

The Supreme Court of the State of Louisiana

IN RE: SALVADOR RANDAZZO

No. 2025-B-00772

IN RE: Office of Disciplinary Counsel - Applicant Other; Findings and
Recommendations (Formal Charges);

September 10, 2025

Suspension imposed. See per curiam.

JBM

JLW

JDH

PDG

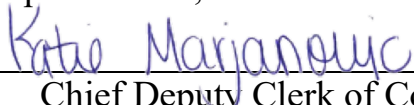
JMG

CRC

Crain, J., dissents and would reject the proposed discipline as too lenient.

Supreme Court of Louisiana

September 10, 2025



Chief Deputy Clerk of Court
For the Court

SUPREME COURT OF LOUISIANA

NO. 2025-B-0772

IN RE: SALVADOR RANDAZZO

ATTORNEY DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDING

PER CURIAM

This disciplinary matter arises from formal charges filed by the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (“ODC”) against respondent, Salvador Randazzo, an attorney licensed to practice law in Louisiana.¹

UNDERLYING FACTS

The following counts are based on three disciplinary complaints filed against respondent by Judge Darren Roy, Division “D” of the 34th JDC. Respondent, who is a litigant in the case of *Salvador J. Randazzo, Individually, and as Executor of the Succession of Lawrence J. Randazzo, and Succession of Josephine L. Randazzo, and Lorene A. Randazzo v. Petrina Ruiz Imbraguglio, Alex Ruiz, Gerald J. Ruiz, Jr., Cristy Ruiz Ourso, the Heirs of Decedent, Camille Ruiz, Manual J. Randazzo, Sr., Lena Torres Nunez, Sidney D. Torres, III, Lena Torres, and Randazzo Property Corporation*; Docket No. 15-1017, 34th JDC, Parish of St. Bernard. The case was assigned to Judge Roy’s docket.

Count I

In his complaint, Judge Roy alleged that between May 5, 2021 and May 26, 2021, respondent made inappropriate statements in phone calls and voicemails to

¹ Respondent has been ineligible to practice law since September 9, 2024 for failure to pay his bar dues and the disciplinary assessment.

Judge Roy's office and staff. The statements include, but are not limited to: (1) derogatory statements about parties involved in the litigation, and judges who presided over the case prior to recusal; (2) statements discussing the litigation; (3) questions to the judge's staff as to how Judge Roy would rule on various issues; (4) statements to the judge's staff of the actions respondent will potentially take in the future depending on potential rulings by Judge Roy; (5) statements discussing various disciplinary complaints respondent has filed against attorneys and judges; (6) statements and questions towards Judge Roy's staff member pertaining to her family and work history; (7) statements about possible decisions from the judiciary commission; (8) statements referencing a non-involved judge who spent time in federal prison and that he "wouldn't want Judge Roy to serve time in prison"; and (9) statements accusing Judge Roy of treating other parties more favorably than respondent.

On May 27, 2021, Judge Roy signed an order directing all parties in the litigation to contact the court and/or staff via email only. Respondent forwarded documentation/emails to Judge Roy, Judge Roy's staff, the court reporter, and other parties to the litigation; however, the documents/emails (dated before and after the court's order) included unnecessary ex parte information and statements seeking to influence the judge ("I need the transcript ... to attach to my complaint against Darren Roy with the Judicial Commission") and statements respondent knew to be false or with reckless disregard concerning the qualifications or integrity of Judge Roy ("right out of the box on May 6, 2021 his bias came through").

In his response to the complaint, respondent defended his conduct and made several negative comments about the qualifications and integrity of Judge Roy. At his sworn statement, respondent admitted making the calls to Judge Roy's office and stated that he had the right to call the judge's office and that some of the statements to the staff included information contained in the public record and/or "that's been

known to everyone in St. Bernard Parish Court House since 1941...” Respondent admitted that he regretted only one of the phone calls as it contained statements that were not necessary for the judge to know, except at the hearing in the matter.

