been advised not to travel on September 23, 2021.

ANSWER: The allegation that Respondent did not go to an emergency room is denied. In further answer, Respondent and his spouse drove to an emergency room at Rockford Memorial Hospital in Rockford, IL. Respondent's spouse entered the emergency room and learned that the wait was likely many hours, and therefore, Respondent did not

enter the emergency room. Admitted that the remaining statements contained in the Motion are not accurate.

18. Respondent knew or should have known that the statements in the September 24, 2021 motion filed on his behalf, as described in paragraph 17, above, were false at the time Patti made them on his behalf.

ANSWER: Denied. Respondent was not aware of the emails at the time they were sent and did not learn of the emails until Respondent read them carefully for the first time toward the end of the Show Cause hearing immediately following the sentencing hearing for Romel Murphy on September 24, 2021.

19. On September 24, 2021, Judge Williams granted Respondent's motion and continued the sentencing hearing to October 6, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted the Motion was granted. Denied Respondent was aware that a written Motion was filed.

20. On the afternoon of October 5, 2021, Patti called the District Court and spoke with a member of Judge Williams's [sic] staff, informing her that Respondent met with a client who "seems to be positive" for COVID-19, that Respondent spoke with a doctor who advised him to self-quarantine, and asked for a continuance of the sentencing hearing. At Judge Williams's direction, the judicial assistant emailed Patti and advised that the sentencing hearing would not be continued, absent Respondent testing positive for COVID-19.

ANSWER: Admitted.

21. On October 5, 2021, at 5:01 p.m., Respondent, or someone at his direction, filed an emergency motion to continue the sentencing hearing with a letter from Respondent's doctor that stated he "had a possible exposure to COVID."

ANSWER: Admitted.

22. On the morning of October 6, 2021, Judge Williams denied the emergency motion to continue the sentencing hearing. Shortly thereafter, Respondent emailed Judge Williams, expressing his regret at having been ordered by his doctor not to travel because of his possible exposure to COVID-19, and asking the District Court to continue the sentencing hearing.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent emailed Judge Williams to inform the Court that Respondent had been exposed to Covid-19, from two separate sources: Respondent's daughter and a potential client with whom Respondent had met on October 4, 2021.

Admitted Respondent was advised by his physician to not appear in person in court which was communicated to Judge Williams. Unfortunately, Judge Williams did not seem to approve of Covid-19 safety protocols in that he required in person court proceedings, would not permit appearance by Zoom and dispensed with any requirement for masks and social distancing. Admitted Judge Williams refused to accept the Respondent's request for the reasons stated.

Any remaining allegations are denied.

23. Respondent's statements as described in paragraphs 21-22, above, that he had been ordered by his doctor not to travel were false because Respondent's doctor only confirmed that Respondent reported a potential exposure to COVID-19, but had not expressly ordered Respondent not to travel.

ANSWER: Denied as alleged. There were actually two doctors involved in this process; Dr. Hutton, a personal physician for Respondent's prospective client, and

Respondent's doctor, Dr. Hansen. Dr. Hutton expressly directed that Respondent quarantine himself based on his patient's COVID diagnosis and Dr. Hansen confirmed Dr. Hutton's directive.

24. Respondent knew that the statement that his doctor ordered him not to travel, as described in paragraphs 21-23, above, was false at the time he made it.

ANSWER: Denied.

25. On October 6, 2021, Respondent did not appear at Murphy's sentencing hearing. Judge Williams rescheduled the sentencing hearing for October 20, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted. Additionally, Mr. Murphy himself did not appear at the scheduled sentencing hearing.

26. On October 14, 2021, Judge Williams issued a show cause order to Respondent and scheduled the show cause hearing for October 20, 2021, immediately following the sentencing hearing. The order required Respondent to produce, among other things, the following items:

All correspondence with defendant about defense counsel's attempt to continue and defendant's need to appear at the sentencing hearing set for October 6, 2021;

All medical records pertaining to defense counsel's "back spasms" that required a last-minute continuance of the sentencing hearing scheduled for September 24, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted.

27. Respondent appeared in court with Murphy on October 20, 2021. On that date, Judge Williams sentenced Murphy to 77 months imprisonment and ordered Murphy to make \$414,433.23 in restitution to the victims of his offense.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent appeared in court with Murphy on October

20, 2021 and admitted as to the substance of the sentencing order. Any remaining allegations are denied.

28. On October 20, 2021, immediately following Murphy's sentencing hearing, Judge Williams held a hearing on his show cause order. At the show cause hearing, Respondent provided Judge Williams with typed documents reflecting communications between Patti and Murphy, but communications were not original documents or screenshots of text messages or emails. Respondent also provided Judge Williams with an October 19, 2021 letter from Respondent's doctor which stated: "Patient reports missing a work appointment on, 9/24/21, due to back spasms."

ANSWER: The allegations contained in paragraph 28 are vague and the document(s) described are not attached. Admitted that Respondent produced a typed version of text messages between Respondent and Mr. Murphy and not the original messages. The originals were produced to the Executive Committee for the Northern District of Illinois which accepted the texts and permitted Respondent to practice. Admitted that the October 19, 2021 letter was produced. Any remaining allegations are denied.

29. During the hearing, Judge Williams noted the documents Respondent provided in response to the show cause order were insufficient. As to Respondent's failure to produce medical records supporting his claimed visit to and treatment at an emergency room for back spasms, Judge Williams stated:

Mr. Steinback, what that tells me regarding the September 24th is that—I'm highly skeptical that you went to the emergency room and had any instructions from any doctor not to appear—or not to travel. I find it absolutely unbelievable that you could not produce documents to demonstrate those medical treatments that you allege and that you told me in a court filing happened on those dates. I don't have any idea how you could not produce those documents when I gave you plenty of time to do so, if, in

fact, they occurred. So I'm very troubled by that, and it makes me highly suspicious that you misrepresented a fact to this Court.

...

What I want, and what you have represented to this Court in a pleading that you filed with this Court, is that you went to the emergency room on September 24th and got instructions from your doctor that you weren't to travel. That's what I want. It may be the case that that happened, and if so, you can produce those records to me. . .

ANSWER: Denied as alleged. A copy of the report of proceedings is attached as Exhibit F (first paragraph of quote beginning at page 8 of transcript; second paragraph of quote at page 15). "Insufficient" is a legal conclusion and no answer is required. Any remaining allegations are denied.

30. In response to Judge Williams's statements concerning Respondent's alleged medical treatment on September 24, 2021, Respondent stated:

It was an urgent care facility rather than an ER. We went to the ER. It was backed up to the point where anybody who wasn't bleeding out of an artery wasn't going to be seen for about five hours, so we went to the urgent care center that was open, and I will be able to get whatever it is that is necessary. The problem is, they are backed up for all sorts of reasons, and nobody there owes me anything. I owe you, but they don't owe me. I – I pleaded with them. My wife went over there and begged them and ultimately reached out to Dr. Hansen because his office is in the same complex as that urgent care center to see if he could get those records.

ANSWER: Denied as alleged. Paragraph 28 quotes two separate parts of a transcript. Respondent had two separate responses. See Exhibit E, pp. 10 – 14; 15.

31. The statements made by Respondent as set forth in paragraph 30, above, were false and misleading, because Respondent was not admitted to, nor did he receive treatment at, an emergency room or urgent care clinic on September 23, 2021, and therefore, Respondent knew the urgent care clinic had no medical records to produce related to his alleged treatment for back

spasms.

ANSWER: Denied as alleged. Admitted that Respondent was not admitted by a hospital or treated at urgent care.

32. Respondent knew the statements set forth in paragraph 30, above, were false and misleading at the time he made them.

ANSWER: Denied.

33. On October 20, 2021, Judge Williams granted Respondent an additional 30 days to produce the records pursuant to the show cause order. Respondent did not produce any additional documents in response to the show cause order.

ANSWER: Admitted. Judge Williams may have indicated that Respondent would not be limited to the thirty days if needed.

