

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

In the Matter of

ROBERT SALVATORE REDA,
Attorney-Respondent,
No. 6199867.

Commission No. 2026PR00013

RESPONDENT'S ANSWER TO ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLAINT

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

Information Provided Pursuant to Commission Rule 231

a. Respondent is admitted to practice before the US Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, the District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (including the trial bar), and the U.S. Supreme Court. Respondent has also been admitted pro hoc vice in numerous other courts. Respondent has never been disciplined in any other jurisdiction.

b. Respondent was previously licensed as a real estate broker and Series 7 & 11, but those licenses have lapsed.

COUNT 1

(Commission of a Criminal Act – Disorderly Conduct)

1. At all times alleged in this complaint, there was in effect a criminal statute in Illinois, Chapter 720 Section 5/26-1(a)(1), entitled “disorderly conduct,” which made it a Class C

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misdemeanor offense for a person to knowingly commit any act in such unreasonable manner as to alarm or disturb another and to provoke a breach of the peace.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 1 of the Complaint.

2. At all times alleged in this complaint, there was in effect a criminal statute in Illinois, Chapter 720 Section 5/12-3(a)(2), entitled “battery,” which made it a Class A misdemeanor offense for a person to knowingly and without legal justification make physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with an individual.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 2 of the Complaint.

3. On May 19, 2019, Respondent was at a restaurant in downtown Lake Forest having dinner and drinking alcohol. When he was finished, he left the restaurant on foot. He saw two individuals, an eighteen-year-old with the initials A.M., and a seventeen-year-old with the initials G.L., skateboarding in the street on Bank Lane. Respondent called out to them, telling them that they should not skateboard in the street. The skateboarders yelled back at Respondent.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 3 of the Complaint.

4. Respondent approached the skateboarders, and a verbal altercation ensued. Respondent then physically approached A.M. and headbutted him. Respondent then left the area.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that a verbal altercation ensued. Respondent denies the remaining allegations in paragraph 4 of the Complaint.

5. On June 6, 2019, the Lake County State’s Attorney filed a two-count criminal information against Respondent. Count One of the information charged Respondent with battery for knowingly and without legal justification causing bodily harm to A.M., by striking A.M. about the head, in violation of Chapter 720, Section 5/12-3(a)(1). Count Two of the information charged Respondent with battery for knowingly and without legal justification making contact of an

insulting or provoking nature with A.M., by striking A.M. about the head, in violation of Chapter 720, Section 5/12-3(a)(2). An arrest warrant was issued the same day and bond set in the amount of \$30,000.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 5 of the Complaint.

6. On June 7, 2019, a Lake Forest police officer arrested Respondent and notified him of a court date of June 28, 2019. Respondent posted bond and was released from custody. On June 28, 2019, Respondent appeared in court, represented by counsel, was arraigned, and pled not guilty to the charges.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 6 of the Complaint.

7. On July 26, 2021, pursuant to a negotiated agreement, Respondent pled guilty to a reduced charge of disorderly conduct. Judge Theodore Potkonjak sentenced Respondent to a term of 12 months of supervision, subject to conditions. Those conditions included that Respondent not have any contact with A.M., complete anger management treatment, and undergo substance abuse evaluation and treatment.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 7 of the Complaint.

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

- a. committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as a lawyer, by conduct including committing the criminal offense of disorderly conduct, in violation of 720 ILCS 5/26-1(a)(1), in violation of Rule 8.4(b) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

ANSWER: Respondent denies the allegations in paragraph 8 of the Complaint including subparagraph (a). However, Respondent admits that with the benefit of hindsight he should have handled the matter differently.

COUNT II
(Commission of a Criminal Act – Disorderly Conduct)

9. At all times alleged in this complaint, there was in effect a criminal statute in Illinois, Chapter 720 Section 5/26-1(a)(1), entitled “disorderly conduct,” which made it a Class C misdemeanor offense for a person to knowingly commit any act in such unreasonable manner as to alarm or disturb another and to provoke a breach of the peace.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 9 of the Complaint.

10. At all times alleged in this complaint, there was in effect a criminal statute in Illinois, Chapter 720 Section 5/12-3(a)(2), entitled “battery,” which made it a Class A misdemeanor offense for a person to knowingly and without legal justification make physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with an individual.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 10 of the Complaint.

11. On August 27, 2023, Respondent was at a restaurant in downtown Lake Forest, where he consumed alcohol. At the restaurant, Respondent heard that an unhoused individual was living in a tent in a wooded area several blocks away.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the first sentence of paragraph 11. Respondent denies the remaining allegations in paragraph 11 of the Complaint. In further answering, Respondent states that he heard that there was a homeless encampment hidden in a public area nearby.

