



THE NORTH CAROLINA DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMISSION

Public Sanctions Imposed

Mediator: Kaycee Staehle, Esq.
Sanction: Public Admonishment
Date: September 1, 2022

The Commission's Grievance and Disciplinary Committee met on July 7, 2022, to consider the renewal applications submitted by Ms. Kaycee Staehle for the FY's 2017/18, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22. The NC Supreme Court Rules for the Dispute Resolution Commission (hereinafter "DRC Rules"), Rule 9(b), provides, in part, that certain matters regarding a mediator's moral character, conduct, or fitness to practice shall be forwarded directly to the Grievance and Disciplinary Committee for review.

Ms. Staehle's applications provided false information by failing to acknowledge that at the time she submitted her renewal applications she was currently subject to disciplinary action by the NC State Bar.

The Rules for Mediated Settlement Conferences and Other Settlement Procedures in Superior Court Actions (MSC Rules) were amended by the NC Supreme Court on April 1, 2014, March 1, 2020, and October 1, 2021. Each rule set, as applied to this matter, is defined below.

MSC Rule 8.E, effective from April 1, 2014, until February 28, 2020, provides, "...Once certified, a mediator shall report to the Commission within (30) days of receiving notice any subsequent criminal conviction(s); any disbarment(s) or revocation(s) of a professional license, other disciplinary complaints filed with, or actions taken by, a professional licensing or regulatory body..."

MSC Rule 8(a)(4), effective from March 1, 2020, until June 10, 2020, and amended as to leveling only, becoming Rule 8(a)(5) effective September 30, 2021, provides, "[t]he applicant must be of good moral character and adhere to the Standards of Professional Conduct for Mediators when acting under these rules. On his or her application(s) for certification or application(s) for certification renewal, an applicant shall disclose any: ... e. pending or closed grievances or complaints filed with a professional licensing, certifying, or regulatory body, whether in North Carolina, another state, or another country; ... A mediator shall report to the Commission any of the above-enumerated matters arising subsequent to the disclosures reported on the initial or renewal application for certification within thirty days of receiving notice of the matter."

MSC Rule 8(a)(5), effective October 1, 2021, provides "[t]he applicant must be of good moral character and adhere to the Standards of Professional Conduct for Mediators when acting under these rules. On his or her application(s) for certification or application(s) for certification renewal, an applicant shall disclose any: ... f. disciplinary action taken against him or her by a professional licensing, certifying, or regulatory body, whether in North Carolina, another state, or another country, including, but not limited to, disbarment, revocation, decertification, or suspension of any professional license or certification, including the suspension or revocation of any license, certification, registration, or qualification to serve as a mediator in another state or country, even if stayed; ... If a matter listed in subsections (a)(5)(a) through (a)(5)(h) of this rule arises after a mediator submits his or her initial or renewal application for certification, then the mediator shall report the matter to the Commission no later than thirty days after receiving notice of the matter."

Additionally, the Rules of the Dispute Resolution Commission, Rule 7. Mediator Conduct, requires the disclosure of “disciplinary action imposed upon the mediator by a professional organization...Failure to do so is a violation of these rules.”

Ms. Staehle failed to disclose a pending grievance from the NC State Bar on her certification renewal applications for the fiscal years of FY 2017-18, FY 2019-20, FY 2020-21, and FY 2021-22, as required by the MSC Rules and the DRC Rules, Rule 7.

Pursuant to the DRC Rules, the Grievance and Disciplinary Committee deliberated and determined probable cause existed to believe that the applicant’s conduct was inconsistent with professional behavior, and in violation of the DRC Rules and the MSC Rules. The Grievance and Disciplinary Committee determined to sanction Ms. Staehle by imposing a public admonishment.

Ms. Staehle declined to appeal the Grievance and Disciplinary Committee’s decision to issue a sanction to the full Commission. Therefore, the Grievance and Disciplinary Committee’s determination to impose a sanction on Ms. Staehle of a public, written admonishment, pursuant to DRC Rule 9(e)(13)(b).

You are hereby admonished by the North Carolina Dispute Resolution Commission for your violation of DRC Rules and MSC Rules. The Commission trusts that you will heed this admonishment, that it will be remembered by you, that it will be beneficial to you and that you will never again allow yourself to depart from adherence to the high ethical standards established for mediators serving in North Carolina.