The ODC alleged that respondent’s conduct violated Rules 3.5(a) (a lawyer shall not seek to influence a judge, juror, prospective juror, or other official by means prohibited by law), 3.5(b) (a lawyer shall not communicate ex parte with such a person during the proceeding unless authorized to do so by law or court order), 8.4(a) (violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct), and 8.4(d) (engaging in conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice) of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

Count II

In his complaint, Judge Roy alleged that respondent filed two pleadings that contained statements and accusations which respondent knew to be false, or at best, demonstrated a reckless disregard of the truth concerning the integrity of Judge Roy.

The first pleading, captioned “Designation of Record for Appeal of Judgment Pertaining to Hearing of May 6, 2021 Converted by Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal from Supervisory Writ to Appeal,” contains the following statements:

- “Darren Roy was busy serving Salvador J. Randazzo with every order he signed except the Order he was directed to sign by the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal.”
- “Salvador J. Randazzo due to no fault of his own but due solely to the contrivance of Darren Roy was not provided the District Court’s order in a timely manner.”
- “Salvador J. Randazzo can only think of 1 reason why Darren Roy, trial judge did not email his order signed on August 2, 2021 to undersigned counsel and that is that he wanted the time limit to pass so that undersigned counsel could not designate the record, and would have to pay to have the entire record

copied for the appeal. This cost of copying the entire record, 95 percent of which involves other Randazzo properties and issues would be prohibitive and Darren Roy wanted this appeal to be stopped. Darren Roy believed or believes that compelling the payment of such a huge amount of money to get irrelevant and immaterial pleadings copied would be sufficient to deter the continued prosecution of this matter before the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal.”

- “Despite the machinations of the trial judge, Darren Roy and anyone else that he has had ex parte communications with, Salvador J. Randazzo files this pleading ...”

The second pleading, captioned “Motion for Recusal of Darren Roy, Judge Division “D” 34th Judicial District Court Parish of St. Bernard, State of Louisiana,” contains the following statements:

- “Darren Roy as trial Judge signed an order pursuant to the remand of the case, BUT DARREN ROY DID NOT EMAIL A COPY TO SALVADOR J. RANDAZZO AND DID ...”
- “NOT HAVE SALVADOR J. RANDAZZO SERVED WITH A COPY OF HIS COURT ORDER. DARREN ROY SAT ON THE AUGUST 2, ORDER THAT HE SIGNED, LETTING TIME PASS WHICH WOULD HAVE ADVERSELY AFFECT THE APPELLATE RIGHTS OF SALVADOR J. RANDAZZO.”
- “To take this kind of action is nothing less than malicious.”

In his response to the complaint, respondent denied that his conduct violated the rules, adding that he has the right and privilege to state what he believes is a reasonable conclusion in the pleadings he files. His response also contained several comments that are either false, or made with reckless disregard as to the truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge, including but not limited to the following:

- “Darren Roy will only do the minimum required of him ... He says so in black and white. My statements point out that he may be lazy and have incompetent staff.”
- “It appears that these two complaints from a ‘District Judge’ ... are an attempt to improperly and illegally tamper with my law license.”

At his sworn statement, respondent was asked to provide facts or evidence to support the statements he had made about Judge Roy in his pleadings. Respondent provided no facts or evidence, only his beliefs and opinions based on decisions and events that occurred (or did not occur).

The ODC alleged that respondent’s conduct violated Rules 8.2(a) (a lawyer shall not make a statement that the lawyer knows to be false or with reckless disregard as to its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge), 8.4(a), and 8.4(d) of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

Count III

In his complaint, Judge Roy alleged that respondent filed numerous pleadings containing statements and accusations which respondent knew to be false, or at best, demonstrated a reckless disregard of the truth concerning the integrity of Judge Roy.

