

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
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In the Matter of the Complaint of

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF LICENSING SERVICES,**

Complainant,

DECISION
Complaint No.:C170007

-against-

AMBER SABRINA SHAH,

Respondent.

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The above noted matter came on for hearing on November 1, 2017 at the office of the Department of State (“Department”) located at 123 William Street, New York, New York. The case has been reassigned from Judge Ziedah Diata to Judge John Kenny.

The respondent failed to appear. The Division of Licensing Services (“DLS”) was represented by Hearing Presenter Aqil Qureshi.

COMPLAINT

The complaint alleges that respondent real estate salesperson has failed to provide proof that she successfully completed the required 75 hours of qualifying education prior to applying for her license, and that she failed to cooperate with the complainant’s investigation.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1) The respondent is registered as a real estate salesperson, UID #10401283790, with a license expiration date of January 5, 2018 (State’s Ex. 2). The respondent is associated with Gamma Group LLC.

2) Notice of Hearing together with a copy of the Complaint was served by certified and regular mail to the business address of the respondent on September 12, 2017. The certified mail was signed for as received and the regular mailing was not returned to the DLS by the Post Office (State’s Ex. 1).

3) On January 5, 2016, the respondent submitted an online application seeking licensure as a real estate salesperson. The respondent's examination and education history, based on information provided by the respondent at time of submission, was automatically converted by the Department's licensing system into a "Certification Preparation Report". The Certification Preparation Report indicates, in part, that the respondent claimed her qualifying education was completed on or about November 15, 2015. Based upon the respondent's original submission, the DLS issued the requested license on January 6, 2016 (State's Ex.3).

4) By an email dated February 6, 2017, the respondent was informed that she needed to provide proof of the required 75 hours of qualifying education by submitting documentation of her course completion certificate(s) (State's Ex. 3).

5) By letter dated March 17, 2017, which was sent by email only, the DLS advised the respondent that she failed to comply with the February 6, 2017 request for documentation. The DLS proposed to recommend the revocation of her real estate salesperson license for non-compliance with the audit. In the letter, the respondent was advised of the right to have a hearing or she could waive her right to a hearing and either provide proof of completion of the 75 hours of approved courses or that she could surrender her license by completing an attached Surrender Form (State's Ex. 3). The respondent failed to reply or comply with the request from the DLS.

OPINION

I- To obtain personal jurisdiction and bind the respondent to the agency decision the complainant must properly serve the respondent with notice of the hearing and a copy of the complaint and afford him the opportunity to be heard (see Siegel, New York Practice §58 (4th ed., 2005). Service properly made in a manner reasonably calculated to provide notice of the time, date, place, manner and nature of the proceedings is sufficient whether or not the opposing party actually receives notice. *See Persad v. Division of Licensing Services*, 63 DOS APP 09 (2009); *Pinger v. Division of Licensing Services*, 23 DOS APP 07 (2007).

Service of the notice of hearing in this matter was made by both certified and regular mail to the respondent's last known business address. The certified mailing was signed for as received and the regular mail was not returned to the DLS by the Post Office. Accordingly, to the extent that there is evidence that notice was properly served in this instance, the hearing was permissibly conducted in the respondent's absence. *Patterson v. Department of State*, 35 AD2d 616 (3d Dept. 1970); *Staley v. Division of Licensing Services*, 14 DOS APP 01 (2001); *Department of State v. Battista*, 05 DOS APP 11 (2011); *Matter of the Application of Rose Ann Weis*, 118 DOS 93 (1993).

II- The complaint alleges that the respondent violated Real Property Law (RPL) §441(1)(c) by not supplying proof that she had completed 75 hours of qualifying education. That statute actually applies to real estate broker license applications by real estate salespersons, and provides a method to credit the salesperson's qualifying education to the fulfillment of the required real estate broker qualifying education requirement. It is RPL §441(1-A) (d) which sets forth the requirement that an applicant for a license as a real estate salesperson provide proof of having completed 75 hours of qualifying education. Here, the respondent has not provided such proof and, therefore has violated RPL §441(1-A) (d).

III- Pursuant to RPL §442-e (5) a real estate salesperson is obligated to cooperate with the complainant's investigation. By failing to respond to the complainant's emails, the respondent violated that statute.

DETERMINATION

WHEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DETERMINED THAT Amber Sabrina Shah has violated Real Property Law §§441 (1-A) (d) and 442-e (5), and accordingly, pursuant to Real Property Law §441-c, her license as a real estate salesperson, UID #10401283790, is suspended effective immediately and until such time as she produces proof satisfactory to the Department of State that prior to the submission of her original application for that license she completed the required 75 hours of real estate salesperson qualifying education, and until she shall have paid a fine of \$250.00. She is directed to send, as appropriate, her license certificate, pocket card, and salesperson's identification, proof of completion of the qualifying education, and a certified check or money order for the fine payable to "Secretary of State" to Norma Rosario, Department of State, Division of Licensing Services, One Commerce Plaza, 99 Washington Avenue, 5th Floor, Albany, New York, 12231-0001. As an alternative to payment by check or money order, the fine may be paid by credit card using the form available at <http://www.dos.ny.gov/forms/licensing/1450-f-1-a.pdf>.

/s/

John E. Kenny
Administrative Law Judge

Dated: May 8, 2018