

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

In the Matter of:	)	
	)	
RUTH RAMIREZ,	)	
	)	Commission No. 2026PR00039
Attorney-Respondent,	)	
	)	
No. 6292685.	)	

COMPLAINT

Lea S. Gutierrez, Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, by her attorney, Tammy L. Evans, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 753(b), complains of Respondent, Ruth Ramirez, who was licensed to practice law in Illinois on November 8, 2007, and alleges that Respondent has engaged in the following conduct which subjects her to discipline pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 770:

COUNT I

*(Lack of Diligence and Failure to Communicate – O.A.)*

1. On August 9, 2003, a man with the initials “D.W.” and a woman with the initials “O.A.” were married. During the marriage, D.W. and O.A. had two children.
2. On December 10, 2010, O.A. filed a *pro se* petition for dissolution of marriage in the Circuit Court of Cook County and caused D.W. to be served with the petition. D.W. did not file a response to the petition.
3. On March 3, 2011, the trial court entered a judgment for dissolution of marriage. Pursuant to the judgment, D.W. was required to pay child support in the amount of \$500 every month to O.A. for their two minor children. D.W. has not made any child support payments since the judgment was entered.

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ARDC Clerk

4. Between January 1, 2018 and October 1, 2021, the parties' oldest child resided with D.W. On or before April 12, 2022, D.W. filed a petition to modify child support seeking to abate his obligation to pay child support for the parties' oldest child for the period of January 1, 2018 and October 1, 2021. D.W. caused O.A. to be served with the petition. Shortly thereafter, Respondent and O.A. agreed that Respondent would represent O.A. in matters relating to D.W.'s petition to modify child support and agreed that Respondent would charge O.A. a \$2,500 flat fee.

5. On April 14, 2022, Respondent filed her appearance in the couple's post-dissolution of marriage matter.

6. Between April 2022 and December 2023, O.A. made payments totaling \$1,400 toward Respondent's requested \$2,500 flat fee.

7. Between April 14, 2022 and December 18, 2023, Respondent appeared in court and filed pleadings on behalf of O.A. in the dissolution of marriage matter.

8. On June 27, 2023, the court entered an order abating D.W.'s obligation to pay child support for the parties' oldest child for the period of January 1, 2018 through October 1, 2021.

9. As of August 7, 2023, the dispute between O.A. and her former spouse over the amount of child support D.W. owed O.A. was unresolved, and on that date, Respondent caused a petition for rule to show cause to be filed in O.A.'s case. On August 14, 2023, Respondent caused a notice of motion to be filed and served upon D.W.'s attorney. The notice of motion stated that Respondent would appear before the Honorable Matthew Jannusch on August 21, 2023, and present the petition for rule to show cause.

10. On August 21, 2023, D.W.'s attorney filed a motion to withdraw as counsel for D.W. On the same day, Respondent caused a notice of motion to be filed and served on D.W.

and his attorney that stated Respondent would appear before Judge Jannusch on August 29, 2023, and present the petition for rule to show cause. The trial court scheduled a status hearing for the motion to withdraw and petition for rule to show cause for September 11, 2023.

11. On September 11, 2023, Respondent and O.A. appeared in court for the status hearing. Judge Jannusch entered an order allowing D.W.'s attorney to withdraw and advising D.W. that he had 21 days to retain counsel. Judge Jannusch continued the matter for a status hearing to be conducted via the Zoom videoconference platform on October 10, 2023, and provided the meeting number and password on the order.

12. On October 10, 2023, Respondent and O.A. appeared in court for the previously scheduled status hearing. Judge Jannusch directed Respondent to send notice of her petition for rule to show cause directly to D.W. and continued the matter to October 30, 2023 for a status hearing on Respondent's petition.

13. On October 30, 2023, Respondent, O.A., and D.W. appeared via Zoom for the status hearing. Judge Jannusch entered an order granting D.W. 28 days to file a response to Respondent's petition for rule to show cause and continuing the matter to December 18, 2023 for entry of judgment and a proposed payment schedule.

14. On December 18, 2023, Respondent and O.A. appeared via Zoom for the hearing on Respondent's motion. D.W. did not appear. Respondent was directed to prepare a judgment and proposed payment schedule and docket the matter for presentation before the trial court.

15. At no time between December 18, 2023 and June 3, 2024, did Respondent prepare or present a judgment and proposed payment schedule to the trial court.

16. Between December 18, 2023 and June 3, 2024, O.A. called Respondent's law office on several occasions and left messages for Respondent asking about the status of her case, but Respondent did not return O.A.'s calls.

17. On April 23, 2024, O.A. sent an email to Respondent's office assistant and the general email address for Respondent's law office. In her email, O.A. stated that she had been calling the office and leaving messages but had not received a response and asked when Respondent would be filing an order in her case. She also informed Respondent that she would contact the court directly if she did not receive a response.

18. On May 21, 2024, O.A. contacted the court requesting a court date to finalize the order regarding child support. The court informed O.A. that her attorney must file the necessary order.