On October 27, 2021, respondent filed with this court a pleading, captioned “Applying for Supervisory Writ Application from the Ruling of the Louisiana Court of Appeal, No. 2021-C-0444, Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit, State of Louisiana,” which contained statements about Judge Roy, Judge Hans Liljeberg, and the Fourth Circuit. The statements include, but are not limited to:

- “... the Fourth Circuit did not look very hard.”
- “... the Fourth Circuit rendered a feckless decision...”
- “The baseless and flawed decision by the trial court and the Fourth Circuit’s illogical and vulgar blessing of the trial court’s action...”

- “The trial court’s error is glaring and perverts the procedural laws...”
- “This Court must correct the Fourth Circuit’s unanimous error wherein three (3) court of appeal judges could not see or did not want to see how corrupt the trial court’s decision would be and its effect on later lawsuits.”
- “The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal was blind to the error...”
- “Not even in St. Bernard Parish can this atrocity be allowed to stand.”

This court did not consider respondent’s writ, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule VII, §7.² Justices Crichton and Crain concurred, noting the conduct was a blatant violation of the court’s rule prohibiting discourteous language under Rule VII, § 7, as well as General Administrative Rule, Part G, § 11, which requires lawyers to speak and write civilly and respectfully in all communications with the court.

On January 6, 2022, respondent filed a pleading, captioned “Memorandum in Support of Plaintiff’s/Applicant’s Motion for Recusal of Judge Darren Roy, Judge Division ‘D’ 34th Judicial District Court,” which contained statements that include, but are not limited to:

- “It appeared that neither did the Judge Darren Roy seem to care as it was not apparent that he even bothered to look at the pleadings Randazzo filed.”
- “Judge Roy’s favoritism of Sidney D. Torres II and Lena Torres Nunez was on full display.”
- “Judge Darren Roy wants to hold on to this case.”
- “Judge Roy desperately wanted to make decisions on May 6, 2021 and then May 27, 2021 or else he would have without hesitation recused himself...”
- “Why is Judge Darren Roy so desperate to stay as the presiding judge in the corporation lawsuit?”

² Supreme Court Rule VII, §7 provides, “[t]he language used in any brief or document filed in this court must be courteous, and free from insulting criticism of any person, individually or officially, or of any class or association of persons, or of any court of justice, or other institution.”

- “Judge Darren Roy’s conduct was not negligent but was intentional. Judge Darren Roy did not make any simple mistake, his actions have been calculated and conniving and have caused serious damages to Salvador J. Randazzo...”

On March 11, 2022, respondent filed a pleading with the Fourth Circuit regarding the recusal proceeding conducted by Judge Hans Liljeberg (ad hoc), which contained statements that include, but are not limited to:

- “...judicial integrity has reached a new low.”
- “Judge Liljeberg ignored the ethical and codal provisions in order to rule that Judge Roy may keep these proceedings in front of him.”
- “Judge Roy’s action of filing two complaints are obviously spiteful and hateful acts, beyond any legitimate courtroom procedure concern or judicial integrity concern.”
- “A cloistered lifetime of handling misdemeanor cases and traffic offenses in a nook in the St. Bernard Parish DA’s didn’t sufficiently prepare Judge Roy to act as a District Judge as he claimed when he was running for the Hon. Kirk S. Vaughn’s seat in Division “D.”

On March 24, 2022, the Fourth Circuit denied respondent’s writ application.

In April 2022, respondent filed with this court a pleading, captioned “Application for Supervisory Writ or Writ of Certiorari and Review to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal, State of La., Docket No. 2022-C-0158; 34th JDC, Parish of St. Bernard, State of La., Docket No. 2015-1017, Hon. Hans Liljeberg, Judge-Ad-Hoc, Presiding Judge,” which contained statements about Judge Roy and Judge Liljeberg, that include, but are not limited to:

- “Recording all of undersigned counsel’s calls and then dangling them in front of the Office of Disciplinary Counsel is an obvious intimidation tactic.”
- Every time undersigned counsel entered Div. “D” before Judge Roy, he exhibited a bias and prejudice against him...”

- The second complaint by Darren Roy to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel is not concerned [with] Judge Roy’s integrity but rather with doing harm to undersigned counsel.”

