THIS REPORT IS NOT A FINAL ORDER OF DISCIPLINE*

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS
BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Issued
December 22, 2025

In the Matter of: SHON ROBERT HOPWOOD, Respondent. A Temporarily Suspended Member of the Bar of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals (Bar Registration No. 1631420)	:	D.C. App. No.[1] Board Docket No. 25-BD-050 Disc. Docket No. 2025-D122

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF
THE BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

On July 18, 2025, a jury in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia found Respondent guilty of the following crimes: (1) three counts of assault, in violation of D.C. Code § 22-404; (2) five counts of contempt, in violation of D.C. Code § 23-1329; and (3) two felony counts of obstruction of justice, in violation of D.C. Code §§ 22-722(a)(2)(A) and (B). Disciplinary Counsel notified the District of Columbia Court of Appeals (the "Court") of the jury verdict against Respondent, and on August 7, 2025, the Court suspended Respondent and directed the Board to institute a formal proceeding to determine the nature of the obstruction of justice offenses and whether those offenses involve moral turpitude within the meaning of

[1] This Report and Recommendation is filed as a new disciplinary matter. As discussed below, this matter was previously before the Court under D.C. App. No. 25-BG-0736.

* Consult the 'Disciplinary Decisions' tab on the Board on Professional Responsibility's website (http://www.dcattorneydiscipline.org) to view any subsequent decisions in this case.

D.C. Code § 11-2503(a) (2001), which mandates the disbarment of a District of Columbia Bar member who has been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude.[2] *See* Order, *In re Hopwood*, App. No. 25-BG-0736 (D.C. Aug. 7, 2025).

On August 26, 2025, Disciplinary Counsel filed a statement ("ODC's Statement") arguing that a conviction under D.C. Code §§ 22-722(a)(2)(A) and (B) involves moral turpitude per se. On September 6, 2025, Respondent requested a 45-day extension of time to respond to ODC's Statement, citing delays in receiving mail at the D.C. Jail. The Board granted his request, and Respondent's response was due by October 30, 2025. Respondent has not filed a response to ODC's Statement, and has not requested additional time to do so.

DISCUSSION

D.C. Code § 11-2503(a) provides for the mandatory disbarment of a member of the District of Columbia Bar convicted of a crime of moral turpitude. The legal standard for moral turpitude was established in *In re Colson*, 412 A.2d 1160 (D.C. 1979) (en banc). In *Colson,* the Court held that a crime involves moral turpitude if

[2] "There is a distinction between being found guilty and being convicted. A defendant is found guilty when the verdict is returned, but he/she is not convicted until the sentence is imposed." *In re Gardner*, 625 A.2d 293, 297 (D.C. 1993) (per curiam). The status of Respondent's criminal case is not a basis to delay the Board's recommendation to the Court. However, the Court should defer final action until notified by Disciplinary Counsel that Respondent has been convicted, and if he appeals the conviction, his appeal has concluded. *See In re Hirschfeld*, 622 A.2d 688, 690 (D.C. 1993) (withholding action on Board report and recommendation until appeal of conviction is concluded); D.C. Bar R. XI, § 10(d) ("A disciplinary proceeding under this subsection . . . shall not be concluded until all direct appeals from conviction of the crime have been completed.").

"the act denounced by the statute offends the generally accepted moral code of mankind," if it involves "baseness, vileness or depravity in the private and social duties which a man owes to his fellow men or to society in general, contrary to the accepted and customary rule of right and duty between man and man," or if the act is "contrary to justice, honesty, modesty, or good morals." *Id.* at 1167-68 (internal citations omitted). If the Court has determined that a particular crime involves moral turpitude per se, the Board must adhere to that ruling and disbarment must be imposed without inquiry into the specific criminal conduct in each case. *See id.* at 1165.

Where, as here, the Court has not previously addressed the statute at issue (D.C. Code §§ 22-722(a)(2)(A) and (B)), we must review its elements to determine whether it is a crime of moral turpitude per se. This assessment is based solely on an examination of the statute, not on the respondent's conduct. *See In re Shorter*, 570 A.2d 760, 765 (D.C. 1990) (per curiam) (citing *Colson*, 412 A.2d at 1164-67). That is, we focus "on the type of crime committed rather than on the factual context surrounding the actual commission of the offense." *Colson*, 412 A.2d at 1164. To constitute a crime of moral turpitude per se, "the statute, in all applications, [must] criminalize[] conduct that 'offends the generally accepted moral code of mankind,' 'involve[] baseness, vileness or depravity,' or offend[] universal notions of 'justice, honesty, or morality.'" *In re Rohde*, 191 A.3d 1124, 1131 (D.C. 2018) (quoting *In re Tidwell*, 831 A.2d 953, 957 (D.C. 2003)). We are therefore obliged to consider whether the least culpable offender convicted under the statute necessarily engages

in a crime of moral turpitude. *See In re Johnson*, 48 A.3d 170, 172-73 (D.C. 2012) (per curiam) ("[P]art of the calculus in assessing whether a crime is one of moral turpitude per se is whether we can say that the least culpable offender under the terms of the statute necessarily engages in conduct involving moral turpitude." (internal quotations and citation omitted)); *In re Squillacote*, 790 A.2d 514, 517 (D.C. 2002) (per curiam) ("if the most benign conduct punishable under the statute" does not involve moral turpitude, then the crime is not one of moral turpitude per se); *see also Shorter*, 570 A.2d at 765.

