

ORIGINAL

FILED

12/23/2025

Bowen Greenwood
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

Case Number: PR 25-0150

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

PR 25-0150

FILED

DEC 23 2025

Bowen Greenwood
Clerk of Supreme Court
State of Montana

IN THE MATTER OF:

NAOMI R. LEISZ,

Attorney at Law,

Respondent.

ORDER
OF
DISCIPLINE

On February 20, 2025, the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) filed a formal disciplinary complaint with the Commission on Practice (Commission) against Montana attorney Naomi R. Leisz. The disciplinary complaint may be reviewed by any interested person in the office of the Clerk of this Court.

On September 25, 2025, Leisz tendered a conditional admission and affidavit of consent pursuant to Rule 26(B)(3) of the Montana Rules for Lawyer Disciplinary Enforcement (MRLDE).¹ Leisz acknowledged the material facts of the complaint were true and she had violated the Montana Rules of Professional Conduct as alleged by ODC.

After ODC concurred with Leisz's tendered admission, the Commission set the matter for hearing on October 15, 2025. Leisz appeared before the Commission, where she was represented by Nick Brooke.

On October 30, 2025, the Commission submitted to this Court its Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation for Discipline in which it recommended this Court approve Leisz's conditional admission and enter an order imposing the agreed-upon discipline.

¹ Leisz first submitted a conditional admission and affidavit of consent on April 1, 2025. However, the Commission did not accept the initial agreed-upon discipline.

In her conditional admission, Leisz admitted that in April 2022, her minor son was involved in a car accident in which he hit a power pole. Leisz's son failed to report the accident. Leisz later filed an insurance claim in which she falsely claimed she was the driver of the vehicle at the time of the collision. Leisz's insurance company paid the claim. Investigators later contacted the insurance company, and a company representative advised the investigators that the insurer would not have paid a claim where the insured lied about the circumstances of the accident. However, the insurance company has not sought reimbursement of their payment to Leisz; Leisz noted her son was insured under the policy and she assumes the insurer agrees the accident would have been covered by it.

Leisz later learned she was going to face criminal charges from the incident. On June 30, 2023, she resigned from her position as Sanders County Attorney. Leisz self-reported the impending charges to ODC. Leisz also advised ODC that she was voluntarily going on inactive status with the Montana State Bar, effective July 3, 2023. However, Leisz did not subsequently contact the Montana State Bar and change her status to inactive status. Leisz asserts, however, that she did not practice law from July 3, 2023, until her criminal case ended because she believed suspension by ODC was imminent. However, she resumed practicing because ODC had not taken action on her self-report by the time her criminal matter concluded.

Leisz was charged with Criminal Insurance Fraud, a felony, in July 2023. She ultimately pled guilty to Obstructing Justice, a misdemeanor, pursuant to a plea agreement that she signed on April 18, 2024. On April 25, 2024, the Sanders County District Court entered its order sentencing Leisz to six months incarceration in Sanders County Jail, all suspended, plus fines, fees, community service, and restitution to Northern Lights, Inc., in the amount of \$3,293.00, for the damage to the power pole.

In the tendered Conditional Admission and Affidavit of Consent, Leisz admitted she violated M. R. Pro. Cond. 8.4. In exchange for her tendered admissions, Leisz agreed to discipline in the form of: a 60-day suspension from the practice of law; paying the costs of these proceedings; and complying with all notice requirements of MRLDE 29 and 30.

At the October 15, 2025 disciplinary hearing, Chief Disciplinary Counsel Pam Bucy asked the Commission to accept Leisz's conditional admission and the recommended form of discipline. Bucy advised the Commission that Leisz had previously been subject to discipline in 2006, but that was at the beginning of her career and under very different circumstances. Bucy acknowledged that Leisz and ODC had initially agreed to a 30-day suspension from practice, but subsequently agreed to a 60-day suspension because the Commission indicated 30 days was too lenient. Brooke advised the Commission that, even though Leisz failed to complete the steps necessary to effectuate inactive status with the Montana State Bar, she nonetheless voluntarily ceased practicing law for approximately 14 months.

In its Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommendation for Discipline, the Commission recommended this Court accept Leisz's conditional admissions for violating M. R. Pro. Cond. 8.4, and impose discipline in the form of:

1. A 60-day suspension from the practice of law in Montana;
2. Payment of costs incurred by ODC and the Commission in connection with this matter; and
3. Compliance with all notice requirements in MRLDE 29 and 30.

In its Recommendation, the Commission advised this Court it was accepting the proposed form of discipline and it believed lesser discipline would erode public confidence in the profession, particularly in light of the fact that Leisz was the Sanders County Attorney at the time of the incident.

The Commission further considered aggravating factors in this case to be Leisz's refusal to cooperate with law enforcement, her false insurance claim, and her misstatement to ODC that she was going on inactive status. The Commission found mitigating factors to include Leisz's sincere remorse, her many years of practice without disciplinary incidents, her voluntary withdrawal from practice, and no monetary harm to a client.

This Court reviews *de novo* the Commission's findings of fact, conclusions of law, and recommendations. *In re Neuhardt*, 2014 MT 88, ¶ 16, 374 Mont. 379, 321 P.3d 833

(citation omitted). Having thoroughly reviewed the pertinent portions of the record, and having considered the disciplinary criteria enumerated in MRLDE 9(B), we have determined to accept the Commission's recommendation.

Based upon the foregoing:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The Commission's Recommendation that we accept Leisz's Rule 26 tendered admission is ACCEPTED AND ADOPTED.

2. Leisz is SUSPENDED from the practice of law for 60 days, effective 30 days from the date of this Order of Discipline. Leisz is directed to give notice of her suspension to all clients she represents in pending matters, any co-counsel in pending matters, all opposing counsel and self-represented opposing parties in pending matters, and all courts in which she appears as counsel of record in pending matters, as required by MRLDE 30.

3. Leisz shall pay the costs of these proceedings, subject to the provisions of MRLDE 9(C)(4)(a).

4. Leisz shall comply with all notice requirements of MRLDE 29 and 30.

5. Pursuant to MRLDE 26(D), the Clerk of this Court is directed to file copies of Leisz's Conditional Admission and Affidavit of Consent, together with the Commission's Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommendations for Discipline.

The Clerk of this Court is directed to serve a copy of this Order of Discipline upon Naomi R. Leisz, 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 23rd day of December, 2025.



Chief Justice

Katherine M. Bidigare

James J. Brennan
Louise M. Ken

John F. ...
Angela ...

John Rice

Justices