



PUBLIC MATTER

FILED

MAY 23 2016

STATE BAR COURT CLERK'S OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO

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STATE BAR COURT

HEARING DEPARTMENT - SAN FRANCISCO

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| In the Matter of: |) | Case No. 16-O-12282 |
| |) | |
| RONI LYNN DEUTCH , |) | NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY CHARGES |
| No. 152429, |) | |
| |) | |
| A Member of the State Bar |) | |

NOTICE - FAILURE TO RESPOND!

**IF YOU FAIL TO FILE A WRITTEN ANSWER TO THIS NOTICE
WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER SERVICE, OR IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR
AT THE STATE BAR COURT TRIAL:**

- (1) YOUR DEFAULT WILL BE ENTERED;**
- (2) YOUR STATUS WILL BE CHANGED TO INACTIVE AND YOU
WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO PRACTICE LAW;**
- (3) YOU WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE FURTHER
IN THESE PROCEEDINGS UNLESS YOU MAKE A TIMELY
MOTION AND THE DEFAULT IS SET ASIDE, AND;**
- (4) YOU SHALL BE SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL DISCIPLINE.
SPECIFICALLY, IF YOU FAIL TO TIMELY MOVE TO SET
ASIDE OR VACATE YOUR DEFAULT, THIS COURT WILL
ENTER AN ORDER RECOMMENDING YOUR DISBARMENT
WITHOUT FURTHER HEARING OR PROCEEDING. SEE RULE
5.80 ET SEQ., RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE STATE BAR OF
CALIFORNIA.**

1 The State Bar of California alleges:

2 JURISDICTION

3 1. Roni Deutch ("respondent") was admitted to the practice of law in the State of
4 California on June 6, 1991, was a member at all times pertinent to these charges, and is currently
5 a member of the State Bar of California.

6 COUNT ONE

7 Case No. 16-O-12282
8 Rules of Professional Conduct, rule 3-110(A)
9 [Failure to Perform with Competence]

10 2. On or about October 11, 2010, Deborah DeSpain employed respondent to assist
11 DeSpain in reducing her income tax obligation to the Internal Revenue Service with respect to
12 money DeSpain had received from a settlement with DeSpain's prior employer. Respondent
13 intentionally, recklessly, and repeatedly failed to perform the legal services with competence, in
14 willful violation of Rules of Professional Conduct, rule 3-110(A), in the following ways:

15 (a) Respondent's office staff advised DeSpain to seek an offer in compromise with the
16 Internal Revenue Service, which would have required DeSpain to make substantial tax payments,
17 without conducting due diligence to determine whether DeSpain actually owed any taxes for the
18 settlement funds.

19 (b) Between October 13, 2010, and May 25, 2011, respondent failed to perform the
20 services for which she was employed. Respondent closed her law office on May 25, 2011,
21 without notifying DeSpain.

22 (c) Respondent failed to reasonably supervise her office staff, resulting in the misconduct
23 alleged in paragraphs 2 (a) and 2(b). As a further result of respondent's failure to supervise her
24 office staff, DeSpain's reasonable status inquiries, made between in or about January, 2011 and
25 March, 2011, went unanswered.
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COUNT TWO

Case No. 16-O-12282
Business and Professions Code, section 6068(m)
[Failure to Respond to Client Inquiries]

3. Respondent failed to respond to approximately six telephone messages, constituting reasonable status inquiries made by respondent's client, Deborah DeSpain, between in or about January, 2011 and March, 2011, that respondent received in a matter in which respondent had agreed to provide legal services, in willful violation of Business and Professions Code, section 6068(m).

COUNT THREE

Case No. 16-O-12282
Rules of Professional Conduct, rule 3-700(D)(2)
[Failure to Refund Unearned Fees]

4. On or about October 11, 2010, respondent received advanced fees of \$3,687 from a client, Deborah DeSpain, to perform legal services to assist DeSpain in reducing her income tax obligation to the Internal Revenue Service. Respondent failed to perform any legal services for the client, and therefore earned none of the advanced fees paid. Respondent failed to refund, upon respondent's termination of employment on or about May 25, 2011, any part of the \$3,687 fee to the client, in willful violation of Rules of Professional Conduct, rule 3-700(D)(2).

