

IN RE: ORDER IN CRIMINAL CASE NOS. SC-25419 TO 25422 (PEOPLE V. GEAM HENRY REUYAN Y VALDELLON), COMPLAINANT, VS. ATTY. ADONIS EDGAR ANGELO A. MACAM, RESPONDENT.

A.C. No. 14715 [Formerly CBD Case No. 23-7086], June 09, 2026

Ponente: LOPEZ, J., J.

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LOPEZ, J., J.:

This Court resolves a referral by the Family Court, Branch 6, Sta. Cruz, Laguna (Family Court) in its February 23, 2023 Order in Criminal Case Nos. SC-25419-22 entitled *People v. Gearn Henry Reuyan y Valdellon* against Atty. Adonis Edgar Angelo A. Macam (Atty. Macam) for violation of Canon IV, Sections 1, 3, and 4 of the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability (CPRA). The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) Board of Governors affirmed with modification[1] the Report and Recommendation[2] of the IBP Investigating Commissioner. The IBP Board of Governors found Atty. Macam guilty of light offenses under Canon III, Section 2 of the CPRA, and meted the following penalties: (1) mandatory rendition of community service for 20 hours; and (2) reprimand with stern warning that a repetition of the same or similar act shall be dealt with more severely.

Atty. Macam was counsel for accused Gearn Henry V. Reuyan (Reuyan) in the subject criminal cases before the Family Court. For Atty. Macam's failure to appear on the scheduled hearing on February 23, 2023 and for postponing the hearing for the third time, the judge of said Family Court held Atty. Macam in contempt of court, imposed a fine of PHP 3,000.00, and referred the matter to the IBP for appropriate action. In an Order[3] issued by the IBP Investigating Commissioner, Atty. Macam was ordered to file an Answer, to which Atty. Macam filed a Motion for Extension of Time to File Answer.[4] Later, he filed an Answer,[5] narrating that he failed to attend the first hearing set on December 15, 2002 as he had a previous commitment to attend a hearing in Nueva Ecija. For the second scheduled hearing on February 2, 2023, Atty. Macam averred that he was sick and furnished the Family Court with a medical certificate. Atty. Macam also requested from the Family Court, through email, that he be allowed to attend the hearing online, which it did not grant. Instead, the hearing was rescheduled on February 23, 2023. On February 19, 2023, Atty. Macam sent an Urgent Motion to Cancel Hearing on the ground that on January 2, 2023, he had already previously booked a trip to Palawan with his family for February 21-23, 2023. The Family Court then issued its February 23, 2023 Order citing Atty. Macam for contempt, directing the accused to engage the services of another counsel, and resetting the cross examination of the private complainant on April 13, 2023.[6]

Since the facts and issues are not disputed, the IBP Investigating Commissioner proceeded to summary recommendation.[7] In its Report and Recommendation,[8] the IBP Investigating Commissioner found Atty. Macam guilty of light offenses. The dispositive portion of the Report and Recommendation reads:

THEREFORE, circumstances considered, the undersigned Investigation Commissioner recommends that respondent be cited for Light Offenses under the CPRA, particularly under Canon III[,] Sec[.] 2, and meted a penalty of REPRIMAND.[9]

According to the IBP Investigating Commissioner, Atty. Macam, a member of the Bar, owes fidelity to his client and to the courts. Under Canon III, Section 2 of the CPRA, a lawyer shall conscientiously assist in the speedy and efficient administration of justice to the courts. While it may appear that Macam had reasons for the postponement, the fact of cancellation and/or postponements remain unchanged.[10]

In a Resolution,[11] the IBP Board of Governors modified the IBP Commissioner's Report and Recommendation in this wise:

RESOLVED, to MODIFY, as it is hereby MODIFIED, the Report and Recommendation of the Investigating Commissioner to mete out upon respondent Atty. Adonis Edgar Angelo A. Macam the following penalties: – (i) MANDATORY RENDITION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR TWENTY (20) HOURS; and (ii) REPRIMAND with STERN WARNING that a repetition of the same or similar act shall be dealt with more severely.[12]

This Court's Ruling

This Court affirms with modifications the findings and recommendations of the IBP Board of Governors. Atty. Macam is guilty of light offenses, particularly under Canon III, Section 2 of the CPRA.

Canon III, Section 2[13] of the CPRA provides:

SECTION 2. The responsible and accountable lawyer. — A lawyer shall uphold the constitution, obey the laws of the land, promote respect for laws and legal processes, safeguard human rights, and at all times advance the honor and integrity of the legal profession.

As an officer of the court, a lawyer shall uphold the rule of law and conscientiously assist in the speedy and efficient administration of justice.

