

Garden State CLE Presents:

Collateral Consequences of Domestic Violence



Lesson Plan

1. Attorneys - Suspension from Practice

a.) Applicable Rule of Professional Conduct

RPC 8.4. Misconduct

It is professional misconduct for a lawyer to:

(b) commit a criminal act that reflects adversely on the lawyer's honesty, trustworthiness or fitness as a lawyer in other respects;

[Note that the RPC refers to "a criminal act." However, this RPC also applies to disorderly persons' offenses in the context of domestic violence.]



b.) