

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD  
OF THE  
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION  
AND  
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

In the Matter of:	)	
	)	
SAMI ZIAD AZHARI,	)	
	)	Commission No. 2023PR00007
Attorney-Respondent,	)	
	)	
No. 6294661.	)	

COMPLAINT

Jerome Larkin, Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, by his attorney, Jonathan M. Wier, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 753(b), complains of Respondent Sami Ziad Azhari, who was licensed to practice law in Illinois on December 18, 2007, and alleges that Respondent has engaged in the following conduct which subjects him to discipline pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 770:

*(Inappropriate Sexual Relationship with Client)*

1. In August 2014, and at all times alleged in this complaint, Respondent practiced law with his law firm known as Azhari, LLC. His practice concentrated in the representation of individuals who had been accused of criminal conduct.

2. In May 2014, the State's Attorney of DuPage County charged Lisa M. Fasano with the misdemeanor criminal offense of telephone harassment. This matter was docketed by the clerk of the circuit court as *People v. Fasano*, DuPage County case number 14 CM 1406.

3. Attorney Lewis Gainor and Ms. Fasano agreed that Mr. Gainor would represent her in matters relating to the defense of the pending criminal case in DuPage County. Ms. Fasano paid Mr. Gainor a fee of \$4,000.

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4. On or prior to August 10, 2014, Respondent and Ms. Fasano agreed that Respondent would represent her in the criminal case. On August 12, 2014, Mr. Gainor filed a motion to withdraw and for substitution of attorneys. On August 18, 2014, a substitution of attorney was filed in Ms. Fasano's criminal case providing that Respondent would substitute as her attorney in place of Mr. Gainor. At the time that Respondent substituted as Ms. Fasano's counsel, he did not have an ongoing sexual relationship with her.

5. In October or November 2014, Respondent began having sexual relations with Ms. Fasano, while he was still representing her in case number 14 CM 1406.

6. Between August 2014 and April 27, 2015, Respondent represented Ms. Fasano in case number 14 CM 1406. On April 27, 2015, following a bench trial, the Court found Ms. Fasano guilty of the Class B Misdemeanor of telephone harassment – lewd comment and sentenced her to eighteen months of court supervision.

7. By reason of the conduct described above, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. engaging in a sexual relationship with his client, Lisa Fasano, after the client-lawyer relationship commenced, in violation of Rule 1.8(j) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

WHEREFORE, the Administrator requests that this matter be referred to a panel of the Hearing Board of the Commission, that a hearing be conducted, and that the Hearing Panel make findings of fact, conclusions of fact and law, and a recommendation for such discipline as is warranted.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Larkin, Administrator  
Attorney Registration and  
Disciplinary Commission

By: /s/ Jonathan M. Wier  
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