34. On November 3, 2021, Respondent's client, Murphy, filed a *pro se* motion asking the District Court for appointment of new counsel. In the motion, he stated: "I have three pertinent issues concerning my case and my previous attorney is busy with other cases and said he cannot handle them as well as me being unsatisfied with services rendered and I am unable to hire an attorney." On that same date, Judge Williams appointed new counsel to represent Murphy.

ANSWER: Admitted that the motion described in paragraph 34 (which only contains a partial quote) was filed and allowed. Respondent does not admit the content of the motion which is hearsay. Respondent further states that it is not unusual for criminal defendants to request new counsel. And, in this particular instance, Defendant expressed concern about whether his sentencing judge, who had issued a Rule to Show Cause against his then-current counsel, would hold that in any way against Defendant despite

Respondent's expressions of confidence that the sentencing judge would not utilize the current status of the Rule to Show Cause in any way to bias the court's judgment, Defendant nonetheless expressed concern about moving forward with respect to these issues with Respondent. Any remaining allegations are denied.

35. On November 24, 2021, Judge Williams entered an order for a further show cause hearing, again directing Respondent to produce the original communications with Murphy and medical records related to his purported September 23, 2021, treatment for back spasms. Judge Williams scheduled the show cause hearing for December 8, 2021, and stated he would "not consider any motions to continue or motions for extension of time."

ANSWER: Admitted.

36. On December 7, 2021, Patti emailed the District Court requesting a continuance of the show cause hearing. In the email, Patti claimed she failed to inform Respondent of the hearing until a few days prior and explained that Respondent's brother was experiencing grave medical issues at the time. The District Court had the email filed as a sealed motion, granted the motion, and continued the hearing to December 15, 2021.

ANSWER: Admitted that the communication was sent. Denied Patti "claimed" anything. She truthfully informed the Court of her error.

37. On December 14, 2021, Patti emailed the District Court requesting a continuance of the show cause hearing and attaching a letter from Respondent addressed to the District Court which related his history of health problems. In explaining the events of September 23, 2021, Respondent's letter stated, in part:

The decision was then made to proceed to one of several urgent care clinics in the general vicinity of our home. A triage doctor, possibly an NP or a PA, conducted an evaluation, advising (that which I already knew), to avoid physical activity and travel,

offering a script for pain medication. I declined the prescription, already having pain medication, thereafter returning home.

This care clinic, as I have come to learn, is a part of a much larger chain. Repeated calls for the doctor or medical provider present that evening revealed that the providers at this clinic rotate and some only work part time, while others work for a number of unaffiliated clinics. No one able to find the name of the triage provider, nor did anyone seem particularly motivated to go out of their way to undertake the effort to do so.

ANSWER: Admitted that such a letter was sent on Respondent's behalf by Patti.

The letter is not attached to the Complaint and is controlling.

38. Respondent statements contained in the letter to Judge Williams as described in paragraph 37, above, were false, because Respondent had not been admitted to an urgent care clinic, nor had he been evaluated by any medical professional, nor had he been offered any prescription for pain medication.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent had not been admitted to an urgent care, nor had he been evaluated by any medical professional, nor had he been offered any prescription for pain medication during the event described in paragraph 37. Any remaining allegations are denied.

39. Respondent knew the statements described in paragraphs 37-38, above, were false at the time he made them.

ANSWER: Denied.

40. On December 15, 2021, Judge Williams granted Respondent's request for a continuance and rescheduled the show cause hearing to January 10, 2022.

ANSWER: Admitted.

41. On January 10, 2022, at the continued show cause hearing, Respondent asked to testify on his own behalf. During his testimony, Respondent stated, in part regarding the events of

September 23 and 24, 2021:

I took—I had an old scrip for Flexeril. I had previously taken ibuprofen. That didn't work. The Flexeril made me very sleepy, but I was still in pain. Although I was tired, I was—it was a—pain that I cannot describe in words. Crippling doesn't quite get to it. I ultimately took a half a pain pill, a—something called Vicoprofen. That knocked me out. I was out. I don't know if that was midnight, 1:00 in the morning. I don't remember when that was. I—I tried to rack my brain about that.

At some point, Patti reached out to Your Honor's deputy clerk; Patti reached out to Kyndra [the prosecutor]; apparently sent e-mails. Somewhere along the line there was a motion that was put together. I do not let motions go out unless I have read them, even simple ones, even straightforward ones. I neither wrote, read, nor signed that document.

...

When I awakened the next morning, Patti said, "The case has been continued." I—I—I said a little prayer to myself, and I fell back to sleep, and did not know that this motion was written or of any kind of an issue at all until after the fact.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent testified. See Dkt # 1, 22-mc-00002-CJW for quoted language and report of proceedings. Any remaining allegations are denied.

42. At the January 10, 2022 hearing, following Respondent's statement, Judge Williams asked Respondent a number of questions, including the following:

Court: Did you actually step foot inside that urgent care facility?

Respondent: Yes.

Court: Did you see a medical provider there?

Respondent: I saw a lady who at least takes in – I call it – I think I called it a triage, because it's like – if you are hurting as badly as I was, they motioned me up, and I sat down next to her. First thing that was – that came up from my wife is "I'm worried he's having a kidney stone," and that was – I wanted out of there. .
.And I just said, "Patti, we're out of here, I'm sorry."

Court: So did you provide that person with your name or any identifying information?

Respondent: I didn't. Patti may have. I didn't. I know that I went back and tried to get ahold of people, just to see if anybody – because we never got a bill – if anybody remembered me coming in. . . I couldn't get a hold of anybody. I tried. I was thinking, maybe if someone would remember that we came in that night, maybe I could get a statement from them. That's the best I could do. But I didn't say that I had been treated. . .

Court: You were aware of this motion to continue at the time that we had the contempt hearing on October 20, '21, correct?

Respondent: Yes.

Court: So you were aware that it says that “Mr. Steinback taken to the emergency room and was treated there?” You were aware that that's what it said when we had the contempt hearing on October 20th of 2021?

Respondent: I—I looked at that motion. I didn't pay much attention to it. I thought Your Honor was going to take me to task over COVID, and that's what I was prepared to address.

Court: I gave you fair notice that the continuance of the September 24 hearing was part of what we were going to discuss.

Respondent: Yes, Your Honor. I didn't focus on that motion.

Court: It also says you were given medication for the spasms. You were aware of that at the time we had the October 20, 2021, hearing, correct?

Respondent: My wife said that,

yes. Court: All right.

Respondent: I never said that.

Court: Well, it's bearing your signature, Mr. Steinback. It bears your signature.

Respondent: It bears—it bears a name with my name on it. Not my signature.

Court: Then your wife is practicing law without a license, isn't she?

Respondent: Not—she put a motion together, because that's what she was suggested she should do.

Court: Well, when we got to the October 20th hearing, you didn't tell me any of this at that hearing, did you, Mr. Steinback?

Respondent: No, sir, I did not.

...

Court: You did not tell me that you were not treated at the urgent care center. You suggested, did you not, that you were treated at an urgent care facility.

Respondent: I said I went there, Your Honor.

...

Court: You would agree with me, Mr. Steinback, that you had ample opportunity at that hearing on the 20th to explain to me that you went into an urgent care facility and walked out and was not treated, you were not treated, and you did not get medication, and you did not get a directive from any doctor to limit your physical activity the next four to seven days? You would agree you had an opportunity to explain all that to me on October 20th, didn't you?

Respondent: Yes, Your Honor, I agree, I had the opportunity. . .

ANSWER: Admitted that this exchange occurred and is contained a transcript which is not attached to the Complaint and controls.

43. At no time between September 24, 2021 and January 9, 2022, did Respondent take reasonable remedial action to correct the false statements in the September 24, 2021 motion to continue regarding Respondent's purported treatment at the emergency room.

ANSWER: Denied as alleged.