As an advocate, a lawyer shall represent the client with fidelity and zeal within the bounds of the law and the CPRA. (Emphasis supplied)

Here, respondent asked for postponement for the three hearings in the subject criminal case. According to respondent, for the first hearing set on December 15, 2022, he failed to attend it because he had a previous commitment to attend a hearing in Nueva Ecija. For the second scheduled hearing on February 2, 2023, respondent averred that he was sick. He furnished the Family Court with a medical certificate. He also requested from the Family Court, through email, that he be allowed to attend the hearing online. However, the Family Court did not grant respondent's request, but it moved the hearing on February 23, 2023. On February 19, 2023, respondent sent an Urgent Motion to Cancel Hearing. Respondent reasoned that on January 2, 2023, he had already previously booked a trip to Palawan with his family for February 21-23, 2023.[14] The Family Court then issued its February 23, 2023 Order[15] citing Atty. Macam for contempt, directing the accused to engage the services of another counsel, and resetting the cross examination of the private complainant on April 13, 2023.

Respondent's act resulted in the delay of the cross examination of the private complainant in the subject criminal case, added a burden on the part of the accused who was directed to find another lawyer to represent him, and ultimately caused the delay in the prosecution of the case. His repeated postponements and delays show that he failed to conscientiously assist in the speedy and efficient administration of justice.

Thus, We affirm the IBP Board of Governor's Report and Recommendation. We find respondent guilty of violating Canon VI, Section 35(f) of the CPRA, which states:

SECTION 35. Light offenses. – Light offenses include:

....

(f) Other similar or analogous infractions of the CPRA.

Canon VI, Section 37 of the CPRA provides for the sanctions imposed upon a respondent guilty of a light offense, as follows:

SECTION 37. Sanctions. —

....

(c)

If the respondent is found guilty of a light offense, any of the following sanctions shall be imposed:

(1)

A fine within the range of [PHP] 1,000.00 to [PHP] 35,000.00;

(2)

Censure; or

(3)

Reprimand.

In addition to the above sanctions in paragraph (c), the respondent may also be required to do community service or service in the IBP legal aid program.

In all instances, when the offense involves money or property owed, which is intrinsically linked to the lawyer-client relationship, the respondent shall be ordered to return the same.

This Court imposes a fine of PHP 17,500.00 with a stern warning that a repetition of the same or similar infraction shall be dealt with more severely, in accordance with Section 39[16] of the CPRA. In imposing the fine and stern warning, We considered the mitigating circumstance that respondent is a first-time offender.[17]

ACCORDINGLY, Atty. Adonis Edgar Angelo A. Macam is GUILTY of violation of Canon III, Section 2 of the Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability. Atty. Macam is meted the penalty of FINE in the amount of PHP 17,500.00 with a STERN WARNING that a repetition of the same offense or similar acts in the future shall be dealt with more severely.

Let a copy of this Decision be furnished the Office of the Bar Confidant to be appended to Atty. Adonis Edgar Angelo A. Macam's personal record as an attorney, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines for its information and guidance, and the Office of the Court Administrator for circulation to all the courts.

The Integrated Bar of the Philippines is directed to furnish the local chapter to which the respondent belongs a copy of this Decision.

This Decision is immediately executory upon receipt.

SO ORDERED.

Leonen, SAJ. (Chairperson), Lazaro-Javier, and Villanueva, JJ., concur.
Kho, Jr.,[*] J., on leave.

[*]On leave.

[1] Rollo, pp. 46-47.

[2] Id. at 48-49.

[3] Id. at 30-31.

[4] Id. at 34-35.

[5] Id. at 25-26.

[6] Id. at 37.

[7] Id. at 48-49.

[8] Id. at 48-49.

[9] Id. at 49.

[10] Id.

[11] Id. at 46-47.

[12] Id. at 46.

[13] CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY (2023).

[14] Rollo, pp. 12-14.

[15] Id. at 22-23.

[16] Section 39. Manner of imposition. —

If one (1) or more mitigating circumstances and no aggravating circumstances are present, the Supreme Court may impose the penalties of suspension or fine for a period or amount not less than half of the minimum prescribed under the CPRA.

[17] Section 38. Modifying circumstances. — In determining the appropriate penalty to be imposed, the Court may, in its discretion, appreciate the following mitigating and aggravating circumstances:

(a)

Mitigating circumstances:

(1)

First offense, except in charges of gross misconduct, bribery or corruption, grossly immoral conduct, misappropriating a client's funds or properties, sexual abuse, and sale, distribution, possession and/or use of illegal drugs or substances;

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