ELC 10.6
DEFAULT PROCEEDINGS

(a) Entry of Default.

(1) Timing. If a respondent lawyer, after being served with a notice to answer as provided in rule 10.4, fails to file an answer to a formal complaint or to an amendment to a formal complaint within the time provided by these rules, disciplinary counsel may serve the respondent with a written motion for an order of default.

(2) Motion. Disciplinary counsel must serve the respondent with a written motion for an order of default and a copy of this rule at least five days before entry of the order of default. The motion for an order of default must include the following:

(A) the dates of filing and service of the notice to answer, formal complaint, and any amendments to the complaint; and

(B) disciplinary counsel's statement that the respondent has not timely filed an answer as required by rule 10.5 and that disciplinary counsel seeks an order of default under this rule.

(3) Entry of Order of Default. If the respondent fails to file a written answer with the Clerk within five days of service of the motion for entry of an order of default, the hearing officer, or if no hearing officer or panel has been assigned, the chief hearing officer, on proof of proper service of the motion, enters an order finding the respondent in default.

(4) Effect of Order of Default. Upon entry of an order of default, the allegations and violations in the formal complaint and any amendments to the complaint are deemed admitted and established for the purpose of imposing discipline and the respondent may not participate further in the proceedings unless the order of default is vacated under this rule.

(b) Proceedings After Entry of an Order of Default.

(1) Service. The Clerk serves the order of default and a copy of this rule under rule 4.2(b).

(2) No Further Notices. After entry of an order of default, no further notices must be served on the respondent except for copies of the decisions of the hearing officer or hearing panel and the Board.

(3) Disciplinary Proceeding. Within 60 days of the filing of the order of default, the hearing officer must conduct a disciplinary proceeding to recommend disciplinary action based on the allegations and violations established under section (a). At the discretion of the hearing officer or panel, these proceedings may be conducted by formal hearing, written submissions, telephone hearing, or other electronic means. Disciplinary counsel may present additional evidence including, but not limited to, requests for admission under rule 10.11(b), and depositions, affidavits, and declarations regardless of the witness's availability.

(c) Setting Aside Default.

(1) Motion To Vacate Order of Default. A respondent may move to vacate the order of default and any decision of the hearing officer or panel or Board arising from the default on the following grounds:

(A) mistake, inadvertence, surprise, excusable neglect, or irregularity in obtaining the default;

(B) erroneous proceedings against a respondent who was, at the time of the default, incapable of conducting a defense;

(C) newly discovered evidence that by due diligence could not have been previously discovered;

(D) fraud, misrepresentation, or other misconduct of an adverse party;

(E) the order of default is void;

(F) unavoidable casualty or misfortune preventing the respondent from defending; or

(G) any other reason justifying relief from the operation of the default.

(2) Time. The motion must be made within a reasonable time and for grounds (A) and (C) within one year after entry of the default. If the respondent's motion is

based on allegations of incapability of conducting a defense, the motion must be made within one year after the disability ceases.

(3) Burden of Proof. The respondent bears the burden of proving the grounds for setting aside the default. If the respondent proves that the default was entered as a result of a disability which made the respondent incapable of conducting a defense, the default must be set aside.

(4) Service and Contents of Motion. The motion must be filed and served under rules 4.1 and 4.2 and be accompanied by a copy of respondent's proposed answer to each formal complaint for which an order of default has been entered. The proposed answer must state with specificity the respondent's asserted defenses and any facts that respondent asserts as mitigation. The motion to vacate the order of default must be supported by an affidavit showing:

(A) the date on which the respondent first learned of the entry of the order of default;

(B) the grounds for setting aside the order of default; and

(C) an offer of proof of the facts that the respondent expects to establish if the order of default is vacated.

(5) Response to Motion. Within ten days of filing and service of the motion to vacate, disciplinary counsel may file and serve a written response.

(6) Decision. The hearing officer or panel decides a motion to vacate the order of default on the written record without oral argument. If the proceedings have been concluded, the chief hearing officer assigns a hearing officer or panel to decide the motion. Pending a ruling on the motion, the hearing officer or panel may order a stay of proceedings not to exceed 30 days. In granting a motion to vacate an order of default, the hearing officer or panel has discretion to order appropriate conditions.

(7) Appeal of Denial of Motion. A respondent may appeal to the Chair a denial of a motion to vacate an order of default by filing and serving a written notice of appeal stating the arguments against the hearing officer or panel's decision. The respondent must file

the notice of appeal within ten days of service on the respondent of the order denying the motion. The appeal is decided on the written record without oral argument. Pending a ruling on the appeal, the Chair may order a stay of proceedings not to exceed 30 days. In granting a motion to vacate an order of default, the Chair has discretion to order appropriate conditions.

(8) Decision To Vacate Is Not Subject to Interim Review. An order setting aside an order of default is not subject to interim review.

(d) Order of Default Not Authorized in Certain Proceedings. The default procedure in this rule does not apply to a proceeding to inquire into a lawyer's capacity to practice law under title 8 except as provided in that title.

[Adopted effective October 1, 2002.]