44. On May 18, 2022, Respondent wrote Judge Williams a letter in which he stated, among other things, that he never saw or approved the filing of the September 24, 2021 motion to continue Murphy's sentencing hearing, which contained the false statements that he was treated at an emergency room for back spasms, prescribed medications, and instructed not to travel. In the letter, Respondent claimed that Patti filed the motion without his knowledge or permission. Patti did not provide a sworn affidavit, nor did she testify in Respondent's contempt proceedings before Judge Williams.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent sent the letter described in paragraph 44. Admitted that Patti did not testify in Respondent's contempt proceedings. Patti did however have discourse in the form of emails, phone calls and a letter written by Patti to the Court. Judge Williams never requested her appearance. Respondent further states that her sworn statement was taken during the investigation which led to the filing of this Complaint. See Exhibit F.

45. On June 10, 2022, Judge Williams entered an order finding Respondent in contempt of court. Among other things, Judge Williams found that Respondent repeatedly disobeyed court orders, misled the court, and was not candid with the court. In particular, Judge Williams found that Respondent disobeyed the District Court's order by failing to appear for Murphy's sentencing hearing on October 6, 2021, and that Respondent repeatedly failed to produce documents as ordered by the District Court that could have substantiated his need for

continuances.

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent was found in contempt of court; the order speaks for itself. Any remaining allegations are denied.

46. In addition, in his June 10, 2022 order, Judge Williams found that Respondent:

“could not ultimately produce medical records showing he was treated for back spasms on September 24, 2021, because that was a lie from the beginning. He still claims to have visited an urgent care facility and was seen by a person there, yet he has failed to produce documents showing that to be true. The Court finds that it is not. Had Steinback talked to a care provider as he claimed, the first step the facility would have taken would have been to get identification from Steinback and enter him into their system, if for no other reason than to collect insurance. The fact that Steinback has produced no records, no witness, no evidence whatsoever to support his evolving story of treatment for his alleged back spasms on September 24, 2021, leads the Court to the inescapable conclusion that he never went to see anyone that day about his back spasms, even assuming he had them.”

ANSWER: Admitted that Respondent was found in contempt of court; the order speaks for itself. Any remaining allegations are denied.

47. In his June 10, 2022 order, Judge Williams found that Respondent’s conduct substantially interfered with the District Court’s schedule. Judge Williams found that when Respondent repeatedly filed motions to continue hearings at the last minute, for what he found to be false or frivolous pretenses, that Respondent disrupted Judge William’s schedule and prevented him from hearing other matters.

ANSWER: Admitted the conclusions were made by Judge Williams but with no factual support. Any remaining allegations are denied.

48. On June 10, 2022, Judge Williams ordered that Respondent be publicly reprimanded, that Respondent be barred from practicing in the United States District Court for the

Northern District of Iowa, and that Respondent be fined \$5,000.

ANSWER: Admitted that Judge Williams entered an order on June 10, 2022.

Denied that the order is accurately summarized and denied the order is accurate.

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

- a. failing to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client, by failing to appear at the October 6, 2021, sentencing hearing in *United States v. Murphy*, and by failing to produce records as ordered by the District Court on October 20, 2021, in violation of Rule 1.3 of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct;
- b. knowingly making a false statement and failing to correct a false statement of material fact previously made to the tribunal by the lawyer, by failing to inform the District Court that statements, contained in the September 24, 2021 motion to continue, the December 14, 2021 letter to the District Court, and in Respondent's testimony on October 20, 2021 and January 10, 2022 regarding Respondent's treatment or evaluation at an emergency room and urgent care clinic were false and misleading, in violation of Rule 3.3(a)(1) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);
- c. failing to take reasonable remedial action regarding the conduct by a person over whom Respondent had direct supervisory authority, by conduct including failing to take reasonable remedial action to notify the District Court that Patti filed the September 24, 2021 motion to continue and that said motion contained false statements regarding Respondent's treatment for back spasms, when the consequences of Patti's conduct could have been avoided or mitigated, in violation of Rule 5.3(c)(2) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);
- d. engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation by conduct including telling the District Court in the September 24, 2021 motion to continue, the December 14, 2021 letter to the District Court, and in Respondent's testimony on October 20, 2021 and January 10, 2022 that Respondent was treated at an emergency room or urgent care clinic on September

23, 2021, was advised by a medical professional not to travel or engage in strenuous physical activity, and stating to the District Court that medical records for his treatment may exist, knowing that those statements were false and knowing that no such treatment records existed, in violation of Rule 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010); and

- e. engaging in conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice by conduct including requesting continuances for Murphy's sentencing hearing on September 24, 2021 and October 6, 2021 and making knowingly false statements to the District Court about the reasons for those continuances, which necessitated a contempt proceeding, in violation of Rule 8.4(d) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

ANSWER: Denied.

WHEREFORE, the Respondent respectfully requests that the Complaint be dismissed or in the alternative, that in the event the Panel finds that Respondent has violated the Rules of Professional Conduct, that Respondent be reprimanded or censured.

Adrian Vuckovich (av@cb-law.com)
Kathryne Hayes (khayes@cb-law.com)
COLLINS BARGIONE & VUCKOVICH
One North LaSalle Street, Suite 300
Chicago, Illinois 60602
Telephone: 312-372-7813

By: /s/ Adrian Vuckovich
Counsel for Respondent

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA
CEDAR RAPIDS DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	No. 20-CR-00006
)	
Plaintiff,)	INDICTMENT
)	
vs.)	Counts 1-6
)	18 U.S.C. § 1343: Wire Fraud
ROMEL MURPHY,)	
)	Count 7
Defendant.)	18 U.S.C. § 1028A: Aggravated Identity Theft

The Grand Jury charges:

Counts 1-6

Wire Fraud

Introduction

1. Defendant began working for K.C., a national recording artist, as a road manager in October 2017. In approximately November 2017, K.C. fired defendant.

2. Defendant owned and operated a talent booking agency, Real Talent Media Group, LLC, also known as “Real Talent Marketing Group,” also known as “RTMG.” Defendant held himself out as the president and managing partner of Real Talent Media Group. Defendant, doing business as Real Talent Media Group, ostensibly booked artists for performances at concert venues located in and around the United States, including in the Northern District of Iowa.



The Scheme to Defraud

3. From on or about November 2017, to on or about March 2019, in the Northern District of Iowa and elsewhere, defendant ROMEL MURPHY devised and intended to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud his clients and others, and to obtain the moneys, funds, assets, and other property of those individuals, by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises (“the scheme to defraud”). In particular, defendant induced clients to wire funds to him to secure artists’ appearances at performances that never occurred. Defendant solicited booking fees, deposits, and expense payments from his clients and others under the false pretense of arranging artists’ performances. Defendant’s clients and others sent at least \$250,000 in funds to accounts under defendant’s control. Defendant then converted these funds to his own use.

Manner and Means of the Scheme to Defraud

4. The scheme and artifice to defraud and obtain money was carried out in the following manner, among others:

A. One of defendant’s music industry contacts would request defendant book a performance of a particular national recording artist at a client’s venue. Defendant would assure the client that he could book the artist. Defendant would then draft and send a fraudulent contract to the client that had been purportedly signed by a representative for the artist.

B. The contract would call for a deposit and/or other expenses to secure the artist’s performance. The client would sign the contract and

wire the funds for the deposit/expenses to defendant's account.

Defendant would keep the money for his own purposes, including gambling. When the performances failed to occur, defendant would promise to refund the client's deposit. He would then create and send false wire transfer forms that would appear to show a wire from defendant's account to the client's account when no wire transfer had actually been initiated.

Execution of the Scheme to Defraud

5. From on or about November 2017, to on or about March 2019, in the Northern District of Iowa and elsewhere, defendant ROMEL MURPHY knowingly devised or intended to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud his clients and others, and to obtain the moneys, funds, assets, and other property of those individuals, by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises. Defendant ROMEL MURPHY knowingly executed and attempted to execute the scheme to defraud his clients and others by soliciting and inducing these individuals to send funds by wire transfer to accounts under defendant's control, including but not limited to the following:

Count	Account Holder	Date of Wire	From/To	Amount
1	R.E.	December 6, 2017	Iowa/Illinois	\$32,500
2	A.B.	December 7, 2017	Iowa/Illinois	\$20,000
3	A.B.	April 3, 2018	Iowa/Illinois	\$50,000
4	R.E.	April 9, 2018	Iowa/Illinois	\$50,000
5	A.B.	April 27, 2018	Iowa/Illinois	\$5,000

6 A.B. April 30, 2018 Iowa/Illinois \$7,632

This was in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343.