19. On June 3, 2024, O.A. filed a request for investigation with the ARDC.

20. 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 conduct including failing to prepare or present a judgment and proposed payment schedule on behalf of O.A., in violation of Rule 1.3 of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);
- b. failing to keep a client reasonably informed about the status of a matter, by conduct including failing to respond to O.A.'s telephone calls and email regarding the status of her matter, in violation of Rule 1.4(a)(3) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010); and
- c. failing to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information, by conduct including failing to respond to O.A.'s telephone calls and email regarding the status of her matter, in violation of Rule 1.4(a)(4) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

COUNT II  
*(Lack of Diligence and Lack of Communication – M.H.)*

21. On July 12, 1980, a woman with the initials “M.H.” and a man with the initials “H.H.” were married in Haiti.

22. On or about January 25, 2018, M.H. filed a petition for legal separation in the Circuit Court of Cook County.

23. On or before March 8, 2019, Respondent and M.H. agreed that Respondent would represent M.H. in matters relating to her desire for a legal separation and that Respondent would charge M.H. a \$700 flat fee for the representation. On or before March 15, 2019, Respondent filed her appearance on behalf of M.H.

24. Between March 15, 2019 and May 16, 2022, Respondent appeared in court on behalf of M.H. for various status dates and hearings related to the case.

25. On May 16, 2022, the trial court entered an order continuing the matter for a pre-trial conference on August 25, 2022, and directing H.H. to appear in court on that date. The order further stated that H.H.’s failure to appear in court on August 25, 2022 may result in an adverse ruling against him.

26. On August 25, 2022, neither Respondent, M.H. nor H.H. appeared in court for the scheduled pre-trial conference. The trial court continued the matter for a progress hearing on October 26, 2022. The circuit clerk sent an electronic notice of the trial court’s order to Respondent.

27. On October 26, 2022, Respondent did not appear for the scheduled progress hearing, and the trial court entered an order dismissing the matter for want of prosecution.

28. On October 27, 2022, the Cook County Circuit Clerk's office sent electronic notice of the trial court's dismissal order to Respondent. On or about October 27, 2022, Respondent received the electronic notice from the Circuit Clerk's office.

29. At no time after October 27, 2022, did Respondent inform M.H. that her case had been dismissed for want of prosecution, or file a motion to vacate the trial court's October 26, 2022 order.

30. Between October 27, 2022 and July 2024, M.H. contacted Respondent's office to inquire about the status of her case. Each time M.H. contacted Respondent's office, Respondent's staff told M.H. that the judge presiding over her matter was ill and that her matter had been continued.

31. In or around July 2024, M.H. contacted the Cook County Circuit Clerk's office and was told that her case had been dismissed on October 26, 2022.

32. On September 27, 2024, M.H. submitted a request for investigation of Respondent to the ARDC.

33. 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 conduct including failing to appear for a pre-trial conference on August 25, 2022 and for a progress hearing on October 26, 2022, which resulted in M.H.'s matter being dismissed for want of prosecution, and failing to file a motion to vacate the trial court's October 26, 2022 dismissal order, in violation of Rule 1.3 of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);
- b. failing to promptly inform a client of any decision or circumstance with respect to which the client's informed consent, as defined in Rule 1.0(e), is required by these Rules, by conduct including failing to inform M.H. that her case had

been dismissed for want of prosecution, in violation of Rule 1.4(a)(1) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);

- c. failing to reasonably consult with a client about the means by which the client's objectives are to be accomplished, by conduct including failing to inform M.H. that her case had been dismissed for want of prosecution, in violation of Rule 1.4(a)(2) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);
- d. failing to keep a client reasonably informed about the status of a matter by conduct including failing to inform M.H. that her case had been dismissed for want of prosecution, in violation of Rule 1.4(a)(3) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010); and
- e. failing to explain a matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the client to make informed decisions regarding the representation, by conduct including failing to inform M.H. that her case had been dismissed for want of prosecution, in violation of Rule 1.4(b) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

### COUNT III

#### *(Failure to Cooperate with a Disciplinary Investigation)*

34. The Administrator realleges and incorporates paragraphs one through 19, and paragraphs 21 through 32, above.

35. As of March 25, 2025, the Administrator was investigating allegations against Respondent made by both O.A. and M.H., who are referred to in Counts I and II, above. On that date, Respondent was personally served with a subpoena to appear via the Zoom video conference platform for a sworn statement on May 1, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. The subpoena also directed Respondent to produce copies of her client files for O.A. and M.H.

36. At Respondent's request, the sworn statement was continued to September 18, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. Respondent appeared for the sworn statement but did not produce copies of her client files for O.A. and M.H.

37. On December 10, 2025, counsel for the Administrator sent a letter to Respondent via email to Respondent's registered email address. In her letter, counsel requested that Respondent provide copies of her client files for O.A. and M.H. to counsel by December 31, 2025. As of March 31, 2026, the date that the Administrator's investigations relating to Respondent's representation of O.A. and M.H. were referred to the Inquiry Board, Respondent had not provided the requested files. Respondent's production of the client files has never been waived or excused.

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

- a. failing to respond to a lawful demand for information from a disciplinary authority, by conduct including failing to provide copies of Respondent's client files for O.A. and M.H. pursuant to the subpoena that was personally served upon Respondent on March 25, 2025, and pursuant to counsel's December 10, 2025 letter, in violation of Rule 8.1(b) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

WHEREFORE, the Administrator requests that this matter be assigned to a panel of the Hearing Board, that a hearing be held, and the panel make findings of fact, conclusions of fact and law, and a recommendation for such discipline as is warranted.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lea S. Gutierrez, Administrator  
Attorney Registration and  
Disciplinary Commission

By: /s/ Tammy L. Evans  
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