In considering this issue, we note that we are not writing on a clean slate. The Court has determined that convictions under a *federal* witness tampering statute involve moral turpitude per se. *See In re Manafort*, 207 A.3d 593 (D.C. 2019) (per curiam) (disbarring attorney for witness tampering in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1512(b)(1)); *Johnson*, 48 A.3d at 173 (disbarring attorney for witness and evidence tampering in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1512(b)(2)); and *In re Blair*, 40 A.3d 883, 884 (D.C. 2012) (appended Board Report) (disbarring attorney for witness tampering in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1512(b)(3)). The Board faced a similar circumstance in *In re Blair*, where the Court had not yet considered whether a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1512(b)(3) involved moral turpitude per se, but had determined that the violation of a Pennsylvania witness tampering statute involved moral turpitude per se. *See Blair*, 40 A.3d at 885 (appended Board Report). Thus, the Board compared the two statutes to determine whether there was a significant difference between them. *Id.* at 886. Finding none, the Board recommended that witness tampering under 18

U.S.C. § 1512(b)(3) constitutes moral turpitude per se and mandates disbarment. *Id.* The Court agreed, and disbarred the respondent. *Blair*, 40 A.3d at 884.

D.C. Code §§ 22-722(a)(2)(A) and (B) provide that

> (a) A person commits the offense of obstruction of justice if that person:
>
> . . .
>
> (2) Knowingly uses intimidating or physical force, threatens or corruptly persuades another person, or by threatening letter or communication, endeavors to influence, intimidate, or impede a witness or officer in any official proceeding, with intent to:
>
> (A) Influence, delay, or prevent the truthful testimony of the person in an official proceeding;
>
> (B) Cause or induce the person to withhold truthful testimony or a record, document, or other object from an official proceeding;

Following *In re Blair*, we compare this statute to 18 U.S.C. §§ 1512(b)(1), 1512(b)(2), and 1512(b)(3), all of which involve moral turpitude per se. They provide that

> (b) Whoever knowingly uses intimidation, threatens, or corruptly persuades another person, or attempts to do so, or engages in misleading conduct toward another person, with intent to--
>
> (1) influence, delay, or prevent the testimony of any person in an official proceeding;
>
> (2) cause or induce any person to--
>
> (A) withhold testimony, or withhold a record, document, or other object, from an official proceeding;
>
> (B) alter, destroy, mutilate, or conceal an object with intent to impair the object's integrity or availability for use in an official proceeding;
>
> (C) evade legal process summoning that person to appear as a witness, or to produce a record, document, or other object, in an official proceeding; or

> (D) be absent from an official proceeding to which such person has been summoned by legal process; or
>
> (3) hinder, delay, or prevent the communication to a law enforcement officer or judge of the United States of information relating to the commission or possible commission of a Federal offense or a violation of conditions of probation supervised release, parole, or release pending judicial proceedings.

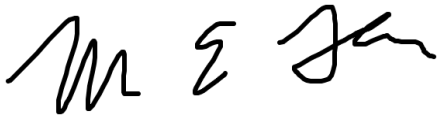
Like the Board in *Blair*, we see no significant difference between D.C. Code §§ 22-722(a)(2)(A) and (B), and 18 U.S.C. §§ 1512(b)(1-3), as each "prohibits an attempt to obstruct justice by attempting to induce an individual to withhold evidence." *Manafort*, 207 A.3d at 594. Thus, a violation of D.C. Code §§ 22-722(a)(2)(A) and (B) involves moral turpitude per se.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, we conclude that a conviction under D.C. Code §§ 22-722(a)(2)(A) and (B) involves moral turpitude per se. We recommend that Disciplinary Counsel monitor the progress of Respondent's criminal case, and notify the Court if and when Respondent is sentenced, and if and when any direct appeal is concluded. We further recommend that Respondent's attention be directed to the requirements of D.C. Bar Rule XI, § 14(g), and their effect on his eligibility for reinstatement, *see* D.C. Bar R. XI, § 16(c), and that Respondent's period of

disbarment commence for purposes of reinstatement upon his full compliance with D.C. Bar Rule XI, § 14(g).

BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

By: 

Michael E. Tigar

All of the Board members concur in this Report and Recommendation, except Ms. Cassidy, who is recused.