

Public Discipline

These summaries are based on information provided by the Office of Lawyer Regulation (OLR), an agency of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The OLR assists the court in supervising the practice of law and protecting the public from misconduct by lawyers. The full text of matters summarized can be located at <https://compendium.wicourts.gov/app/search>.

Disciplinary Proceeding Against Leslie M. Smith

On May 28, 2025, the Wisconsin Supreme Court granted Leslie M. Smith's petition for consensual revocation of her license to practice law in Wisconsin, effective immediately. *Disciplinary Proc. Against Smith*, 2025 WI 19.

On June 7, 2023, the United States filed a criminal complaint alleging that Smith committed one count of health-care fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1347(a). On Feb. 5, 2024, the United States filed an information charging Smith with one count of health-care fraud (in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1347(a)), three counts of wire fraud (in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343), and four counts of tax evasion (in violation of 26 U.S.C. § 7201). That same day, Smith and the United States filed a plea agreement in which she agreed to plead guilty to all eight counts and stipulated to the salient facts in the information as a factual basis for her plea. Smith pleaded guilty to the eight counts on May 8, 2024, and was sentenced to 66 months in federal prison. Smith was ordered to pay \$2,341,655.08 in restitution and to forfeit her interests in several pieces of real and personal property and financial accounts.

Based on her conviction, Smith's license to practice law was summarily suspended on July 23, 2024.

The Office of Lawyer Regulation (OLR) submitted a memo recommending that the court grant Smith's petition. In her petition, Smith stated that she could not successfully defend herself against the allegations of misconduct. She averred that she was filing the petition freely, voluntarily, and knowingly; that she un-

derstood that she has the right to retain counsel in the matter; that she understood she is giving up the right to contest the misconduct allegations; and that she is aware that if this court grants the petition and revokes her license to practice law in Wisconsin, Supreme Court Rules 22.26-.33 apply.

Reinstatement of Kevin R. Rosin

On May 27, 2025, the Wisconsin Supreme Court reinstated the law license of Kevin R. Rosin, effective immediately. *Disciplinary Proc. Against Rosin*, 2025 WI 18.

Rosin's disciplinary history consists of a one-year license suspension, effective May 25, 2023 (*Rosin I*), and a six-month suspension imposed consecutively to the discipline ordered in *Rosin I* (*Rosin II*).

In *Rosin I*, the court held that Rosin violated SCR 20:8.4(c)3 and the standard of conduct set forth in *In re Disciplinary Proceedings Against Shea*, 190 Wis. 2d 560, 527 N.W.2d 314 (1995), actionable via SCR 20:8.4(f), by forming a Wisconsin limited liability company dedicated to providing patent law services in violation of the terms of his employment as an attorney at an intellectual property law firm; soliciting a firm client and providing services to that client outside the firm; billing, collecting, and retaining for himself legal fees that should have been billed through the firm; soliciting another potential client to provide services outside the firm; and making misrepresentations to the firm when initially confronted with questions about his actions.

In *Rosin II*, the court held that Rosin violated these same professional standards by engaging in conduct that allowed two

firms to believe he was a full-time and exclusive employee of each firm for about two weeks, failing to tell either firm of his simultaneous employment by both firms, and misleading one or both firms as to the simultaneous employment.

Rosin filed a petition for reinstatement of his license on Aug. 30, 2024. On Feb. 6, 2025, Rosin and the OLR entered into a stipulation whereby they jointly recommended that Rosin's license be reinstated. Based on that stipulation, the court concluded that Rosin established by clear, satisfactory, and convincing evidence that he satisfied all the criteria necessary for reinstatement.

Disciplinary Proceedings Against Daniel P. Steffen

On July 1, 2025, the Wisconsin Supreme Court revoked the law license of Daniel P. Steffen, retroactive to June 22, 2023, and ordered that he pay the \$9,574.37 cost of the proceeding. *Disciplinary Proc. Against Steffen*, 2025 WI 31.

Steffen was charged with three counts of violating Wis. Stat. section 942.09(2)(am)1. by capturing intimate representations of a person without knowledge or consent of the victim. The charges related to two victims. Steffen was prosecuting the first victim while acting as a part-time assistant district attorney and began a sexual relationship with her before the case concluded. The second victim was also involved in a sexual relationship with Steffen and sought his advice on avoiding criminal prosecution for potential criminal acts. A jury convicted Steffen on all three counts and the court sentenced Steffen to one and one-half years' initial confinement and two years' extended supervision on count 1 and count 3 (concurrent), and four years' probation on count 2, consecutive to the other sentences.

Following the conviction, on the OLR's motion, the court entered an order summarily suspending Steffen's license to practice law in Wisconsin pursuant to SCR 22.20.

The OLR subsequently filed a disciplinary complaint alleging Steffen violated



SCR 20:8.4(b) as a result of his actions leading to the convictions. The parties entered into a stipulation in which Steffen admitted to most of the underlying facts. A hearing was held on sanctions, after which the referee issued a report recommending an 18-month suspension. Neither party appealed from the report.

In declining to impose an 18-month suspension and instead finding revocation appropriate, the supreme court noted, “we reject the referee’s recommendation for an 18-month suspension, which is insufficient given the nature and seriousness of the misconduct, the need to protect the public, the need to deter other attorneys from similar misconduct, and the significant aggravating factors present in this case.”

The court noted that in assessing the nature and seriousness of the misconduct, the focus was almost exclusively on the elements of the underlying criminal offense. The court has repeatedly recognized that the surrounding circumstances were also relevant because SCR 20:8.4(b) “does not require that an attorney actually have been convicted of a crime for the rule to apply; *we discipline for conduct, not convictions.*”

The court also noted that the overall nature of Steffen’s misconduct did not simply involve recording sexual acts without the consent of his victims; it involved an assistant district attorney abusing his position of power and authority.

The court noted that in assessing the vulnerability of the victims as an aggravating factor, the focus on whether Steffen engaged in express quid pro quo sexual encounters with them, whether he attempted to use his position as an assistant district attorney to secure sexual favors, and whether the encounters were consensual was misplaced. The court recognized the power differential between Steffen and his victims and found them to be inherently vulnerable.

Steffen had no prior discipline. **WL**

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