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Professional Responsibility Program

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June 10, 2020

Via U.S. Mail and email

Carrie Legus
P.O. Box 843
Burlington, VT 05402
carrie.j.legus@gmail.com

**Re: In re Carrie Legus, Docket No. 2020-135
PRB File No. 2020-102**

Dear Ms. Legus:

I am writing to follow up on our telephone conversation from today. Along with this letter, I enclose the paper copy of the Petition for Interim Suspension filed May 8, 2020 you requested and a paper copy of the May 29 pleading I filed in response to your Motion to Vacate. Please let me know if there are other items you need a paper copy of. There will likely be delays in getting you paper copies of items, but certainly it can be arranged if it is necessary.

Before you terminated today's call, I was intending to discuss with you the following:

1. **Service requests.** Due to COVID-19, we have extremely limited staff resources to process and distribute mail. Therefore, I do not want service of any information, pleading or correspondence from you by U.S. Mail. Please sent anything to me via email only. Sending me mail may cause delays of approximately 7-10 days before I receive the item.

2. **Telephone communication.** As we discussed today, I do not have a state-issued cell phone. The state provides software that forwards my direct line (802-859-3001) to my personal cell phone. To reach me, please dial the direct line number. If you leave a message and I return your call, the number will appear as coming from my personal cell phone. I have no ability to change or control this and unfortunately these are circumstances I must manage in order to carry out my work by during the duration of this pandemic. I do not accept communication via text message. I have no way to document or preserve text messages for my professional obligations on my personal cell phone. If you send text messages to my personal cell phone, I will not acknowledge, reply to or preserve it.

3. **Pending PRB matter.** Interim suspension is a type of emergency placeholder status. It is “interim” exactly as the name states. Sometimes, individuals charged with a crime might choose to stay on interim suspension because if they are convicted and there are subsequent disciplinary findings by a hearing panel, they may receive credit towards a term of suspension if suspension is imposed. “Formal proceedings” referenced in A.O. 9 means a disciplinary or disability proceeding. Those proceedings can begin in a number of ways, either by filing a petition of misconduct, a stipulation of facts, or a disability petition. As disciplinary counsel, I commence those proceedings by filing those pleadings with the Program Administrator, Merrick Grutchfield and serving them upon a respondent. Merrick then assigns the matter to a hearing panel. As of today’s date, no formal proceedings have been initiated against you.

4. **Anticipated next steps.** I need to perform an interview of you. That is my job, to investigate and litigate disciplinary and disability matters. As a licensed attorney, you are required to appear for the interview and answer my questions. I attempted to carry out this interview today, but you terminated the call. I understand from your pleadings that confidentiality is a concern for you and that you may be facing some health obstacles or challenges. My charge as disciplinary counsel is to protect the public, and I have a consistent track record of working cooperatively with respondents with health problems as appropriate to get their license transferred to disability inactive status. Disability filings and proceedings are confidential and while on disability inactive, any associated disciplinary proceedings are held in abeyance. One thing I need to discuss with you in your interview is whether a disability inactive status might be an appropriate option to pursue. **I will need to perform this interview of you regardless of what occurs at or results from the Supreme Court hearing scheduled for June 15, 2020.** Ordinarily, I interview respondents in person. Due to COVID-19, I have been performing most interviews via video conferencing software. If you are unable to use the software, we will need to schedule an interview for you at one of the courthouse spaces in Montpelier. **Please respond to me by email or telephone that you will participate in a video interview or that you require an in-person interview.** The interview will be scheduled for a date and time between June 22 and July 6 once I hear from you whether or not it can be done via video.

5. **Obtaining counsel.** I always encourage respondents to seek advice of counsel in PRB matters. Members of the Vermont bar are surprisingly generous with their willingness to help out a colleague in need and you may be able to find assistance for little or no cost.

6. **Access to internet.** I understand you may not have internet available at your home. Because hearing panels and courts send notices electronically, you will need to notify them you require communication by U.S. mail if that is what you believe you need. However, I wanted to be sure you are aware that there is free public wireless internet available at all courthouses, including Caledonia. There is a password to use it, but the docket clerk's office provides it upon request. Even closer and more convenient, the Danville Library public wifi is available 24 hours a day outside the building according to its website, <https://popememoriallibrary.org/> as is the Hardwick Library public wifi, <https://www.jeudevinememoriallibrary.org/>.

7. **How to file a complaint.** You stated today that you wished to file a complaint against me. I want to be sure you have the appropriate information to do that. Brandy Sickles manages intake of all complaints. She can send you information about that process. She has a protocol in place to insure complaints against anyone who works for the Professional Responsibility Program is handled by outside counsel and I would be entirely screened out of that process. Brandy can be reached at 802-859-3000.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. Contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

