

**PRACTICE OF LAW BOARD
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 600, Seattle, WA 98101-2539
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Members

December 10, 2008

Stephen Crossland
Chairperson
Cashmere

Jose R. Veliz

Hon. Paul A. Bastine
Vice-Chairperson
Spokane

██████████
Kennewick, WA ██████████

Thomas Andrews
Seattle

RE: Files No. 06-40 and 08-17, Unauthorized Practice of Law
Complaints against Jose Veliz

Margaret Bridewell
Walla Walla

Dear Mr. Veliz:

Shamra Coy
Chewelah

The Practice of Law Board was created by order of the Washington State Supreme Court, General Rule (GR) 25. The Board is charged with the investigation of allegations of unauthorized practice of law in Washington. Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 2.48.180 states that a nonlawyer practicing law or holding himself out as entitled to practice law constitutes the unauthorized practice of law. Court rule GR 24 defines the practice of law. The unauthorized practice of law is a crime in Washington.

Brian J. Dano
Moses Lake

Stephanie Delaney
Seattle

Nancy C. Ivarinen
Burlington

Cheryl D. Kringle
Seattle

As you are aware, Judge ██████████ M██████████ and M██████████ D██████████ have filed complaints against you alleging that you are engaging in the unauthorized practice of law. According to Judge M██████████'s complaint, the Adams County Clerk's office has received seven dissolution petitions that they believe were drafted by you for different clients. ██████████ Adams County received a call from a woman who was translating for V██████████ P██████████. Mr. P██████████ had questions regarding his dissolution petition. Mr. P██████████ told ██████████ that he had paid you \$700 to help him complete and file the paperwork in his dissolution action and that you offered to Mr. and Mrs. P██████████ to "finish their divorce for another \$900." On June 18, 2008, the Practice of Law Board's investigative attorney received a letter from you enclosing an investigatory report, dated June 30, 2007, written by ██████████ Insurance, LLC. The report included the following statements:

Howard H. Marshack
Vancouver

Daniel Pérez
Seattle

Renée Shadel
Seattle

Hon. Jane M. Smith
Nespelem

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Administrator
Julie Shankland

Investigative Attorney
Sandra Schilling

Veliz repeated that he reviewed the papers and there were some errors; he pointed the errors out to V██████████ P██████████ but

that he did not correct them. He told them what needed to be done. He reviewed the papers...Veliz said there were errors in the debt collection section. He recalled telling them that they needed a Joinder which was not on file...that the jurisdiction wasn't correct.

In May 2008, the Practice of Law Board received a new complaint filed by M [REDACTED] D [REDACTED]. Ms. D [REDACTED] wrote that she paid you \$7,500 for legal services on behalf of her son and that you did nothing. Ms. D [REDACTED] told our investigative attorney that her son had been convicted of a crime in Colorado and had 45 days to appeal the conviction. A friend gave her the phone number of L [REDACTED] B [REDACTED] in Pasco, Washington, who told Ms. D [REDACTED] that he could help her find a lawyer that she could afford. Mr. B [REDACTED] told Ms. D [REDACTED] that he had a lawyer who would charge her \$7,500, which she needed to pay in advance. After sending the advance, Mr. B [REDACTED] gave to Ms. D [REDACTED] your phone number. Ms. D [REDACTED] provided proof that she sent your office \$7,500, which was cashed.

According to Ms. D [REDACTED], she called you at (509) 531-8475. You told her you needed to review all of the papers so that you could study them and find mistakes made by the trial attorney. You sent to Ms. D [REDACTED] a package, which you told her to send to her son. Although Ms. D [REDACTED] spoke with you several times and, according to her, you reassured her that you were going to get it done, the appeal deadline passed with no appeal filed. Ms. B [REDACTED] subsequently hired Colorado attorney P [REDACTED] R [REDACTED] who confirmed that there were no attorneys licensed in Washington named Jose Veliz or L [REDACTED] B [REDACTED]. Mr. R [REDACTED] found the number for Veliz Paralegal Services on the internet and spoke with L [REDACTED] B [REDACTED] at the number. Mr. B [REDACTED] told Mr. R [REDACTED] that you are an attorney and that he, L [REDACTED] B [REDACTED], was your paralegal. Mr. R [REDACTED] stated that, after he spoke with Mr. B [REDACTED], Ms. D [REDACTED] said that she received some money back. In August 2008, the Practice of Law Board's investigative attorney received an email from your attorney, T [REDACTED] M [REDACTED]. Mr. M [REDACTED]'s email stated that you told Ms. D [REDACTED] that you were not an attorney, and that you helped Ms. D [REDACTED] prepare a document.

You are not a lawyer. RCW 2.48.180(2)(a) states that a non-lawyer practicing law or holding himself out as entitled to do so constitutes the unauthorized practice of law. Selecting, drafting or completing legal documents which affect the legal rights of others is included in the GR 24 definition of the practice of law. By assisting Mr. P [REDACTED] in the drafting of his dissolution petition and assisting Ms. D [REDACTED] in preparing her son's appeal, you engaged in the unauthorized practice of law. At this time, pursuant to GR 25(f)(4)(B), we request that you enter into a written agreement with this Board, to refrain from the following conduct:

- Holding yourself out as authorized to select, draft or complete legal documents or pleadings for others;

- Any activity which is defined as the practice of law in GR 24.

The Practice of Law Board has also ordered to refer the investigation of this matter to the County Prosecutor's Office, and has also ordered information to be sent to Columbia Legal Services, the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and the Northwest Justice Project.

If you disagree with the POL Board's final action, you may seek review by filing a Notice of Petition for Review with the Washington Supreme Court. The Notice must be filed within 30 days of final POL Board action. You must serve the original Notice of Petition for Review on the Supreme Court Clerk and a copy on the POL Board. Your Notice must set out you name and address, the name and address of your counsel, if any, and a concise statement of the reason for your appeal. Your Petition must comply with the Rules of Appellate Procedure (RAP). For further information on Petitions for Review, please see GR 25(g).

If you are willing to so stipulate, please sign and date your signature and have your signature witnessed by a person over the age of eighteen, who will also sign as the witness. The signed letter should be returned to the Board within 15 days.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation.

Very Truly Yours,



Steve Crossland, Chair
Practice of Law Board

JS:as

Enclosure: Agreement to Refrain

cc: Judge [REDACTED] M [REDACTED] (w/out enclosure)
P [REDACTED] R [REDACTED] (w/out enclosure)