Count 7

Aggravated Identity Theft

6. On or about April 29, 2018, in the Northern District of Iowa and elsewhere, defendant ROMEL MURPHY, did knowingly transfer, possess, and use, without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person during and in relation to the offense of Wire Fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343, as charged in Counts 5 and 6. Specifically, defendant ROMEL MURPHY used the name of C.M., C.M.'s email address containing C.M.'s name, and the PayPal account of C.M.

7. This was in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028A(a)(1).

A TRUE BILL

/s/Foreperson

Grand Jury Foreperson

January 8, 2020
Date

PETER E. DEEGAN, JR.
United States Attorney

By:



KYNDRA LUNDQUIST
Assistant United States Attorney

PRESENTED IN OPEN COURT
BY THE
FOREMAN OF THE GRAND JURY
And filed 1/8/2020
ROBERT L. PHELPS, CLERK



IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA
CEDAR RAPIDS DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

ROMEL MURPHY,

Defendant.

Case No. 20-cr-6-CJW

ORDER CONTINUING TRIAL

Before the Court is Defendant's Motion to Extend Deadlines for Plea Entry and Trial, filed on May 7, 2020. (Doc. 19.) Trial is currently scheduled for June 1, 2020. The Government does not resist this motion.

On March 16, 2020, the Court issued an Administrative Order 20-AO-0002-P (Changes to Court Operations Due to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)), continuing all criminal jury trials scheduled in the Northern District of Iowa between March 16, 2020, and April 24, 2020, pending further order of the Court.

On April 8, 2020, the Court issued an Administrative Order 20-AO-0005-P (Changes to Court Operations Due to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)), continuing all criminal jury trials scheduled in the Northern District of Iowa between April 8, 2020, and May 11, 2020, pending further order of the Court.

On April 28, 2020, the Court issued an Administrative Order 20-AO-0007-P (Changes to Court Operations Due to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)), continuing all criminal jury trials scheduled in the Northern District of Iowa between April 28, 2020, and May 31, 2020, pending further order of the Court. Therefore, there will be no criminal jury trials in this district until June 1, 2020 at the earliest.



The Court specifically finds that the ends of justice served by continuing all criminal jury trials outweigh the best interests of the public and any defendant's right to a speedy trial, and the periods of delay occasioned by the continuances implemented by these Administrative Orders are therefore excluded under the Speedy Trial Act pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A).

The Court's findings set forth in the March 16, 2020, April 8, 2020, and April 28, 2020 Administrative Orders are incorporated herein. The Court further finds as follows:

In addition to the public health concerns cited by the Court's Administrative Orders, the problems presented by the evolving COVID-19 pandemic are far reaching and have impacted the parties' ability to meet and confer with each other, witnesses, review discovery, and otherwise prepare for trial. An "ends-of-justice" delay is appropriate in this case because counsel or other relevant individuals have been encouraged to telework and minimize personal contact to the greatest extent possible. Based on the above-stated findings, the ends of justice served by continuing the requested tolling and exclusion of time outweigh the interest of the public and Defendant in a trial within the original date prescribed by the Speedy Trial Act.

"District courts are afforded broad discretion when ruling on requests for continuances, but [c]ontinuances generally are not favored and should be granted only when the party requesting one has shown a compelling reason." *United States v. Jirak*, 728 F.3d 806, 815 (8th Cir. 2013) (quoting *United States v. Cotroneo*, 89 F.3d 510, 514 (8th Cir. 1996)) (internal quotes omitted). "In determining whether to grant a continuance, the trial judge must balance the asserted need for the continuance against the hardship of the resulting delay, and should also consider the complexity of the case, the diligence of the party requesting a continuance, and the conduct of the opposing party." *United States v. Farlee*, 757 F.3d 810, 821 (8th Cir. 2014), *cert. denied*, 135

S. Ct. 504 (2014) (citing *United States v. Coronel-Quintana*, 752 F.2d 1284, 1287–88 (8th Cir. 1985)). When balancing the foregoing factors, the court may also consider: “whether a delay will seriously disadvantage either party,” potential prejudice to Defendant, and how the continuance weighs against Defendant’s interest in a speedy trial. See Speedy Trial Act of 1974, 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(1)-(7) (2016) (stating when a continuance is “excludable” from the time allotted for a Speedy Trial); see also *United States v. Moe*, 536 F.3d 825, 831 (8th Cir. 2008); *United States v. Roberts*, 787 F.3d 1204, 1212 (8th Cir. 2015); *United States v. Dunn*, 723 F.3d 919, 928 (8th Cir. 2013). “Because this balancing requires familiarity with the parties and particular circumstances of the case, the trial court retains broad discretion to grant a continuance.” *Farlee*, 757 F.3d 810 at 821 (citing *Morris v. Slappy*, 461 U.S. 1, 11, (1983)).

In the instant case, the Court finds the reasons advanced by Defendant for the continuance serve the ends of justice and outweigh the interests of the public and Defendant’s right to a speedy trial. See 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). Accordingly, for good cause shown, the motion to continue trial is **granted**. The trial of this cause scheduled for June 1, 2020, is hereby **continued to commence during the two-week period beginning on August 3, 2020**.¹ The non-trial related motions deadline is not continued. Further, for the reasons set forth above, the time from the date of the motion to the time of trial is excluded for purposes of the Speedy Trial Act. *Id.*

IT IS SO ORDERED this 8th of May, 2020.



Mark A. Roberts, United States Magistrate Judge
Northern District of Iowa

¹ The time frames and plea hearing deadline requirements established in the trial management order at Doc. 14 continue to govern this case, but now with the new trial date scheduled to commence during the two-week period beginning August 3, 2020, substituted, the time frames now attach to the new trial date scheduled.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA
CEDAR RAPIDS DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

ROMEL MURPHY,

Defendant.

Case No. 20-cr-6-CJW

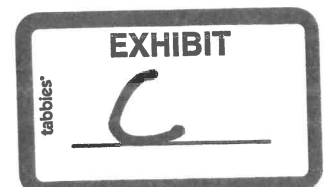
ORDER CONTINUING TRIAL

Before the Court is Defendant's Unresisted Motion to Extend Deadlines for Plea Entry and Trial, filed on July 10, 2020. (Doc. 21.) Trial is currently scheduled for August 3, 2020. The Government does not resist this motion.

On March 16, 2020, the Court issued an Administrative Order 20-AO-0002-P (Changes to Court Operations Due to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)), continuing all criminal jury trials scheduled in the Northern District of Iowa between March 16, 2020, and April 24, 2020, pending further order of the Court.

On April 8, 2020, the Court issued an Administrative Order 20-AO-0005-P (Changes to Court Operations Due to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)), continuing all criminal jury trials scheduled in the Northern District of Iowa between April 8, 2020, and May 11, 2020, pending further order of the Court.

On April 28, 2020, the Court issued an Administrative Order 20-AO-0007-P (Changes to Court Operations Due to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)), continuing all criminal jury trials scheduled in the Northern District of Iowa between April 28, 2020, and May 31, 2020, pending further order of the Court. Therefore, there will be no criminal jury trials in this district until June 1, 2020 at the earliest.



The Court's findings set forth in the March 16, 2020, April 8, 2020, and April 28, 2020 Administrative Orders are incorporated herein. The Court further finds as follows:

In addition to the public health concerns cited by the Court's Administrative Orders, the problems presented by the evolving COVID-19 pandemic are far reaching and have impacted the parties' ability to meet and confer with each other, witnesses, review discovery, and otherwise prepare for trial. An "ends-of-justice" delay is appropriate in this case because counsel or other relevant individuals have been encouraged to telework and minimize personal contact to the greatest extent possible. Based on the above-stated findings, the ends of justice served by continuing the requested tolling and exclusion of time outweigh the interest of the public and Defendant in a trial within the original date prescribed by the Speedy Trial Act.