12. Respondent left the restaurant and walked to the wooded area near the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Oakwood Avenue. He went into the wooded area, discovered a tent, then dragged the tent out of the area and into the street. An unhoused man with the initials “C.K.” was inside the tent when Respondent began dragging it out of the wooded area. Respondent then dragged the tent down the street. He also threw items belonging to C.K., including a backpack, into the street.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that he walked over to the public area and discovered that a tent was concealed in a small, wooded area. Respondent denies the remaining allegations in paragraph 12 of the Complaint.

13. A witness to the incident, who was driving nearby in a convertible, stopped his car and called the police. While on the phone with the police, Respondent walked toward the witness’s car and yelled at the witness, asking him “what’s your problem?” and “what’s wrong with you?” and calling him a “pussy.” Respondent’s actions caused the witness to fear for his safety.

ANSWER: Respondent denies the allegations in paragraph 13 of the Complaint. In further answering, the alleged witness William Meyer slowed down his car and began yelling at Respondent. As a result, Respondent yelled back at Meyer.

14. Respondent left the area and walked in the direction of the restaurant. On his way back to the restaurant, a Lake Forest police officer stopped Respondent and attempted to interview him. Respondent told the officer that he did not know what he was being stopped for and that he was going to walk away. After being notified that he was being detained and was not free to leave, Respondent falsely denied that he had been on the corner of Oakwood Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue, and falsely claimed that he was not aware of anyone throwing belongings out of the wooded area. The police officer did not further detain Respondent.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that he left the area, walked in the direction of the restaurant, and that he was approached by a police officer. Respondent denies the remaining allegations in paragraph 14 of the Complaint.

15. Respondent's August 27, 2023 statements to the police officer that he had not been on the corner of Oakwood Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue, and that he was not aware of anyone throwing belongings out of the wooded area, were false, because Respondent had been on and near the corner of Oakwood Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue, and because Respondent had thrown belongings out of the wooded area.

ANSWER: Respondent denies the allegations in paragraph 15 of the Complaint.

16. Respondent knew that his August 27, 2023 statements to the police officer were false, because he himself had had been on and near the corner of Oakwood Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue, and because he himself had thrown belongings out of the wooded area.

ANSWER: Respondent denies the allegations in paragraph 16 of the Complaint.

17. Later that evening, at approximately 11:35 p.m., the police officer went to Respondent's residence. There, the police officer issued Respondent a City of Lake Forest citation for disorderly conduct, which contained a notification that an administrative hearing concerning the charge had been set for September 14, 2023.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 17 of the Complaint.

18. On September 11, 2023, the Lake County State's Attorney's Office issued two non-traffic citations for two counts of disorderly conduct to Respondent, both containing notice of a court date of October 6, 2023, in the Circuit Court of Lake County. The first citation alleged that Respondent committed the offense of disorderly conduct by alarming and disturbing the witness while destroying a homeless encampment, and by calling the witness a "pussy" and advancing

toward his vehicle while he was calling 911, in violation of Chapter 720, Section 5/26-1(a)(1). The second citation alleged that Respondent committed the offense of disorderly conduct by alarming and disturbing the witness by pulling C.K. into the street while C.K. was inside the tent, and throwing C.K.'s belongings into the street which the witness observed. The matter was docketed as People of the State of Illinois v. Robert S. Reda, No. 23CM00001394 and assigned to the Hon. James K. Simonian.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 18 of the Complaint.

19. A Lake Forest police officer served the citations, described in paragraph 18, above, on Respondent on September 11, 2023. On that date, the City of Lake Forest voided the municipal citation referred to in paragraph 17, above, and vacated the hearing date of September 14, 2023.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 19 of the Complaint.

20. On October 6, 2023, the Lake County State's Attorney filed a three-count criminal information against Respondent, superseding the two citations referred to in paragraph 18, above. Count One of the information charged Respondent with disorderly conduct for knowingly dragging C.K. in his tent in such an unreasonable manner as to alarm and disturb C.K., and provoke a breach of the peace, in violation of Chapter 720, Section 5/26-1(a)(1). Count Two of the information charged Respondent with disorderly conduct for knowingly approaching the witness's vehicle in such an unreasonable manner as to alarm and disturb the witness, and provoke a breach of the peace, in violation of Chapter 720, Section 5/26-1(a)(1). Count Three of the information charged Respondent with battery for knowingly making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with C.K., in that he dragged C.K. while he occupied his tent, without lawful authority and without legal justification, in violation of Chapter 720, Section 5/12-3(a)(2). On

October 6, 2023, Respondent appeared in court, represented by counsel, was arraigned, and pled not guilty to the charges.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations of paragraph 20 of the Complaint, except for the third sentence, which misstates the charge in Count Three of the Information.