On June 22, 2022, this court denied respondent’s writ application.

In his response to the complaint, respondent continued to make statements pertaining to the qualifications and integrity of Judge Roy and further claimed that Judge Roy is biased and prejudiced against him. At his sworn statement, respondent provided no facts or evidence to support the statements he had made about the judges and the courts in the pleadings, only his beliefs and opinions stemming from the actions and decisions in the litigation. Respondent continued to make statements he knew to be false or with reckless disregard as to its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of judges/justices and courts at all levels of appeal.

The ODC alleged that respondent’s conduct violated Rules 8.2(a), 8.4(a), and 8.4(d) of the Rules of Professional Conduct, as well as Supreme Court Rule VII, §7, and Supreme Court General Administrative Rule, Part G, § 11.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS:

In September 2024, the ODC filed formal charges against respondent as set forth above. Respondent answered the formal charges, and denied any misconduct. Accordingly, the matter proceeded to a formal hearing on the merits.

The hearing committee conducted the formal hearing on February 24, 2025. Respondent did not appear for the hearing.³ The ODC was represented by Deputy Disciplinary Counsel Robin Mitchell. The ODC introduced documentary evidence,

³ Respondent failed to participate in the prehearing telephone conferences in this matter. Someone claiming to be his sister called the disciplinary board on multiple occasions to advise that he was ill and/or hospitalized. The committee chair directed respondent, or someone on his behalf to file evidence of his medical status. Nothing was filed. At the conclusion of the hearing, the record was held open for thirty days to allow respondent to submit evidence of his medical status and/or to move to transfer to disability inactive status. Neither occurred.

including phone records and transcripts, emails to court staffers, pleadings filed by respondent, and other relevant documents. The following witnesses testified at the hearing: Judge Darren Roy, 34th JDC, Parish of St. Bernard; Hans Liljeberg, former judge on the Fifth Circuit and current councilman for Jefferson Parish; Alyssa Lucy Wineski, former law clerk for Judge Roy; Rachel Kessler, administrative assistant to Judge Roy; and Cecilia Menesses, court reporter for Judge Roy.

Hearing Committee Report

After considering the evidence and testimony presented at the hearing, the committee made factual findings consistent with the underlying facts set forth above.

The committee indicated that the witnesses provided credible, first-hand accounts of respondent's actions and statements, both written and verbal. Particular weight was given to the testimony of Judge Roy, whose staff members were on the receiving end of respondent's calls and emails. Judge Roy recognized the problematic nature of the conduct. The committee found the testimony of all witnesses to be credible.

The committee found the ODC proved by clear and convincing evidence that respondent violated Rules 3.5(a), 3.5(b), 8.2(a), 8.4(a), and 8.4(d) of the Rules of Professional Conduct, Supreme Court Rule VII, § 7, and Supreme Court General Administrative Rule Part G, § 11. With respect to each rule violation, the committee determined, in pertinent part:

Rule 3.5 – Respondent called Judge Roy's office on at least eight occasions, at times leaving rambling voicemails and engaging in one-way legal arguments with staff members. Ms. Wineski described a typical call, where respondent would "start off much calmer at the beginning of the phone calls, and then he would almost, like, work himself up because as you can tell, I'm not saying much, and he is just, kind of, getting more and more - I don't know if angry - just loud, worked up, passionate

- ." Ms. Kessler testified that in a typical call from respondent, he "would always ask me what he should do, what I thought the judge was going to do, how he should handle that." Ms. Menesses testified that respondent rambled during his calls and complained about the judge and many others involved in the litigation. His phone calls became such a problem for staff, such that Judge Roy issued an order requiring respondent to communicate via email only.

Rule 8.2 – In two pleadings he filed in matters before Judge Roy, respondent falsely accused the judge of purposely withholding service of a court order. Then, in the motion to recuse, respondent included multiple attacks on the judge's integrity. Judge Roy denied the allegations and demonstrated how the court records showed them to be false.

