

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

In the Matter of:

PAUL NELSON BERARD,
Attorney-Respondent,
No. 6307434.

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Commission No. 2026PR00037

NOTICE OF FILING

TO: Tammy Evans
Counsel for the Administrator
Email: ARDCeService@iardc.org; tevens@iardc.org

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on May 26, 2026, I will submit the attached ANSWER TO COMPLANT and this notice to the Clerk of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, One Prudential Plaza, 130 East Randolph, Suite 800, Chicago, Illinois 60601, for filing by electronic means through the Odyssey eFileIL system.

/s/William F. Moran, III
Counsel for Respondent

COUNSEL FOR RESPONDENT:

William F. Moran, III (#06191183)
STRATTON, MORAN, REICHERT & SRONCE
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Springfield, IL 62703
Telephone: 217/528-2183
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FILED
5/26/2026 5:41 PM
ARDC Clerk

PROOF OF SERVICE

I, William F. Moran, III, state that I served copies of this Notice of Filing and the attached Answer to Complaint on Counsel for the Administrator by emailing true and correct copies thereof to her at the email addresses shown on the face of this Notice of Filing on this 26th day of May 2026. 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 the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct.

William F. Moran, III
Counsel for Respondent

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ANSWER TO COMPLAINT

Respondent, PAUL NELSON BERARD, by his attorney, William F. Moran, III, for his answer to the Complaint filed against him in this cause by the Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, LEA S. GUTIERREZ, states as follows:

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

1. Respondent was admitted to practice law in the State of Illinois on December 13, 2011. Respondent has also been admitted to practice law in the State of Wisconsin on September 1, 2011, which license is inactive, the State of Missouri on April 24, 2023, which license is active and in good standing, and the State of Colorado on June 11, 2020, which license is active and in good standing. Respondent has not been admitted at any time to any federal court or administrative agency.
2. Respondent has no other professional license.

ALLEGATIONS IN THE COMPLAINT

COUNT I

(Convictions for Domestic Battery and Driving Under the Influence)

1. Pursuant to 720 ILCS 5/12-3/2(a)(2), a person commits domestic battery if he or she knowingly without legal justification by any means makes physical contact of an

insulting or provoking nature with any family or household member.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegation as set forth in Paragraph 1 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint, with the correction that the appropriate citation for the domestic battery statute in Illinois is 720 ILCS 5-3.2(a)(2).

2. Pursuant to 625 ILCS 5/11-501(a)(1), a person shall not drive or be in actual physical control of any vehicle within this State while the alcohol concentration in the person's blood, other bodily substance, or breath is .08 or more based on the definition of blood and breath units in Section 11-501.2.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 2 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

3. In 2016, Respondent and a woman with the initials "K.B." were married. During the marriage, Respondent and K.B. had two children. In 2023, K.B. filed a petition for dissolution of the marriage, and in July 2024, the court entered a judgment for dissolution.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 3 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

4. On February 13, 2024, Respondent and K.B. appeared in court for a hearing on Respondent's motion to sell marital property. K.B. objected to Respondent's motion, and the trial court subsequently denied the motion.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 4 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

5. At or around 3:30 p.m. on February 13, 2024, K.B. went to Respondent's house to pick up their two minor children. Respondent and K.B. got into a verbal altercation outside of Respondent's house, and when Respondent noticed that K.B. had begun recording their

conversation, he attempted to take K.B.'s cell phone out of her hand, causing both he and K.B. to fall to the ground. As a result, K.B. injured her wrist and thumb. Respondent then took K.B.'s cell phone and went back into his house. K.B. called 911 from a neighbor's home, and Deputy Megan O'Meara from the McLean County Sheriff's Department and Sergeant Nathan Wilkins from the Leroy Police Department were dispatched to Respondent's address. Deputy O'Meara and Sergeant Wilkins spoke to K.B. and her minor children and completed an incident report. After Respondent exited his house, Deputy O'Meara took Respondent into custody and transported him to the McLean County Detention Center.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 5 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

6. On February 14, 2024, the McLean County State's Attorney filed an information charging Respondent with two counts of domestic battery/physical contact, and one count of disorderly conduct, based on the incident described in paragraph five, above. The matter was docketed as *People of the State of Illinois v. Paul Nelson Berard*, case number 2024DV36.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 6 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

7. On September 1, 2024, at or before 7:00 p.m., K.B. went to Respondent's house to drop off their minor children pursuant to the custody agreement but Respondent was not at home. When K.B. called Respondent on his cell phone, Respondent answered and told her that he was on his way back from Chicago and that he would be at his house in two hours. Respondent then ended the call. A few minutes later, Respondent called K.B. and told her that he would be at his house in an hour. When K.B. asked Respondent if he had been drinking, Respondent ended the call. K.B. then called 911 and requested that a deputy be present for the

custodial exchange.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 7 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

