

ORIGINAL

FILED

07/01/2025

Bowen Greenwood
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

Case Number: PR 24-0631

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

PR 24-0631

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JUL 01 2025

Bowen Greenwood
Clerk of Supreme Court
State of Montana

IN THE MATTER OF CRAIG R. BUEHLER,

An Attorney at Law,

ORDER

Respondent

On October 24, 2024, the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) filed a formal disciplinary complaint with the Commission on Practice (Commission) against Montana attorney Craig R. Buehler. The disciplinary complaint may be reviewed by any interested person in the office of the Clerk of this Court.

On April 2, 2025, Buehler tendered an admission and affidavit of consent pursuant to Rule 26 of the Montana Rules for Lawyer Disciplinary Enforcement (MRLDE). Buehler acknowledged that the material facts of the complaint were true and that he had violated the Rules of Professional Conduct as alleged by ODC.

After ODC concurred with Buehler's tendered admission, the Commission set the matter for hearing on April 15, 2025. Buehler appeared and represented himself at the hearing.

On May 14, 2025, the Commission submitted to this Court its Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommendation for Discipline in which it recommended that this Court approve Buehler's conditional admission and enter an order imposing the agreed-upon discipline.

We agree with the Commission's recommendation. In his conditional admission, Buehler admitted that he was hired to represent the Personal Representative in a probate matter. Buehler did not hire an accountant or other professional prior to issuing the final

distribution, and he provided an untimely final accounting to the heirs. The Estate was incorrectly distributed due to accounting errors, and Buehler's delay in attempting to rectify the Estate distribution once he was notified of the errors resulted in some heirs being overcompensated and other heirs being significantly undercompensated. Thus Buehler's conduct in the probate matter violated M. R. Pro. Cond. 1.1 by failing to provide competent representation of his client, M. R. Pro. Cond. 1.4 for failing to promptly respond to requests for a detailed Estate accounting and for failing to promptly communicate with the heirs about how the errors would be handled, M. R. Pro. Cond. 1.3 for failing to diligently address the accounting errors, and M. R. Pro. Cond. 3.2 for failing to expedite the litigation.

Based upon the foregoing:

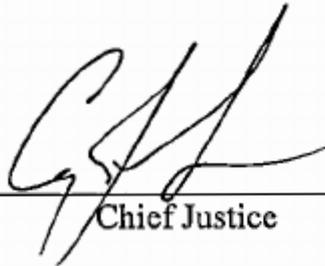
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The Commission's Recommendation that we accept Buehler's Rule 26 tendered admission is ACCEPTED AND ADOPTED.
2. Buehler is SUSPENDED from the practice of law for 30 days, to begin on or around July 1, 2025.
3. After Buehler's suspension is concluded, he shall be subject to one year of PROBATION, during which time he shall: make the agreed-upon restitution payments; actively monitor his practice; and withdraw from any inactive cases in accordance with M. R. Pro. Cond. 1.16.
4. Buehler shall pay the costs incurred by ODC and the Commission in connection with this matter, in accordance with MRLDE 9C(4).
5. Buehler shall further comply with all Notice requirements contained within MRLDE 29 and 30.
6. Pursuant to MRLDE 26D, the Clerk of this Court is directed to file copies of Buehler's Conditional Admission and Affidavit of Consent, together with the Commission's Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation for Discipline.

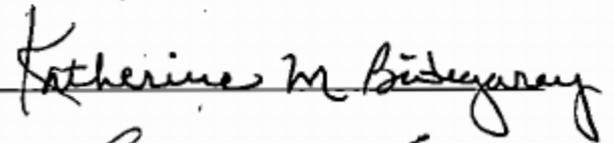
The Clerk of this Court is directed to serve a copy of this Order of Discipline upon Craig R. Buehler, and to provide copies to Disciplinary Counsel, the Office Administrator

for the Commission on Practice, the Clerks of all the District Courts of the State of Montana, each District Court Judge in the State of Montana, the Clerk of the Federal District Court for the District of Montana, the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Appeals of the Ninth Circuit, and the Executive Director of the State Bar of Montana.

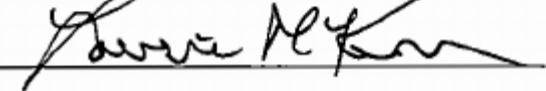
DATED this 1st day of July, 2025.



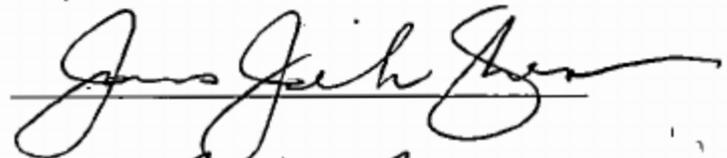
Chief Justice



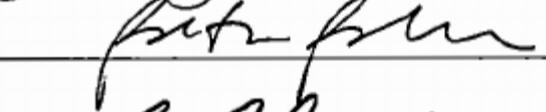
Katherine M. Bideyanay



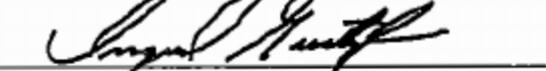
David McKeon



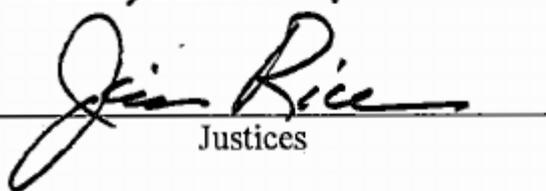
James John Jones



Peter P. P...



Angel Smith



Jim Rice
Justices