FILED
May 4, 2026
Disciplinary Board
Docket # 013

DISCIPLINARY BOARD
WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

In re **MICHAEL OLUFEMI EWETUGA,** Lawyer (Bar No. 37596).	Proceeding No. 26#00009 FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND HEARING OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

The undersigned Hearing Officer held a default hearing on the pleadings under Rule 10.6 of the Washington Supreme Court's Rules for Enforcement of Lawyer Conduct (ELC).

FINDINGS OF FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW REGARDING CHARGED VIOLATIONS

ADMISSION TO PRACTICE

1. Respondent Michael Olufemi Ewetuga was admitted to the practice of law in the State of Washington on June 26, 2006.

FACTS REGARDING COUNTS 1, 2, 3 and 4

Prior Discipline

2. On September 15, 2023, a Hearing Officer found that Respondent violated RPC 1.8(j)(1) by engaging in a sexual relationship with Respondent's client during Respondent's representation of the client, and that Respondent violated RPC 1.4(b) and 1.5(b) by failing to state

or explain the change in the rate or basis of Respondent's fee, and recommended Respondent's law license be suspended for six months.

3. On January 10, 2024, the Washington Supreme Court adopted the Hearing Officer's September 15, 2023 findings of fact and conclusions of law and suspended Respondent's law license for six months, effective January 17, 2024.

4. Respondent's law license remains suspended.

Representation of Michael Edick

5. On November 16, 2020, Michael Edick was injured when Jasmine Bevans's vehicle collided into Edick's vehicle.

6. On November 16, 2020, upon returning home after the collision with Bevans, Edick discovered that the first floor and basement of Edick's home were flooded with sewage.

7. The flood was caused by a construction company, R. L. Alia Company, while R. L. Alia Company performed work for the City of Tacoma in front of Edick's home.

8. The damage to Edick's home exceeded $70,000.

9. Soon after November 16, 2020, Edick hired Respondent on a contingency fee basis to represent Edick in lawsuits against Bevans and R. L. Alia Company.

10. On November 15, 2023, on behalf of Edick, Respondent filed a complaint and summons against Bevans in Pierce County Superior Court (Bevans lawsuit).

11. Respondent did not take any other action to prosecute the Bevans lawsuit.

12. On November 15, 2023, on behalf of Edick, Respondent filed a complaint and summons against R. L. Alia Company in Pierce County Superior Court (R.L. Alia Company lawsuit).

13. Respondent did not take any other action to prosecute the R.L. Alia Company

lawsuit.

14. On November 15, 2023, the court issued a case schedule in the Bevans lawsuit. setting December 13, 2023, as the deadline for confirmation of service and a trial date of November 13, 2024.

15. Respondent failed to serve Bevans with the complaint and summons.

16. On November 15, 2023, the court issued a case schedule in the R. L. Alia Company lawsuit setting December 13, 2023, as the deadline for confirmation of service and a trial date of November 13, 2024.

17. Respondent failed to serve R. L. Alia Company with the complaint and summons.

18. On December 18, 2023, the court sent Respondent a letter stating that Respondent had failed to file confirmation of service in the R. L. Alia Company lawsuit and requested Respondent immediately comply with the case schedule order.

19. Respondent did not take any action in response to the December 18, 2023 letter.

20. Respondent did not notify Edick of the December 18, 2023 letter.

21. On January 19, 2024, ODC sent Respondent a letter advising Respondent of some of the duties and consequences of Respondent's suspension and provided Respondent with a copy of ELC Title 14.

22. ODC's January 19, 2024 letter advised Respondent of Respondent's duty to provide notice to all clients of Respondent's suspension and inability to further represent them.

23. ODC's January 19, 2024 letter advised Respondent of Respondent's duty to advise courts of Respondent's inability to act should Respondent's client not substitute counsel within 10 days.

24. Respondent did not provide Edick notice of Respondent's suspension.

25. Respondent did not advise Edick to seek prompt substitution of counsel.

26. Respondent did not file a notice of withdrawal in the Bevans lawsuit.

27. Respondent did not file a notice of withdrawal in the R. L. Alia Company lawsuit.

28. Respondent did not notify the court about Respondent's inability to act in the Bevans lawsuit.

29. Respondent did not notify the court about Respondent's inability to act in the R. L. Alia Company lawsuit.

30. On March 19, 2024, and October 21, 2024, the court sent Respondent letters regarding the R. L. Alia Company lawsuit that outlined several missed pre-trial deadlines and requested Respondent's immediate compliance.

