

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.: C170079

-against-

JASON SHARMA,

Respondent.

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The above-noted matter came on for hearing before the undersigned, Aiesha L. Hudson, on May 2, 2018, at the office of the Department of State located at 123 William Street, New York, New York.

The respondent failed to appear.

The complainant was represented by David Mossberg, Esq.

COMPLAINT

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

FINDINGS OF FACT

1) On January 1, 2016, the respondent submitted an on-line application for a license as a real estate salesperson. In his on-line application for the license, the respondent certified that he had successfully completed 75 hours of approved pre-licensure education on or about December

9, 2015 (State's Ex. 3).¹ Based on the representations in his submission, the respondent was issued a real estate salesperson license, UID# 10401283664, on January 2, 2016, under the sponsorship of All Kings Realty, Inc., for a term which ended on January 1, 2018 (State's Ex. 2,3).

2) On June 8, 2017, the complainant sent the respondent an email requesting that he provide proof of completion of 75 hours of qualifying education. The respondent did not reply to either that email or a follow up email sent on June 23, 2017, both of which were sent to the email address that the respondent provided when he applied for his license (State's Ex. 3).

3) Notice of Hearing together with a copy of the Complaint was sent by certified and regular mail to respondent's last known business address in the records of the Department of State on March 26, 2018 (date of Affidavit of Service). Neither the certified or regular mail was returned by the U.S. Postal Service. The certified mail return receipt was returned signed, indicating that delivery was made (State's Ex. 1).²

OPINION AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

I- To obtain personal jurisdiction and bind the respondent to the agency decision, the complainant must properly serve him with notice of the hearing 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 the opposing party actually receives the notice. *See Persad v. Division of Licensing Services*, 63 DOS APP 09 (2009); *Pinger v. Division of Licensing Services*, 23 DOS APP 07 (2007).

In this case, service of the Notice of Hearing and Complaint in this matter was made by both certified and regular mail addressed to the respondent's last known business address in the records of the Department of State. The regular and certified mail were not returned, and the certified mail return receipt was returned signed, indicating the mail was delivered. 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 A.D.2d 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 Department of State retains jurisdiction over a disciplinary matter and may impose disciplinary sanctions where (1) the alleged unlawful conduct occurred while the respondent was

¹ Although the complainant's Affirmation of Donna Brunig states that the respondent indicated on his on-line application that he completed 75 hours of approved pre-licensure education on or about December 15, 2015, the attached Certification Preparation Report, which is generated by Department of State's licensing system, indicates that the respondent, in fact, stated that he completed his approved pre-licensure education on December 9, 2015 (State's Ex. 3).

² The record also indicates that, for reasons not explained at the hearing, the complainant previously served the Notice of Hearing and Complaint in this case, by certified and regular mail, to respondent's last known business address on January 18, 2018. The results were the same (State's Ex. 1).

licensed and (2) the respondent was eligible to automatically renew the prior license at the time of the commencement of the action. *See Division of Licensing Services v. Akbar Yasrebi*, 12 DOS 99 (1999); *Division of Licensing Services v. Thabit Uadah*, 287 DOS 98 (1998). Therefore, as the respondent has until two years after the January 1, 2018 expiration of his license to renew it, pursuant to Real Property Law (RPL) § 441(2), this tribunal retains jurisdiction to adjudicate this matter.

III- The complaint alleges that the respondent violated RPL § 441(1)(c) by not supplying proof that he 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).

IV- Pursuant to RPL § 442-e(5) the respondent was required to cooperate with the complainant's investigation. By failing to respond to the complainant's June 14, 2017 email, the respondent violated that statute.³

DETERMINATION

WHEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DETERMINED THAT Jason Sharma has violated Real Property Law §§ 441(1-A)(d) and 442-e(5), and accordingly, pursuant to Real Property Law § 441-c, his license as a real estate salesperson, UID #10401283664, is deemed suspended effective immediately and until such time as he produces proof satisfactory to the Department of State that prior to the submission of his original application for that license he completed the required 75 hours of real estate salesperson qualifying education. He is directed to send, as appropriate, his 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.

/S/

Aiesha L. Hudson
Administrative Law Judge

Dated: August 3, 2018

³ Because the respondent's failure to respond to the complainant's June 23, 2017 email was not alleged in the Complaint (State's Ex. 1), the tribunal cannot consider it as evidence of the respondent's failure to cooperate with the complainant's investigation.