8. At approximately 8:32 p.m., on September 1, 2024, Deputy Jonathan Gardner from the McLean County Sheriff's Department was dispatched to Respondent's address. While in route to Respondent's house, dispatch informed Deputy Gardner that K.B. had called back and reported that Respondent and a man with the initials "J.S.," who K.B. identified as her boyfriend, were engaged in a physical altercation.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 8 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

9. Upon arrival at Respondent's house, Deputy Gardner observed Respondent get into his gray Toyota, put the vehicle in reverse and back out of the driveway, stop for a moment in the roadway, put the vehicle in drive, and pull back into the driveway. Respondent then got out of his vehicle and approached Deputy Gardner. While talking to Respondent about the altercation, Deputy Gardner smelled the odor of alcohol on Respondent and noticed that his eyes were bloodshot and glassy and that he was slurring his speech. Deputy Gardner asked Respondent if he would perform standardized field sobriety tests and Respondent said that he would. Respondent was unable to complete the tests because he could not keep his eyes on the object that the deputy was holding in front of his nose and moving horizontally from one side to another and he was swaying back and forth. Respondent initially agreed to provide a voluntary breath sample to Deputy Gardner but later refused to do so.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 9 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

10. A short time later, Illinois State Trooper William Burns arrived at Respondent's house to assist Deputy Gardner. Respondent provided Trooper Burns with an evidentiary breath sample of .212 (approximately three times the legal limit of .08) on the Alcosensor XVL, a handheld microprocessor-driven alcohol testing instrument. When Trooper Burns conducted an inventory of Respondent's vehicle, he found a cooler which contained unopened cans of Bud Light beer. Trooper Burns placed Respondent under arrest, transported him to the McLean County Detention Facility, and issued him a citation for driving under the influence of alcohol and a citation for driving under the influence of alcohol with a breath alcohol concentration of .08 or more.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 10 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

11. On September 6, 2024, the McLean County State's Attorney filed a second information against Respondent charging him with one count of domestic battery/bodily harm and one count of domestic battery/physical contact, and those charges along with the two citations for driving under the influence of alcohol were docketed as *People of the State of Illinois v. Paul Nelson Berard*, case number 2024DT420.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 11 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint, with the exception of the allegations that he was charged with domestic battery, which allegations he denies. Answering further, Respondent would state that he was charged with simple Battery, pursuant to Section 12-3 of the Illinois Criminal Code, 720 ILCS 5/12-3, a Class A Misdemeanor.

12. On July 8, 2025, Respondent pled guilty to one count of domestic battery/physical contact, a Class A Misdemeanor, in case number 2024DV36. On the same date, and in exchange

for his guilty plea, the State's Attorney agreed to dismiss the disorderly conduct charge and other domestic battery charge. The court sentenced Respondent to 90 days of imprisonment in the McLean County Jail, stayed, and conditional discharge for a period of 24 months with conditions. The court also ordered Respondent to pay a fine and costs totaling \$1,015.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 12 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint.

13. On July 8, 2025, Respondent pled guilty to one count of driving under the influence of alcohol with a breath alcohol concentration of .08 or more. On the same date, and in exchange for Respondent's guilty plea, the State's Attorney agreed to dismiss the remaining charges of driving under the influence, battery causing bodily harm, and battery making physical contact. The court sentenced Respondent to a 24-month period of conditional discharge and 30 days in the McLean County jail but stayed the 30-day sentence pending the successful completion of the 24-month period of conditional discharge. Additionally, the court ordered Respondent to pay all court costs and fees by June 8, 2027, and ordered him to complete 100 hours of community service and accident prevention and victim impact classes.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations as set forth in Paragraph 13 of Count 1 of the Administrator's Complaint, with the clarification that this paragraph of the Complaint relates to the disposition of McLean County Case No. 2024DT420, as described in Paragraph 11 above.

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

- a. committing criminal acts that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness or fitness as a lawyer in other respects, by committing the criminal offense of domestic battery, in violation of 720 ILCS 5/12-3.2(a)(2), and driving under the influence of alcohol with a blood alcohol content over .08, in violation of 625 ILCS 5/11-501(a)(1), and in

violation of Rule 8.4(b) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

ANSWER: The allegations as set forth in Paragraph 14(a) of Count I of the Administrator's Complaint are not allegations of fact, but rather, are conclusions of law which fall within the purview of the members of the Hearing Panel assigned to this case to decide whether the same have been proven by the Administrator, so no answer is required.

WHEREFORE, Respondent, PAUL NELSON BERARD, would request that an evidentiary hearing be held on the Complaint filed in this cause by the Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, LEA S. GUTIERREZ, and Respondent's Answer thereto; that subsequent to the hearing, the Hearing Board make such findings of fact and conclusions of law that are supported by the record and a recommendation for any appropriate discipline to the Supreme Court of Illinois; and for any and all further relief which is just and equitable based upon the circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,

PAUL NELSON BERARD, Respondent

By: /s/William F. Moran, III
Counsel for Respondent

COUNSEL FOR RESPONDENT:

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