Supreme Court Rule VII, § 7 and Supreme Court Administrative Rule Part G, § 11 - Respondent's pleadings contained numerous false statements and accusations about the qualifications and integrity of Judge Roy, Judge Liljeberg, and the judges of the Fourth Circuit, all of whom denied respondent the relief he sought. In his application to this court, he "launched a broadside against the two lower courts." His memorandum supporting his motion to recuse Judge Roy was little more than a vehicle for respondent to vent his spleen against the judge. In his application to the Fourth Circuit, he sought review of Judge Liljeberg's ruling on the motion, and again used the occasion to attack the ethics and integrity of Judge Liljeberg and Judge Roy.

Rule 8.4 – Taken as a whole, respondent's egregious accusations, ad hominem attacks, and numerous and improper ex parte contacts violated this rule. He abused the legal process and prejudiced the administration of justice in three different courts with his personal agenda against sitting judges.

The committee found respondent intentionally violated duties owed to the legal system and the legal profession. He repeatedly attacked the qualifications and integrity of Judge Roy, and his clear objective or purpose was to obtain favorable

treatment from the appellate courts. His conduct continued after being admonished in the concurring opinions of this court. He repeatedly engaged in improper ex parte communications with Judge Roy's staff. His calls with court staff contained implied threats, improper and inappropriate statements about the litigants and counsel, as well as improper questions and statements about procedure, legal strategy, and Judge Roy's opinions on issues. He caused actual harm by impugning the integrity of sitting judges, making false statements, attempting to manipulate the judicial process with threats and coercion, abusing the appellate and supervisory jurisdiction of the courts, and engaging in improper ex parte contact with court staff on multiple occasions. Relying on the ABA's *Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions*, the committee determined that the baseline sanction is disbarment.

The committee found that the following aggravating factors are present: a dishonest or selfish motive, bad faith obstruction of the disciplinary proceeding by intentionally failing to comply with rules or orders of the disciplinary agency, refusal to acknowledge the wrongful nature of the conduct, and substantial experience in the practice of law (admitted 1982). The committee found no mitigating factors are present, noting that respondent did not submit any evidence to support mitigation.

Turning to the issue of an appropriate sanction, the committee noted that this court has addressed cases which involve similar instances of attorney misconduct, and only one case resulted in disbarment, which is the baseline sanction in the ABA Standards for intentional misconduct. The committee determined that respondent's conduct, while serious and sanctionable, does not warrant disbarment. Considering the facts and circumstances of this case, and following the analogous decisions of this court, the committee concluded that a lengthy suspension is warranted.

Accordingly, the committee recommended that respondent be suspended from the practice of law for three years, with eighteen months deferred, and that he be assessed with the costs and expenses of this proceeding.

Neither respondent nor the ODC filed an objection to the hearing committee's report. Therefore, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule XIX, § 11(G), the disciplinary board submitted the committee's report to the court for review.

DISCUSSION

Bar disciplinary matters fall within the original jurisdiction of this court. La. Const. art. V, § 5(B). Consequently, we act as triers of fact and conduct an independent review of the record to determine whether the alleged misconduct has been proven by clear and convincing evidence. *In re: Banks*, 09-1212 (La. 10/2/09), 18 So. 3d 57. While we are not bound in any way by the findings and recommendations of the hearing committee and disciplinary board, we have held the manifest error standard is applicable to the committee's factual findings. *See In re: Caulfield*, 96-1401 (La. 11/25/96), 683 So. 2d 714; *In re: Pardue*, 93-2865 (La. 3/11/94), 633 So. 2d 150.

The record establishes by clear and convincing evidence that respondent filed pleadings containing statements about a judge which he knew were false, or showed reckless disregard of the truth, and engaged in inappropriate communications with a judge's office. This conduct violated Rules 3.5(a), 3.5(b), 8.2(a), 8.4(a), and 8.4(d) of the Rules of Professional Conduct, Supreme Court Rule VII, § 7, and Supreme Court Administrative Rule Part G, § 11, as charged in the formal charges.

