

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

IN RE: REINSTATEMENT OF
RONALD L. CORDES.

No. 38923

FILED

JUL 26 2002

ORDER OF REINSTATEMENT¹

JANETTE M BLOOM
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT
BY *J. Richards*
CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK

This is a petition for reinstatement to the practice of law by Ronald L. Cordes. Cordes was temporarily suspended on January 19, 2000. On November 30, 2000, we entered an order of suspension pursuant to a conditional guilty plea agreement under SCR 113. Cordes was suspended for three years, with two years stayed, and with the one year actual suspension to run from June 15, 2000. Additionally, Cordes was ordered to satisfy several conditions during the term of his suspension before petitioning for reinstatement. The plea agreement called for a two-year probationary period following his reinstatement, with several conditions, and noted that the conditions could be modified by the reinstatement panel.

On September 13, 2001, Cordes filed a petition for reinstatement, and a hearing was held before a Southern Nevada Disciplinary Board hearing panel. At the hearing, Cordes presented evidence that he has paid over \$20,000 in restitution to the former clients harmed by his actions, has paid the costs of the disciplinary proceeding

¹We direct the clerk of this court to amend the caption on this court's docket to conform with the caption on this order.

and the reinstatement proceeding, and has paid a \$2,500 fine imposed by the suspension order. In addition, Cordes presented evidence that he has refrained from alcohol and gambling for over two years, and that he continues to attend Alcoholics Anonymous and Gamblers Anonymous meetings regularly. Cordes also satisfied the condition that he pass the Multi-State Professional Responsibility Examination, and has taken a significant number of continuing legal education classes.

The panel recommended that the petition be granted, subject to a two-year probationary period with several conditions substantially mirroring those in the plea agreement. The conditions require Cordes to pay an outstanding sanction of \$750 imposed by the Eighth Judicial District Court by June 15, 2003, abstain from gambling, drugs and alcohol, submit to random drug and alcohol tests at least twelve times per year during the probationary period and facilitate his availability for such tests, inform the state bar of any prescription medication he takes, notify the state bar of any travel outside the Clark County area, provide quarterly reports from a psychologist or psychiatrist, provide a quarterly affidavit swearing that he has not used drugs or alcohol or gambled, continue to make good faith efforts to resolve any potential malpractice claims, and refrain from engaging in solo practice. In addition, to the extent not already accomplished, Cordes must complete sufficient CLE courses to be current for the years 2000 and 2001. If Cordes is employed by a private firm, then he must enter into a mentoring agreement with a mentor approved by the state bar; if he is employed in the public sector, then he must consent to and authorize his immediate supervisor to discuss with the state bar his work performance, attendance and reliability. The panel recommended that it retain jurisdiction in case Cordes fails to

satisfy these conditions or engages in misconduct, so that it can consider whether further discipline is warranted, including recommending to this court that his reinstatement be revoked and/or that the remaining two years' suspension be imposed.


Having reviewed the record, we conclude that while Cordes' misconduct was serious, his efforts to remedy the effects of his actions and to address the addictions that led to his misconduct are impressive. We conclude that clear and convincing evidence supports the panel's recommendation, and that Cordes has demonstrated that he has the moral qualifications, competency, and learning in law required for admission to practice in this state, and that his resumption of the practice of law will not be detrimental to the public, the integrity of the bar, or to the administration of justice. We further conclude that the probationary conditions recommended by the panel are appropriate, as is the panel's recommendation that it retain jurisdiction over Cordes during the probationary period.

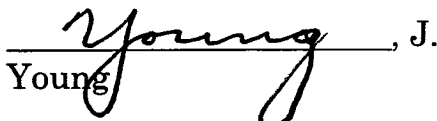
We note, however, that while Cordes is required to have a mentor should he be employed in private practice, the panel's recommendation contains no conditions on Cordes' ability to handle funds, particularly client funds, during the probationary period. In light of the misconduct that led to his suspension, and Cordes' admission during the hearing that he should not have access to client funds at this time, we have determined that an additional condition should be imposed in the event that Cordes is employed in the private sector during his probationary period.

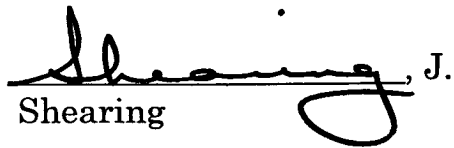
Accordingly, we reinstate Cordes to the practice of law, subject to a two-year probationary period with the conditions imposed by the

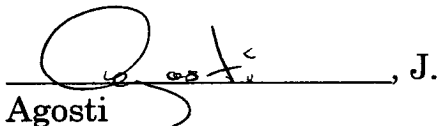
hearing panel. In addition, in the event that Cordes is employed by a private firm, he shall not have access to the firm's bank accounts, particularly the firm's client trust account, during the probationary period. The reinstatement panel shall retain jurisdiction over Cordes during the probationary period.

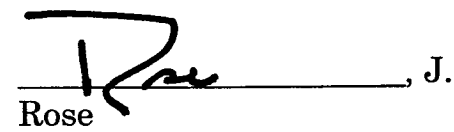
It is so ORDERED.



Maupin

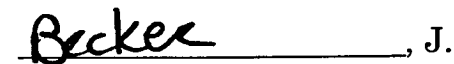

Young


Shearing


Agosti


Rose


Leavitt


Becker

cc: Richard J. Pocker, Chair,
Southern Nevada Disciplinary Board
Rob W. Bare, Bar Counsel
Allen W. Kimbrough, Executive Director
Perry Thompson, Admissions Office,
Supreme Court of the United States
Ronald L. Cordes