"District courts are afforded broad discretion when ruling on requests for continuances, but [c]ontinuances generally are not favored and should be granted only when the party requesting one has shown a compelling reason." *United States v. Jirak*, 728 F.3d 806, 815 (8th Cir. 2013) (quoting *United States v. Cotroneo*, 89 F.3d 510, 514 (8th Cir. 1996)) (internal quotes omitted). "In determining whether to grant a continuance, the trial judge must balance the asserted need for the continuance against the hardship of the resulting delay, and should also consider the complexity of the case, the diligence of the party requesting a continuance, and the conduct of the opposing party." *United States v. Farlee*, 757 F.3d 810, 821 (8th Cir. 2014), *cert. denied*, 135 S. Ct. 504 (2014) (citing *United States v. Coronel-Quintana*, 752 F.2d 1284, 1287-88 (8th Cir. 1985)). When balancing the foregoing factors, the court may also consider: "whether a delay will seriously disadvantage either party," potential prejudice to Defendant, and how the continuance weighs against Defendant's interest in a speedy trial. *See* Speedy Trial Act of 1974, 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(1)-(7) (2016) (stating when a

continuance is “excludable” from the time allotted for a Speedy Trial); *see also United States v. Moe*, 536 F.3d 825, 831 (8th Cir. 2008); *United States v. Roberts*, 787 F.3d 1204, 1212 (8th Cir. 2015); *United States v. Dunn*, 723 F.3d 919, 928 (8th Cir. 2013). “Because this balancing requires familiarity with the parties and particular circumstances of the case, the trial court retains broad discretion to grant a continuance.” *Farlee*, 757 F.3d 810 at 821 (citing *Morris v. Slappy*, 461 U.S. 1, 11, (1983)).

In the instant case, the Court finds the reasons advanced by Defendant for the continuance serve the ends of justice and outweigh the interests of the public and Defendant’s right to a speedy trial. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). Accordingly, for good cause shown, the motion to continue trial is **granted**. The trial of this cause scheduled for August 3, 2020, is hereby **continued to commence during the two-week period beginning on October 5, 2020**.¹ The non-trial related motions deadline is not continued. Further, for the reasons set forth above, the time from the date of the motion to the time of trial is excluded for purposes of the Speedy Trial Act. *Id.*

IT IS SO ORDERED this 14th of July, 2020.



Mark A. Roberts, United States Magistrate Judge
Northern District of Iowa

¹ The time frames and plea hearing deadline requirements established in the trial management order at Doc. 14 continue to govern this case, but now with the new trial date scheduled to commence during the two-week period beginning October 5, 2020, substituted, the time frames now attach to the new trial date scheduled.



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA
CEDAR RAPIDS DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)	No. 20-CR-00006
Plaintiff,)	
v.)	Honorable Judge
ROMEL MURPHY,)	C.J. Williams , Presiding
Defendant)	

MOTION TO EXTEND DEADLINES FOR PLEA ENTRY AND TRIAL

NOW COMES THE DEFENDANT, Romel Murphy, by and through his attorney, Jeffrey B. Steinback, and respectfully asks this Honorable Court to extend the deadlines for the entry of his plea agreement and the corresponding trial date for 45 days, or to a date later, consistent with the calendar requirements of the Court. In support, the following is offered:

1. On February 6, 2020 Mr. Murphy was charged with wire fraud and identity theft and arraigned in this Honorable Court. The date currently set for notification of a plea is 09/14/2020.
2. Mr. Murphy, and his attorney, the undersigned, fully intend to resolve this case by way of a plea agreement, obviating any need for a trial to occur.
3. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions in the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago, Mr. Steinback and Mr. Murphy are subject to quarantine protocols that have been implemented here. They have not been able to meet in person and discuss important aspects of the plea agreement, although many conversations via phone have taken place with both Mr. Steinback and Mr. Murphy, as well as more recent calls between



Mr. Steinback and Ms. Lundquist. Mr. Murphy has recently been able to find part time work. If he were to travel to Iowa, he would be placed under quarantine restrictions and not be able to return to work for 14 days. He would expose his children, and his wife, who would then be subject to a 14 day quarantine from work and day care. With incomes being already stretched and Covid-19 taking a toll on most families, having to quarantine would cause a severe hardship for everyone in the household.

4. The landscape of Covid-19 is constantly changing, but every effort will be made to insure that this plea go forward at the continued date, if this Honorable Court should see fit to grant it.
5. Also, Mr. Steinback on Sunday, September 13, 2020, received a call from his younger brother, Rick, that his cancer, multiple myeloma for which he began treatment about a year ago, has advanced in severity, reaching an alarming level of aggression in a very short period of time. As one might imagine, this is a terrible blow to everyone in the family. Jeff's brother, Rick, began this week an experimental series of potentially life-prolonging treatments; that have very serious side effects, in a clinic near his home which is out of state. The downside is that this same treatment presents high risks, including myocardial infarction and excruciating pain, but the reality stands that without this experimental treatment, the cancer will run unchecked. Rick has asked his brother, Jeff, to be there for these very difficult treatments. Mr. Steinback, the oldest of 3 brothers, has always looked out for his brothers, and is praying that the Court will see fit to grant this motion.
6. This will be our final request for a continuance, as we fully intend to proceed with the plea agreement, obviating any need for a trial.

7. AUSA Kyndra Lundquist has been contacted and takes no position to this request, leaving it to the discretion of this Honorable Court.

WHEREFORE, the defendant, Romel Murphy, prays for an Order granting this motion to extend the Entry of a Plea and to correspondingly extend the trial date accordingly, to a time after 45 days, consistent with the calendar of this Honorable Court.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Jeffrey B. Steinback

Jeffrey B. Steinback

Attorney at Law

8351 Snaresbrook Rd.

Roscoe, IL 61073

847-624-9600

5/19/22, 4:35 PM

RE: [EXTERNAL] Murphy sentencing URGENT

From: Sali_VanWeelden@iand.uscourts.gov,

To: jbsteinbacklaw@aol.com,

Cc: Beth_Sanchez@ianp.uscourts.gov, Patrice_Murray@iand.uscourts.gov, Nathan_Peterson@iand.uscourts.gov, Kyndra.Lundquist@usdoj.gov,

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Murphy sentencing URGENT

Date: Fri, Sep 24, 2021 7:49 am

Attachments: image001.png (43K)

Good morning.

Please file a motion requesting continuance of this sentencing.

Thank you.



From: jbsteinbacklaw <jbsteinbacklaw@aol.com>

Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 7:36 AM

To: Lundquist, Kyndra (USAIAN) <Kyndra.Lundquist@usdoj.gov>

Cc: Sali Van Weelden <Sali_VanWeelden@iand.uscourts.gov>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Murphy sentencing URGENT

CAUTION - EXTERNAL:

Dear Kyndra and Sali,

Jeff was given pain medication and anti-inflammatories/muscle relaxers last night and was instructed to limit any travel or

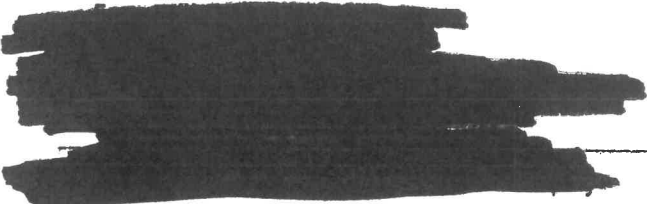
physical activity for the next 4-7 days. Unfortunately, that means he will not be able to go ahead with the hearing today. He sincerely apologizes to the Court and to everyone he has inconvenienced this morning, and respectfully asks that this matter be rescheduled for 14 days, if that is convenient to the calendars of all parties.

