

**DOUGLAS J. MINSTER****Public Reprimand No. 2011-24****Order (public reprimand) entered by the Board on November 2, 2011.****SUMMARY**¹

The respondent was admitted to practice law in the Commonwealth on June 15, 1988. He was also admitted to the bar of the District of Columbia. The respondent's license in the District of Columbia was suspended on October 31, 2000, for failure to pay bar "dues." The respondent was also administratively suspended in Massachusetts on November 9, 2001, for failing to file his annual registration statement and pay his registration fee. The respondent knew that his right to practice in both jurisdictions had been administratively suspended.

The respondent was not reinstated in Massachusetts within thirty days of the order of administrative suspension, and, pursuant to S.J.C. Rule 4:03(3), he then became subject to the provisions of S.J.C. Rule 4:01 §17. Among other things, that rule required the respondent to file an affidavit that he had complied with the order of administrative suspension. The respondent failed to file an affidavit of compliance.

In November 2003, the respondent was hired as vice president and general counsel by a publicly-held telecommunications company based in the U.S. Virgin Islands that subsequently moved its headquarters to Massachusetts. The respondent did not advise senior management officials of the company that his right to practice law had been suspended. The respondent's day-to-day responsibilities at the company only occasionally involved the practice of law and largely focused on business development, strategic planning and governmental affairs. As general counsel, the respondent had no legal staff to manage. The respondent hired outside counsel on behalf of the company to provide legal representation.

The respondent did not seek reinstatement to the Massachusetts bar until February 2010. He was reinstated on March 2, 2010. The respondent was reinstated in the District of Columbia on November 22, 2010. The respondent has no prior history of discipline.

By failing to comply with the requirements of the administrative suspension order and S.J.C. Rule 4:01, §17, the respondent violated Mass. R. Prof. C. 3.4(c) and 8.4(d). By failing to inform his employer that he was not authorized to practice law, the respondent violated Mass. R. Prof. C. 1.4(b). By engaging in the practice of law while he was administratively suspended, the respondent violated Mass. R. Prof. C. 5.5(a).

The matter came before the Board of Bar Overseers on the parties' stipulation of facts and rule violations and an agreed recommendation for discipline by public reprimand. On October 17, 2011, the Board voted to accept the parties' stipulation and to impose a public reprimand.

¹ Compiled by the Board of Bar overseers based on the record of proceedings before the Board.