31. Respondent did not take any action in response to the March 19, 2024 and October 21, 2024 letters.

32. Respondent did not notify Edick of the March 19, 2024 and October 21, 2024 letters.

33. On October 31, 2024, the court sent Respondent a letter regarding the Bevans lawsuit that outlined several missed pre-trial deadlines and requested Respondent's immediate compliance.

34. Respondent did not take any action in response to the October 31, 2024 letter.

35. Respondent did not notify Edick about the October 31, 2024 letter.

36. After Respondent filed Edick's lawsuits against Bevans and R. L. Alia Company, Edick requested updates on the status of the cases.

37. Respondent did not respond to Edick's requests for information.

38. In or around the first week of November 2024, Edick contacted Respondent's adult son, who in turn relayed Edick's communications to Respondent.

39. In or around the first week of November 2024, Respondent spoke with Edick and told Edick that Respondent's law license was suspended.

40. On November 13, 2024, the presiding judge dismissed Edick's lawsuit against Bevans without prejudice after no one appeared for the scheduled trial.

41. Edick cannot re-file the lawsuit against Bevans because there is no time remaining under the statute of limitations.

42. On November 13, 2024, the presiding judge dismissed Edick's lawsuit against R. L. Alia Company after no one appeared for the scheduled trial.

43. Edick cannot re-file the lawsuit against R. L. Alia Company because there is no time remaining under the statute of limitations.

44. At all relevant times in paragraphs 5 to 43, Respondent acted knowingly.

45. Respondent caused Edick serious injury.

46. Respondent caused injury to the court and to the legal system.

Non-Cooperation with ODC's Investigation

47. On October 31, 2025, ODC opened a grievance file against Respondent based on information that Respondent failed to prosecute the Bevans lawsuit and R. L. Alia Company lawsuit.

48. On October 31, 2025, ODC sent Respondent a letter requiring Respondent's written response to ODC's grievance.

49. Respondent did not provide a written response to ODC.

50. On October 31, 2025, ODC sent Respondent another letter requiring Respondent to produce Respondent's complete client file for Edick and all correspondence with Edick to ODC within 30 days.

51. Respondent did not provide the requested records to ODC.

52. On December 8, 2025, ODC sent Respondent a letter requiring Respondent to respond to both October 31, 2025 letters within 10 days and notified Respondent that if Respondent failed to respond, ODC would subpoena Respondent for deposition and compel production of the requested records.

53. Respondent did not provide a written response or the requested records to ODC.

54. On December 27, 2025, Respondent was personally served with a subpoena from ODC compelling Respondent's attendance at a Zoom deposition on January 13, 2026.

55. ODC's subpoena also compelled the production of Edick's client file, correspondence with or regarding Edick, and, among other things, correspondence to Edick regarding Respondent's law license suspension and advice to Edick to promptly seek substitution of counsel.

56. Respondent did not appear at the deposition or produce any records in response to the subpoena.

57. At all relevant times in paragraphs 47 to 56, Respondent acted knowingly.

58. Respondent caused injury to the lawyer discipline system.

59. Under ELC 10.6(a)(4), the Hearing Officer finds that each of the **facts** set forth in the Formal Complaint is **admitted and established**.

60. Under ELC 10.6(a)(4), the Hearing Officer concludes that each of the **violations** charged in the Formal Complaint is **admitted and established** as follows:

COUNT 1

61. By failing to take any action in Edick's lawsuit against Bevans after filing the complaint and summons, and/or by failing to take any action in Edick's lawsuit against R. L. Alia

Company after filing the complaint and summons, Respondent violated RPC 1.3 and RPC 3.2.

COUNT 2

62. By failing to respond to Edick's requests for information, failing to timely inform Edick that Respondent's law license was suspended, failing to advise Edick to seek prompt substitution of counsel, and failing to inform Edick of pre-trial deadlines and that the court notified Respondent of missed pre-trial deadlines in Edick's two lawsuits, Respondent violated RPC 1.4(a) and (b).

COUNT 3

63. By failing to notify Edick of Respondent's law license suspension, failing to advise Edick to seek prompt substitution of counsel, and failing to advise the Pierce County Superior Court of Respondent's suspension and inability to act as Edick's lawyer, Respondent violated RPC 8.4(*l*) (by violating ELC 14.1).