If a short emergency motion for this is preferred by the Court, I can quickly write and file one. Again, our apologies,

Patti

<https://mail.aol.com/webmail-std/en-us/PrintMessage>





-----Original Message-----

From: Lundquist, Kyndra (USAIAN) <Kyndra.Lundquist@usdoj.gov>
To: Sali Van Weelden <Sali_VanWeelden@iand.uscourts.gov>
Cc: jbsteinbacklaw@aol.com <jbsteinbacklaw@aol.com>
Sent: Fri, Sep 24, 2021 6:46 am
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Murphy sentencing URGENT

Hi Sali,

I received this email regarding Jeff Steinback, counsel for Romel Murphy last night. This sentencing is scheduled for 9:30 this morning.

Thanks,

Kyndra

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: P STEINBACK <psteinback@aol.com>
Date: September 23, 2021 at 9:52:34 PM CDT
To: Amy_Steele@iand.uscourts.gov, "Lundquist, Kyndra (USAIAN)" <KLundquist@usa.doj.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Murphy sentencing URGENT

*Evening
email to
Amy &
Kyndra*

Dear Amy and Kyndra,
I am writing this tonight to let you know that Mr. Steinback is on his way to the emergency room due to violent back spasms and nerve pain. I am very doubtful that he will be able to appear tomorrow morning. I am so very sorry to let you know this so late, it is completely unexpected. Mr Murphy is already in Cedar Rapids and we had every intention of proceeding with this hearing. I will update you as soon as I am able.
Thank you,
Patti Steinback.

Sent from my iPhone

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
VS.) 20-CR-6
)
ROMEL MURPHY,)
)
Defendant.)

APPEARANCES:

ATTORNEY KYNDRA LUNDQUIST, U.S. Attorney's Office,
111 Seventh Avenue S.E., Box 1, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401,
appeared on behalf of the United States.

ATTORNEY JEFFREY B. STEINBACK, 8351 Snaresbrook Road,
Roscoe, Illinois 61073, appeared on behalf of the
Defendant.

HEARING TO SHOW CAUSE,

HELD BEFORE THE HON. C.J. WILLIAMS,

on the 20th day of October, 2021, at 111 Seventh Avenue
S.E., Cedar Rapids, Iowa, commencing at 2:55 p.m., and
reported by Patrice A. Murray, Certified Shorthand
Reporter, using machine shorthand.

Transcript Ordered: 12/29/21
Transcript Completed: 12/31/21

Patrice A. Murray, CSR, RMR, FCRR
Court Reporter
PO Box 10541
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52410
PAMurrayReporting@gmail.com



at Patrice Murray at PAMurrayReporting@gmail.com
for a complete copy of the transcript.

1 (The following proceedings were held in open court,
2 following the sentencing hearing of Romel Murphy.)

3 * * * * *

4 THE COURT: All right. I want to proceed now
5 to the show cause hearing.

6 Mr. Murphy, you're free to leave. This doesn't
7 involve you at all.

8 Ms. Lundquist, I'd appreciate if you would stay.

9 MS. LUNDQUIST: Yes, Your Honor.

10 (The defendant departed the courtroom.)

11 THE COURT: All right. On October 14, 2021, at
12 document number 59, the Court entered an order to show
13 cause for why defense counsel, Jeffrey Steinback, should
14 not be held in contempt. The concern the Court had there
15 was at least twofold. First, on September 24th the
16 defendant -- defense counsel filed a motion to continue
17 the sentencing hearing alleging that he was suffering
18 from back spasms that required him to visit an emergency
19 room. That document was filed at document number 53 in
20 the court's file.

21 At paragraph 3, he said that: "Mr. Steinback was
22 taken to the emergency room and he was treated there. He
23 was advised not to travel or participate in any strenuous
24 physical activity for the next four to seven days and was
25 given medication for his spasms." This was filed on

**Contact Patrice Murray at PAMurrayReporting@gmail.com
for a complete copy of the transcript.**

1 September 24th. The sentencing hearing was scheduled for
2 that same day. The Court granted that motion. It was an
3 unopposed motion. At the time I granted that motion, I
4 had reservations; but having no prior contact with
5 Mr. Steinback, I gave him the benefit of the doubt.

6 Then this hearing was set again for a sentencing
7 hearing; this was on October 6th of 2021. On October 5,
8 2021, his staff contacted my staff by e-mail and
9 indicated that he believed that he had -- let me get to
10 this.

11 The e-mail reads, "The test for the person Jeff met
12 with" -- so apparently there was a phone call first with
13 my assistant, Sali Van Weelden, by the defendant's
14 assistant, Patti, who reported that the defendant -- or,
15 I'm sorry, Mr. Steinback may have had contact with a
16 client who may have COVID. The e-mail follow-up on that
17 was "The test for the person Jeff met with seems to be
18 positive. Final results will be available sometime
19 tomorrow after speaking with his doctor. Jeff felt it
20 prudent to file the motion for a continuance." I had
21 previously that day, after the telephone contact, had my
22 assistant e-mail back to Patti Steinback, indicating that
23 I was made aware of this possibility that the
24 defendant -- or that Mr. Steinback might have met with a
25 client who might have COVID, and I indicated that the

**Contact Patrice Murray at PAMurrayReporting@gmail.com
for a complete copy of the transcript.**

1 sentencing will proceed tomorrow as scheduled at
2 9:00 a.m.

3 Mr. Steinback did not show up the following morning
4 at 9:00 a.m. He filed a motion at 5:01 p.m. the night
5 before the sentencing hearing, advising the same thing.
6 In this motion, Mr. Steinback reports, "Defendant's
7 attorney, the undersigned, has been advised that he has
8 had direct exposure to a person with COVID-19 within the
9 last 24 hours." Attached to this is a letter from his
10 doctor. The letter from his doctor says, "Jeffrey
11 Steinback had a possible exposure to COVID on 10-4-21,"
12 and recommended that he be tested in five days and remain
13 in quarantine during that time period. I denied that
14 motion.

15 The following morning when I arrived in court and
16 Mr. Steinback did not appear as ordered by the Court and
17 as scheduled by the Court, he did not have the Court's
18 authority or permission to not appear. He did not have
19 the authority to tell his client not to appear at a
20 sentencing hearing. At that hearing, I appeared, the
21 government appeared, one of the victims appeared, the
22 defendant did not appear, and Mr. Steinback did not
23 appear. At that hearing, I was more prepared by looking
24 back through the case history here. And what I came
25 across was what I found to be a pattern of repeated

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1 continuances and extensions of time, almost always
2 because of something dealing with Mr. Steinback's
3 personal schedule. The first motion to extend deadlines
4 for plea entry and trial was filed on March 9, 2020, at
5 document number 16, and the defendant -- I'm sorry,
6 Mr. Steinback cited a serious family health concern that
7 he needed to be out of town for. The government did not
8 resist, and the Court granted that motion.

9 The -- Mr. Steinback then filed another motion in
10 May, May 7, 2020, document number 19. This time it was
11 because COVID-19 restrictions interfered with him and
12 their ability to consult and prepare for trial. The
13 motion was unopposed, and so the Court granted it again.

14 On July 10, 2020, at document number 21,
15 Mr. Steinback filed another motion for an extension of
16 time, saying that COVID-19 restrictions were still in
17 force in Illinois and interfered with their ability to
18 consult. The government did not resist, and so the Court
19 again granted the motion.

20 Then there is another motion on September 15, 2020,
21 at document number 24, again citing the COVID-19, and
22 then also Mr. Steinback indicates that he received a call
23 from his brother, who has cancer, and needed to be
24 present dealing with his brother's cancer as well. The
25 government did not resist, and so the Court granted that

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1 continuance.

2 Then there is yet another motion to continue at --
3 filed on December 11, 2020, at document number 26, again
4 citing the COVID restrictions. This time Mr. Steinback
5 also wanted to cite he had a new grandson in his -- was
6 born to his family and he wanted to be present for that.
7 As -- in this order, the Court -- or, I'm sorry, in this
8 motion, Mr. Steinback noted that in the Court's last
9 order the Court indicated it was going to be the final
10 continuance, that the -- that the -- Mr. Steinback said
11 that was going to be the last request he made.
12 Obviously, it wasn't. And so because it was not
13 resisted, the Court again granted that extension.

