

FILE NO. _____

STATE OF MINNESOTA

IN SUPREME COURT

In Re Petition for Disciplinary Action
against CHANEL GIGI MELIN,
a Minnesota Attorney,
Registration No. 342506.

**STIPULATION FOR DISPENSING
WITH PANEL PROCEEDINGS,
FOR FILING PETITION FOR
DISCIPLINARY ACTION,
AND FOR DISCIPLINE**

THIS STIPULATION is entered into by and between Martin A. Cole, Director of the Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility, hereinafter Director, and Chanel Gigi Melin, attorney, hereinafter respondent.

WHEREAS, respondent has concluded it is in respondent's best interest to enter into this stipulation,

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED by and between the undersigned as follows:

1. It is understood that respondent has the right to have charges of unprofessional conduct heard by a Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board Panel prior to the filing of a petition for disciplinary action, as set forth in the Rules on Lawyers Professional Responsibility (RLPR). Pursuant to Rule 10(a), RLPR, the parties agree to dispense with Panel proceedings under Rule 9, RLPR, and respondent agrees to the immediate filing of a petition for disciplinary action, hereinafter petition, in the Minnesota Supreme Court.

2. Respondent understands that upon the filing of this stipulation and the petition, this matter will be of public record.

3. It is understood that respondent has certain rights pursuant to Rule 14, RLPR. Respondent waives these rights, which include the right to a hearing before a referee on the petition; to have the referee make findings and conclusions and a

recommended disposition; to contest such findings and conclusions; and to a hearing before the Supreme Court upon the record, briefs and arguments. Respondent hereby admits service of the petition.

4. Respondent waives the right to answer and unconditionally admits the allegations of the petition which may be summarized as follows:

a. Respondent misappropriated \$5,026.86 from the housing association that she represented for her own personal use, in violation of Rule 8.4(b) and (c), Minnesota Rules of Professional Conduct (MRPC).

b. Respondent made a false statement to the housing association she represented on August 11, 2010, by stating that the building included in the housing association was covered by insurance, in violation of Rule 8.4(c), MRPC.

c. Respondent made a false statement to the housing association she represented on August 11, 2010, by stating that the housing association's bank account had been closed on August 11, 2010, in violation of Rule 8.4(c), MRPC.

5. Respondent also provided medical records to the Director that outline her mental health issues which were occurring at the time of the misconduct and continue to be on-going. Respondent's medical records contain her diagnosis for major depression and acute stress disorder. Respondent also reported to the Director that she was under extreme stress at the time of the misconduct. Respondent paid full restitution to the housing association prior to the complaint being filed with the Director.

6. Respondent understands that based upon these admissions, this Court may impose any of the sanctions set forth in Rule 15(a)(1) - (9), RLPR, including making any disposition it deems appropriate. Respondent understands that by entering into this stipulation, the Director is not making any representations as to the sanction the Court will impose.

7. The Director and respondent join in recommending that the appropriate discipline is an indefinite suspension, with a minimum of a two-year suspension pursuant to Rule 15, RLPR. The reinstatement hearing provided for in Rule 18, RLPR, is

not waived. Reinstatement is conditioned upon: (1) payment of costs in the amount of \$900 pursuant to Rule 24(d), RLPR; (2) compliance with Rule 26, RLPR; (3) successful completion of the professional responsibility examination pursuant to Rule 18(e); and (4) satisfaction of the continuing legal education requirements pursuant to Rule 18(e), RLPR.

8. This stipulation is entered into by respondent freely and voluntarily, without any coercion, duress or representations by any person except as contained herein.

9. Respondent hereby acknowledges receipt of a copy of this stipulation.

10. Respondent has been advised of the right to be represented herein by an attorney but has freely chosen to appear *pro se*.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties executed this stipulation on the dates indicated below.

Dated: January 9, 2012. 
MARTIN A. COLE
DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF LAWYERS
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
Attorney No. 148416
1500 Landmark Towers
345 St. Peter Street
St. Paul, MN 55102-1218
(651) 296-3952

Dated: January 9, 2012. 
MEGAN ENGELHARDT
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Attorney No. 329642

Dated: Feb. 10, 2012. 
CHANEL GIGI MELIN
RESPONDENT
250 South Frontage Road West
Vail, CO 81657

MEMORANDUM

While the Director understands conduct such as respondent's misappropriation and false statements would typically warrant more severe discipline, in respondent's case the Director looked at several issues that respondent raised as mitigation. First, respondent has mental health issues, including a diagnosis for major depression and acute stress disorder, which contributed to her conduct in this matter. Respondent is currently in treatment with mental health professionals. Second, respondent was under stress at the time that this conduct occurred. Specifically, respondent was experiencing severe financial problems due to the purchase of her condominium in this building and respondent was also experiencing stress due to her family situation. Third, respondent made complete restitution to the association prior to this complaint being filed.