21. On April 30, 2025, pursuant to a negotiated agreement, Respondent pled guilty to Count One of the information, which had charged him with disorderly conduct for knowingly dragging C.K. in his tent in such an unreasonable manner as to alarm and disturb C.K., and provoke a breach of the peace. In exchange for Respondent's plea of guilty to Count One, the Lake County State's Attorney dismissed Counts Two and Three. Judge Simonian sentenced Respondent to a term of 12 months of supervision, subject to conditions. Those conditions included that Respondent refrain from consuming or possessing alcohol, that Respondent perform 50 hours of community service, that Respondent complete a substance abuse evaluation, and that Respondent complete alcohol and anger management treatment.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations in paragraph 21 of the Complaint, except that he denies that his guilty plea for misdemeanor disorderly conduct was to Count One of the information.

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

- a. committing a criminal act that reflects adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as a lawyer, by conduct including committing the criminal offense of disorderly conduct, in violation of 720 ILCS 5/26-1(a)(1), in violation of Rule 8.4(b) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

ANSWER: Respondent denies the allegations in paragraph 22 of the Complaint including subpart (a). However, Respondent admits that with the benefit of hindsight he should have handled the matter differently.

AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE ONE: COLLATERAL ESTOPPEL

The Administrator first closed the investigation regarding the allegations in Count I (Investigation No. 2019IN02551) on April 7, 2023. In 2025, during the course of the investigation of the allegations of Count II (Investigation No. 2023IN02989), Administrator's counsel informed Respondent's Counsel that the Administrator would not reopen Investigation No. 201902551 even if the Administrator sought to prosecute the allegations in Investigation No. 2023IN02989 (as acknowledged in counsel's 12-1-2025 email). In spite of that statement to Respondent's Counsel and in direct contravention of it, the Administrator subsequently reopened Investigation No. 2019IN02551 and requested that the Inquiry Board vote a complaint as to those allegations (as well as the allegations related to Investigation 2023IN02989), which they did. The Administrator should be estopped from prosecuting allegations related to Investigation No. 2019IN02551 where Administrator's counsel provided assurances to Respondent that the investigation would remain closed and Respondent relied on those assurances.

AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE TWO: VIOLATION OF SUPREME COURT 752

Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 752, the Administrator has authority to investigate allegations of violations of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct. The Administrator does not have authority pursuant to Rule 752 or any other rule to secretly conduct an investigation of an attorney's personal, confidential information that has nothing to do with any allegation of a

violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct. In this matter, however, the Administrator's staff conducted substantial investigation into Respondent's personal, confidential financial records via the use of the Administrator's subpoena power purportedly in relation to Investigation No. 2023IN02989 (the alleged disorderly conduct tent incident) without any notice to Respondent. Respondent's personal, confidential financial information had absolutely nothing to do with the allegations in Investigation No. 2023IN02989, which related to Respondent's alleged removal of a tent in 2023.

Records produced by the Administrator in discovery in this matter on March 12, 2026, indicate that the Administrator's staff obtained Respondent's credit report in October 2025, determined where Respondent had financial accounts, and then issued subpoenas approximately 10 days later to financial institutions at which Respondent had accounts and without notice to Respondent (although Goldman Sachs did inform Respondent of the subpoena it received). Subpoenas were issued to American Express, Citibank, Goldman Sachs, and Wells Fargo Bank. Specifically, it appears that on or about October 31, 2025, the Administrator's staff subpoenaed Respondent's credit card statements from July 1, 2023, "to the present" from all four financial institutions. Notably, even though the Administrator subpoenaed financial records dating through late 2025, such records were for a time period that was more than two years after the tent incident that was the subject of Investigation No. 2023IN02989. The Administrator received hundreds of pages of confidential, financial documents related to Respondent's accounts as a result of the subpoenas.

The actions of the Administrator's staff in using the subpoena power to obtain Respondent's personal, confidential financial records that were not in any way related to Investigation No. 2023IN02989 and the allegations of disorderly conduct related to the tent

incident, were in violation of the authority provided to the Administrator by the Supreme Court under Rule 752. The ARDC and its various officers serve the Court and are only authorized to administer the disciplinary functions that have been delegated to them. *In re Harris*, No. 56119, 3 (1982)(citations omitted). The Administrator is not authorized to use its investigative and subpoena powers to conduct investigations of attorneys that are unrelated to allegations of unethical conduct.

AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE THREE: VIOLATION OF DUE PROCESS

Based on the conduct described in the Affirmative Defenses noted above, and as may be further developed during discovery of this matter, the Administrator has violated Respondent's right to Due Process. An attorney is entitled to due process of law in attorney disciplinary proceedings. *In re Ruffalo*, 390 US 544 (1968).

WHEREFORE, Respondent, ROBERT SALVATORE REDA, prays that the Complaint be dismissed with prejudice, and/or for any other relief the Board deems just.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Stephanie Stewart _____

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