14 There was a scheduling conference that occurred on
15 December 28 of 2020, at document number 33. When the
16 hearing was ultimately held, shortly thereafter -- I
17 believe it was on January 4th when the defendant entered
18 his guilty plea. And then we come up with -- to the
19 sentencing. So while this case was pending sentencing,
20 the defendant failed to file objections to the
21 presentence investigation report in a timely manner, and
22 the Court had set that deadline at document number 45.
23 The defendant failed to comply with that, and the Court
24 had to enter an order, ordering him to comply with the
25 Court's deadline for filing objections to the presentence

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1 investigation report.

2 In my order setting this for a show cause hearing,
3 the Court ordered the defendant to produce some
4 documents. I am not satisfied with the documents
5 provided to the Court. The first was a correspondence
6 with the defendant about defense counsel's attempt to
7 continue the hearing set for October 6th. What I
8 received was not an original document. It was not
9 reflective of an original communication. It was not a
10 copy of an e-mail. It is a typed-out version of
11 communication dated October 5th, the source of which I
12 have no idea where it came from, and also October 6th. I
13 don't know if this is a phone call. I don't know if this
14 is an e-mail. The source of it is not provided to me.

15 I asked for billing records. The billing records I
16 received are not the actual billing records, meaning
17 they're not the bills that are sent out. They're not the
18 accounting records showing the billable hours at the
19 billable rate billed to the clients. What I was provided
20 with instead were handwritten notes from a calendar entry
21 book that purports to show what Mr. Steinback's schedule
22 was during various days at issue here.

23 I requested that Mr. Steinback provide all medical
24 records pertaining to his back spasms that required a
25 continuance on September 24, 2021. What I received I

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1 received today. It is a note that is dated 10-19 of '21
2 from a Dr. Hanson. And it says, "Patient reports missing
3 a work appointment on 9-24-21 due to back spasms."
4 That's it. No medical records provided actually show a
5 visit to the emergency room. No records show payment of
6 bills reportedly occurring in relation to a visit to the
7 emergency room. Nothing shows doctor's instructions that
8 he could not travel. The only billing [sic] records
9 supplied in connection with the September 24th
10 continuance is a medical record dated 11-20 of '20, which
11 indicates that there was some type of back problem and
12 that the defendant is reporting back spasms. This is
13 November of '20, not September 24th of 2021. And then
14 a -- a note from July 30th of 2021, in which, at the very
15 end of it, there was mention of continued pain
16 management, references rheumatology and orthopedic for
17 opinion regarding left hip. Nothing about back spasms.

18 Mr. Steinback, what that tells me regarding the
19 September 24th is that -- I'm highly skeptical that you
20 went to the emergency room and had any instructions from
21 any doctor not to appear -- or not to travel. I find it
22 absolutely unbelievable that you could not produce
23 documents to demonstrate those medical treatments that
24 you allege and that you told me in a court filing
25 happened on those dates. I don't have any idea how you

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1 could not produce those documents when I gave you plenty
2 of time to do so, if, in fact, they occurred. So I'm
3 very troubled by that, and it makes me highly suspicious
4 that you misrepresented a fact to this Court.

5 Regarding the October 6th, I was provided with some
6 documentation that shows that Kimberly Steinback -- who
7 may be Patti Steinback; I don't know -- tested positive
8 for COVID and that the -- Mr. Steinback did not test
9 positive for COVID, and this is on a test result that
10 appears to be 10-10 of '21. And so to the extent that
11 Mr. Steinback might have had contact with somebody who
12 might have had COVID, the fact remains he was not
13 positive. There was no justification for him not to
14 appear in court as ordered and as scheduled, other than
15 his hyper concern about the possibility that he might
16 have had an exposure to COVID.

17 Again, I hold none of this against Mr. Murphy.
18 Mr. Murphy actually showed up on September 24, 2021, even
19 though his lawyer didn't, and he paid his special
20 assessment on that date.

21 So, Mr. Steinback, I'll just tell you, I am very
22 troubled by what appears to be to me -- what appears to
23 me to be a pattern of dilatory conduct by you and what
24 appears to me to be perhaps a misrepresentation to the
25 Court regarding your inability to appear for the

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1 September 24th sentencing hearing. What I'm inclined to
2 do at this point is to continue this hearing and give you
3 14 more days to produce to the Court documentation that
4 demonstrates that you actually went into an emergency
5 room and were treated on September 24th for back spasms
6 and that some doctor actually gave you instructions not
7 to travel in relation to that date.

8 I also want to see actual billing records, ledgers,
9 the bills that you actually sent out to your clients
10 during the dates that I have ordered you to do so for --
11 in document number 59. Giving me calendar entry --
12 copies of a calendar page is not giving me billing
13 records. I think you understand the difference between
14 billings records and a calendar page, and so I expect to
15 see billing records in whatever form you generate that.

16 And then I also want to see the actual source
17 documents for the communication that you had with your
18 client regarding the October 6th hearing and not
19 somebody's post facto typing up of the communication.

20 That's my inclination, but I'm happy to hear from
21 you now on what your thoughts are and what, if anything,
22 you'd like to say.

23 MR. Steinback: Your Honor has raised
24 skepticisms, which essentially attack the very core of
25 who I am and what I've been as a professional for

1 47 years. You are the judge, and your determinations are
2 absolute. I find your finding that you're skeptical,
3 given my medical history, to be difficult. I find your
4 ignoring the fact that my daughter had COVID on the same
5 night that I was with her, when I later met a client
6 whose doctor called me to tell me they had COVID, and --
7 and treat that as if that's proof of nothing is -- is
8 even more concerning.

9 And the fact that you doubt that I didn't bill
10 anybody, not a single soul, between October 6th and
11 October 11th, not one client -- my clients don't want to
12 pay my hourly rate, I have two clients who pay on the
13 hour, because my hourly rate is high. After 47 years, I
14 put a premium on it. Everyone else I offer the option of
15 a flat fee, and everyone else takes it. I didn't bill
16 anything because I didn't do any work between the 6th and
17 the 11th, because, despite what you may think is a minor
18 back spasm, it is a crippling, debilitating, inability to
19 move, stand, sit, walk, I crawled to the washroom, when
20 those things happen. I have cracked my back. I have
21 cracked my neck. I have had five surgeries in order to
22 try to repair them, and nothing has worked. And I can't
23 stop these spasms. I quit driving because I had one. My
24 head slammed into the driving wheel, and I couldn't pull
25 it out. And it was dumb luck that I was able to pull

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1 over to the side of the road. And that was three years
2 ago and the last time I ever drove a car, because I
3 didn't want to be responsible for hurting anyone ever
4 again because something like that could happen.

5 Now, unfortunately, I have destroyed a good part of
6 my body: My back, my hips, my Achilles, my shoulders.
7 If you want to examine them, you can see. They are
8 riddled with scars, dislocations, separations. And now
9 my right hip, like my left, has collapsed. And there's
10 nothing between it, except a few bone fragments, and
11 that's in there. And what happens if I walk around too
12 long or stand up for too long is I begin to shake. And
13 if I don't stop that, the muscles seize up to try to
14 compensate for lack of a backbone, and they seize up so
15 hard that they won't let go for days. I didn't do any
16 work between those days because I couldn't. And you have
17 no idea the frustration, because not only did I not want
18 to incur the ire of Your Honor after having had that
19 situation occur on the 24th, or whatever that date was,
20 but I had planned to go directly from here to see my
21 brother. And because of COVID, I couldn't go near him.
22 He has no immune system. He won't make it through
23 Thanksgiving.

24 And so these things which you say attack me in a way
25 that I am visceral about. I have stood by my reputation,

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1 and the only thing that a lawyer has is his word. That's
2 it. That's my stock in trade.

