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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **EOIR Announces Latest Disciplinary Actions Under Rules of Professional Conduct *One Attorney Reinstated; Four Immediately Suspended***

The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has taken disciplinary action against five attorneys after charging them with violations of the rules of professional conduct for immigration practitioners. These rules appear in Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR Parts 3 and 292). The attorneys' violations arose out of sanctions imposed by other jurisdictions.

Disciplinary proceedings began in each case with a Petition for Immediate Suspension and Notice of Intent to Discipline filed with the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) by EOIR's Office of the General Counsel. The BIA then ordered each attorney to be suspended immediately from practice before the Immigration Courts, the BIA, and the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, which is a part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The BIA also required the attorneys to respond to the alleged violations.

#### **Immediate Suspension**

The BIA ordered the immediate suspensions of the following attorneys:

- **Dennis Detmer Burchard**, who was suspended for 9 months from the practice of law in California, was suspended by the BIA on April 8, 2003, pending final disposition of his case.
- **Samuel G. Kooritzky**, who was found guilty on 57 counts of immigration-related fraud and whose license to practice law in Virginia was revoked, was suspended by the BIA on April 8, 2003, pending final disposition of his case.
- **Michael Louis Leavitt**, who was suspended for 18 months from the practice of law in New York, was suspended by the BIA on April 8, 2003, pending final disposition of his case.
- **Rufino J. Villarreal**, who was temporarily suspended from the practice of law in Nebraska, was suspended by the BIA on April 10, 2003.

(more)

## Disciplinary Actions

### Page 2

#### Reinstatement

The BIA reinstated the following attorney to practice before the immigration tribunals after he had completed his period of suspension:

- **Harnam S. Arneja** was reinstated March 17, 2003, after he was reinstated to practice law in the District of Columbia.

#### Summary

In each of the disciplinary matters cited above, the suspended attorney was directed to notify promptly, in writing, any clients with cases currently pending before the BIA, the Immigration Courts, or the DHS that he or she may no longer represent clients before these tribunals.

The rules of professional conduct include provisions specifying grounds for disciplinary action, requirements for receiving and investigating complaints, and procedures for conducting hearings. The rules also authorize the BIA to suspend immediately a practitioner who has been subject to disbarment, suspension, or resignation with an admission of misconduct as imposed by a state or Federal court, pending a summary proceeding and final sanction.

EOIR announces these disciplinary actions to inform the public about practitioners who are not authorized to represent any matter before an immigration tribunal. EOIR also posts a list of suspended and expelled practitioners on its Web site at [www.usdoj.gov/eoir](http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir).

Additional information about the Attorney Discipline Program can be found at [www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcond.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcond.htm) and [www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcondfaks.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcondfaks.htm) on the EOIR Web site.

EOIR, a component of the Department of Justice, is responsible for providing due process to individuals who are charged with immigration law violations. EOIR has more than 220 Immigration Judges located in 52 Immigration Courts nationwide to conduct proceedings and decide individual cases. The agency also includes the BIA to hear appeals of Immigration Judge and DHS district directors' decisions, and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer to handle employment-related immigration matters.

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