COUNT 4

64. By failing to respond to disciplinary counsel's written requests for a response to ODC's grievance, failing to produce Edick's client file, and failing to appear at the deposition, Respondent violated RPC 8.1(b), RPC 8.4(d), and RPC 8.4(*l*) (by violating ELC 1.5, 5.3(f), 5.3(g), and 5.5(d)).

FINDINGS OF FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW REGARDING RECOMMENDED SANCTION

65. As to Counts 1 and 2, Respondent acted knowingly. Bar File No. 2 ¶¶ 44. Respondent caused Michael Edick serious injury. Id. at ¶ 45.

66. As to Count 3, Respondent acted knowingly. Id. at ¶ 44. Respondent caused serious injury to Edick and injury to the court and to the legal system. Id. at ¶¶ 45-46.

67. As to Count 4, Respondent acted knowingly. Id. at ¶ 57. Respondent caused injury

to the lawyer disciplinary system. Id. at ¶ 58.

68. The following standards of the American Bar Association's Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions ("ABA Standards") (1991 ed. & Feb. 1992 Supp.) presumptively apply in this case:

4.4 ***Lack of Diligence***

4.41 Disbarment is generally appropriate when:
- (a) a lawyer abandons the practice and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client; or
- (b) a lawyer knowingly fails to perform services for a client and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client; or
- (c) a lawyer engages in a pattern of neglect with respect to client matters and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client.

4.42 Suspension is generally appropriate when:
- (a) a lawyer knowingly fails to perform services for a client and causes injury or potential injury to a client, or
- (b) a lawyer engages in a pattern of neglect and causes injury or potential injury to a client.

4.43 Reprimand is generally appropriate when a lawyer is negligent and does not act with reasonable diligence in representing a client, and causes injury or potential injury to a client.

4.44 Admonition is generally appropriate when a lawyer is negligent and does not act with reasonable diligence in representing a client, and causes little or no actual or potential injury to a client.

7.0 ***Violations of Duties Owed as a Professional***

7.1 Disbarment is generally appropriate when a lawyer knowingly engages in conduct that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional with the intent to obtain a benefit for the lawyer or another, and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

7.2 Suspension is generally appropriate when a lawyer knowingly engages in conduct that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional and causes injury or potential injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

7.3 Reprimand is generally appropriate when a lawyer negligently engages in conduct that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional and causes injury or potential injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

7.4 Admonition is generally appropriate when a lawyer engages in an isolated instance of negligence that is a violation of a duty owed as a professional, and causes little or no actual or potential injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

69. As to Counts 1 and 2, the presumptive sanction is disbarment under ABA Standard 4.41(b).

70. As to Counts 3 and 4, the presumptive sanction is suspension under ABA Standard 7.2.

71. Under In re Disciplinary Proceeding Against Petersen, 120 Wn.2d 833, 854, 846 P.2d 1330 (1993), the "ultimate sanction imposed should at least be consistent with the sanction for the most serious instance of misconduct among a number of violations."

72. The following aggravating factors set forth in Section 9.22 of the ABA Standards apply in this case:

(a) prior disciplinary offenses (A grievance was filed against Respondent on December 14, 2021. After a disciplinary hearing based on that grievance, Respondent was ordered suspended from the practice of law for six months effective January 17, 2024, for violating RPC 1.8(j)(1), 1.4(b), and 1.5(b));
(d) multiple offenses; and
(i) substantial experience in the practice of law (admitted to practice law in Washington State on June 26, 2006).

73. It is an additional aggravating factor that Respondent failed to file an answer to the Formal Complaint as required by ELC 10.5(a).

74. There are no applicable mitigating factors under ABA Standard 9.32.

RECOMMENDATION

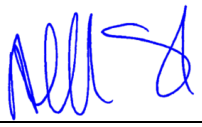
75. Based on the ABA Standards, the applicable aggravating factors, and lack of applicable mitigating factors, the Hearing Officer recommends that Respondent Michael Olufemi Ewetuga be **DISBARRED**.

DATED this 3d day of May, 2026.

Randolph O. Petgrave III, WSBA #26046
Chief Hearing Officer

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that I caused a copy of the FOF, COL and HO's Recommendation to be emailed to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel and to Respondent, Michael Olufemi Ewetuga, at mikethelaw@proton.me, and at, office5401@comcast.net; office5401@proton.me, on the 4th day of May, 2026.



Clerk to the Disciplinary Board