3 I continue to practice, so Your Honor knows, because
4 I have a whole number of people who are depending on me.
5 I don't need it for myself. My wife doesn't need it.
6 But not that it's anybody's business, I have a sick child
7 who can't work. I have a child who has a 15-year-old
8 daughter who can't make ends meet because her husband
9 stole \$3 million of my money and ran off, and I have to
10 continue to take care of them. I have a son who went
11 through a divorce and got devastated, and he's 40. Now,
12 I could say I don't have to take care of them, not my
13 responsibility, but he has two babies. I have a brother
14 who is dying, and his son is getting married in November,
15 and now I'm putting the wedding on, because I will not
16 have that child go without. And God willing, his
17 brother -- his father, my brother, will make it, but I
18 doubt it. I am the oldest remaining Steinback. Everyone
19 else is gone, and I, therefore, become the father figure,
20 despite that they are my brothers. And I take care of
21 all of them, and I will do so until I can't lift my hand
22 anymore or my head doesn't work, because that's -- that's
23 how I'm committed.

24 I am sorry I have offended this Court. I am sorry
25 more than I could ever describe to Your Honor. I am

1 sorry my daughter got COVID. I never knew except from
2 Dr. Adam Hutton, who I don't know, meeting a man for the
3 first time, who called me later that afternoon after I
4 met him, to say, "I'm sorry, you had contact last night
5 with my patient who has COVID." Now, I -- I don't have a
6 relationship; I didn't take that case because I had all
7 sorts of things going on. I have no -- I have no way to
8 demand his records.

9 THE COURT: I have not asked you to.

10 MR. Steinback: But as far as my billing, I
11 can't produce that which I don't have. I didn't work on
12 anybody's cases beyond one videoconference, and that was
13 pro bono. It was a conference I could do from my bed
14 with people who were in New York, representing someone
15 who is a brother of somebody that my daughter lives next
16 to in the apartment complex she lives in. And it was an
17 interview and I took care of it because I could do it on
18 my back, but I didn't bill for it. I can't generate
19 bills for Your Honor because I don't have them and I
20 didn't bill anybody for them. I didn't take any money in
21 during that time period either.

22 I can get more specific information with respect to
23 my spasms, because I've had them for 10 years, because
24 I've seen --

25 THE COURT: Mr. Steinback, I don't want a whole

1 bunch of records of your spasms. What I want, and what
2 you have represented to this Court in a pleading that you
3 filed with this Court, is that you went to the emergency
4 room on September 24th and got instructions from your
5 doctor that you weren't to travel. That's what I want.
6 It may be the case that that happened, and if so, you can
7 produce those records to me, and I'll be satisfied that
8 you did not make a representation [sic] to the Court.
9 But what you've produced to me falls so woefully short of
10 that, that it makes me suspicious that it did not happen.

11 MR. Steinback: It was an urgent care facility
12 rather than an ER. We went to the ER. It was backed up
13 to the point where anybody who wasn't bleeding out of an
14 artery wasn't going to be seen for about five hours, so
15 we went to the urgent care center that was open, and I
16 will be able to get whatever it is that is necessary.
17 The problem is, they are backed up for all sorts of
18 reasons, and nobody there owes me anything. I owe you,
19 but they don't owe me. I -- I pleaded with them. My
20 wife went over there and begged them and ultimately
21 reached out to Dr. Hanson because his office is in the
22 same complex as that urgent care center to see if he
23 could get those records.

24 THE COURT: Well, let's do this, I will give
25 you 30 days to produce those records to me then, and

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1 hopefully that will satisfy me that you actually went to
2 some type of urgent care, emergency care, whatever it
3 was, on September 24th and received treatment for back
4 spasms and you were instructed not to travel.

5 If you don't have billing records, I will take you
6 at your word that you have no billing records for that
7 time period. I would still like to see the original
8 correspondence you had with your client regarding the
9 October 6, 2021. The typed-up version doesn't cut it for
10 me. I want to see the original documents, whether it's
11 by e-mail or whatever. If it's by a voicemail or a phone
12 call, then let me know that, but otherwise I want to see
13 the correspondence that Patti had with your client.

14 MR. Steinback: I will provide those. There
15 were phone calls, and I think those are texts between
16 Romel and I or Patti and Romel. And I don't know how to
17 reproduce an original text, but I can --

18 THE COURT: Texts are hard. What law
19 enforcement officers do oftentimes, frankly, is they take
20 a photograph of a text, so they use one phone to take a
21 photograph of another phone, basically. And if that's
22 what they are, then if you want to do that, that will
23 work.

24 MR. Steinback: I appreciate that. And I -- I
25 do want to say that I recognize -- and I say it for the

1 record and because I believe it to be true -- that Your
2 Honor's handling of Mr. Murphy's matter did not in any
3 way take into account whatever issues the Court and I
4 have, and I respect very much everything that you did and
5 how you did it. And I am grateful for the full and
6 complete and fair opportunity to be heard.

7 THE COURT: Mr. Steinback, you and I may not
8 have any problems either if in the end I'm satisfied that
9 this actually took place. I have an obligation as a
10 judge to ensure the integrity of our court system. And
11 when I saw a pattern of dilatory conduct by counsel here,
12 it concerns me that there are misrepresentations
13 involved. I'm not finding that there are any. I'm just
14 telling you I'm concerned about it. My instinct tells me
15 there's something to look at here, and so I'm looking at
16 it. I may be totally satisfied that there were no
17 misrepresentations, in which case, this matter will be
18 closed without any ramifications whatsoever.

19 I would just note as well, today you were late into
20 court. I find no excuse for lawyers being late. I used
21 to tell people working under me that if you are
22 five minutes early to court, that means that you are
23 ten minutes late. And I recognize you are coming to a
24 city that maybe you haven't been to before, and so I'll
25 overlook your delay in getting into the courtroom today,

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1 but I -- I have a lot of trouble with lawyers who are
2 late to the court. Other people were waiting. Everybody
3 was waiting, including your client, and so I find that to
4 be very poor professional conduct.

5 MR. Steinback: I agree with Your Honor
6 completely there. We drove past the cutoff because --
7 the exit, because it was apparently shut off, went
8 29 miles down to the next one, turned back around so that
9 we could get on, and that extra 30 miles is what we
10 miscalculated.

11 THE COURT: All right.

12 MR. Steinback: But in any event, I don't --
13 mea culpa. I was late for whatever reasons. And any
14 delays there, I own completely. I -- I -- I apologize
15 for that.

16 THE COURT: All right. That's not a major
17 matter.

18 All right. What I'm going to do then,
19 Mr. Steinback, is I'm just going to continue any further
20 proceedings of this matter. I'm going to wait for
21 30 days for you to produce those additional medical
22 records and the original documentation regarding the
23 communications with your client. I will take a look at
24 them at that point, once you produce those to me. And
25 then if I find any further proceedings are necessary, I

1 will schedule them. If I find no further proceedings are
2 necessary because the documentation has satisfied me, I
3 will so indicate on the record without you having to be
4 present, but I will make a notation on the record so that
5 anybody looking at this down the road will understand my
6 finding that you did not act in an inappropriate way, and
7 I will also send you a letter reflecting that.

8 MR. Steinback: I'm very grateful.

9 If I might digress for a moment --

10 THE COURT: Certainly.

11 MR. Steinback: -- with just a little bit of
12 levity. When I saw the two gentlemen sitting on either
13 side here, I wasn't sure if they were for Romel or for
14 me. And I was very pleased to see that you let them
15 leave.

16 That said, have a good rest of the day, Your Honor.

17 THE COURT: All right. You too, Mr. Steinback.
18 That will conclude this hearing.

19 (Proceedings concluded at 3:25 p.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Patrice A. Murray, a Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of Iowa, do hereby certify that at the time and place heretofore indicated, a hearing was held before the Honorable C.J. Williams; that I reported in shorthand and transcribed to the best of my ability the proceedings of said hearing; and that the foregoing transcript is a true record of all proceedings had on the taking of said hearing at the above time and place.

I further certify that I am not related to or employed by any of the parties to this action, and further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto or financially interested in the action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand this 31st day of December, 2021.

/s/ Patrice A. Murray
Patrice A. Murray, CSR, RMR, FCRR
Court Reporter
PO Box 10541
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52410

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