In determining a sanction, we are mindful that disciplinary proceedings are designed to maintain high standards of conduct, protect the public, preserve the integrity of the profession, and deter future misconduct. *Louisiana State Bar Ass'n v. Reis*, 513 So. 2d 1173 (La. 1987). The discipline to be imposed depends upon the facts of each case and the seriousness of the offenses involved considered in light of any aggravating and mitigating circumstances. *Louisiana State Bar Ass'n v. Whittington*, 459 So. 2d 520 (La. 1984).

Respondent violated duties owed to the legal system and the legal profession. His actions were intentional, and caused actual harm. The baseline sanction for this type of misconduct is disbarment. The record supports the aggravating factors found by the hearing committee, and no mitigating factors are present.

In the court's jurisprudence addressing similar misconduct, only one case resulted in disbarment. That case, *In re: McCool*, 15-0284 (La. 6/30/15), 172 So. 3d 1058, involved an attorney who launched a lengthy social media campaign to affect the outcome of a case she was handling, and she used social media to induce and encourage ex parte communications by the public and disseminate false and misleading information about the presiding judge.⁴ Unlike *McCool*, the audience for respondent's false statements was essentially limited to judicial staff and presiding judges in the courts.

More often, we have imposed a period of suspension that ranges from one year and one day to three years. *See e.g., In re: Klein*, 23-0066 (La. 5/18/23), 362 So. 3d 392 (one year and one day suspension imposed upon an attorney who made unsubstantiated disparaging remarks about a judge and opposing counsel, engaged in ex parte communications with a law clerk, continued to file duplicative pleadings after being ordered by the court to refrain from doing so, and removed a case to federal court solely for the purpose of delay);⁵ *In re: Abadie*, 20-1276 (La. 5/13/21), 320 So. 3d 1073 (one year and one day suspension imposed upon attorney who made a false statement about the integrity of a judge, filed improper pleadings, and failed to follow court procedures);⁶ *In re: Mire*, 15-1453 (La. 2/19/16), 197 So. 3d 656, (one year and one day suspension, with all but six months deferred, imposed upon an attorney who made statements in a writ application accusing district and appellate

⁴ Chief Justice Weimer and Justice Guidry concurred in part and dissented in part.

⁵ Justice McCallum concurred in part and dissented in part.

⁶ Chief Justice Weimer, Justice Hughes, and Justice Griffin concurred in part and dissented in part.

court judges of incompetence and/or corruption and suggesting their decisions were driven by political gain);⁷ In *In re: Cook*, 06-0426 (La. 6/16/06), 932 So. 2d 669 (three-year suspension, with all but eighteen months deferred, imposed upon an attorney who filed repetitive and unwarranted pleadings in ongoing litigation and made frivolous and harassing claims for discovery against persons not involved in the litigation); *Louisiana State Bar Ass'n v. Karst*, 428 So. 2d 406 (La. 1983) (one year suspension imposed upon an attorney accused a judge of being “dishonest, corrupt and engaging in fraud and misconduct,” and caused his unfounded accusations to be published in the local newspaper).

Here, the hearing committee has recommended a three-year suspension, with eighteen months deferred, which falls within the range of sanctions we have imposed for similar misconduct. We agree that the recommended sanction is appropriate. Accordingly, we will adopt the committee’s recommendation and impose a three-year suspension, with eighteen months deferred.

DECREE

Upon review of the findings and recommendations of the hearing committee, and considering the record, it is ordered that Salvador Randazzo, Louisiana Bar Roll number 01551, be and he hereby is suspended from the practice of law for three years, with eighteen months deferred. Any misconduct during the deferral period may be grounds for making the deferred portion of the suspension executory or imposing additional discipline, as appropriate. All costs and expenses in the matter are assessed against respondent in accordance with Supreme Court Rule XIX, § 10.1, with legal interest to commence thirty days from the date of finality of this court’s judgment until paid.

⁷ Chief Justice Weimer and Justice Hughes dissented.