COUNT FOUR

Case No. 16-O-12282
Business and Professions Code, section 6068(i)
[Failure to Cooperate in State Bar Investigation]

5. Respondent failed to cooperate and participate in a disciplinary investigation pending against respondent by failing to provide a substantive response to the State Bar's letter of April 15, 2016, which respondent received, that requested respondent's response to the allegations of

1 misconduct being investigated in case number 16-O-12282 in willful violation of Business and
2 Professions Code, section 6068(i).

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4 COUNT FIVE

5 Case No. 16-O-12282
6 Business and Professions Code, section 6068(j)
[Failure to Update Membership Address]

7 6. In or about 2011, respondent vacated her office at the address maintained on the
8 official membership records of the State Bar and thereafter failed to comply with the
9 requirements of Business and Professions Code section 6002.1, by failing to notify the State Bar
10 of the change in Respondent's address within 30 days, in willful violation of Business and
11 Professions Code, section 6068(j).

12 NOTICE - INACTIVE ENROLLMENT!

13 YOU ARE HEREBY FURTHER NOTIFIED THAT IF THE STATE BAR
14 COURT FINDS, PURSUANT TO BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE
15 SECTION 6007(c), THAT YOUR CONDUCT POSES A SUBSTANTIAL
16 THREAT OF HARM TO THE INTERESTS OF YOUR CLIENTS OR TO
17 THE PUBLIC, YOU MAY BE INVOLUNTARILY ENROLLED AS AN
INACTIVE MEMBER OF THE STATE BAR. YOUR INACTIVE
ENROLLMENT WOULD BE IN ADDITION TO ANY DISCIPLINE
RECOMMENDED BY THE COURT.

18 NOTICE - COST ASSESSMENT!

19 IN THE EVENT THESE PROCEDURES RESULT IN PUBLIC
20 DISCIPLINE, YOU MAY BE SUBJECT TO THE PAYMENT OF COSTS
21 INCURRED BY THE STATE BAR IN THE INVESTIGATION, HEARING
AND REVIEW OF THIS MATTER PURSUANT TO BUSINESS AND
PROFESSIONS CODE SECTION 6086.10.

22 Respectfully submitted,

23 THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA
24 OFFICE OF CHIEF TRIAL COUNSEL

25
26 DATED: May 20, 2016

27 By: 
Donald R. Steedman
Acting Assistant Chief Trial Counsel

1 **DECLARATION OF SERVICE BY CERTIFIED AND REGULAR MAIL**

2 **RE: RONI LYNN DEUTCH**
3 **CASE NO. 16-O-12282**

4 I, the undersigned, over the age of eighteen (18) years, whose business address and place of
5 employment is the State Bar of California, 180 Howard Street, San Francisco, California
6 94105, declare that I am not a party to the within action; that I am readily familiar with the
7 State Bar of California's practice for collection and processing of correspondence for mailing
8 with the United States Postal Service; that in the ordinary course of the State Bar of
9 California's practice, correspondence collected and processed by the State Bar of California
10 would be deposited with the United States Postal Service that same day; that I am aware that
11 on motion of party served, service is presumed invalid if postal cancellation date or postage
12 meter date on the envelope or package is more than one day after date of deposit for mailing
13 contained in the affidavit; and that in accordance with the practice of the State Bar of
14 California for collection and processing of mail, I deposited or placed for collection and
15 mailing in the City and County of San Francisco, on the date shown below, a true copy of the
16 within

17 **NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY CHARGES**

18 in a sealed envelope placed for collection and mailing as *certified mail, return receipt*
19 **requested**, and in an additional sealed envelope as *regular mail*, at San Francisco, on the date
20 shown below, addressed to:

21 **Article No. 9414 7266 9904 2042 4852 08:**

22 **RONI LYNN DEUTCH**
23 **Law Ofc Roni Lynn Deutch**
24 **4815 Watt Ave**
25 **North Highlands, CA 95660**

26 **Article No. 9414 7266 9904 2042 4852 15:**

27 **RONI LYNN DEUTCH**
28 **2795 E. BIDWELL ST., SUITE 100-118**
29 **FOLSOM, CA 95630**

30 **(Courtesy Copy)**


31 in an inter-office mail facility regularly maintained by the State Bar of California addressed to:

32 **N/A**

33 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the
34 foregoing is true and correct. Executed at San Francisco, California, on the date shown below.

35 **DATED: May 23, 2016**

36 **Signed:**

37 
38 **Dawn Williams**
39 **Declarant**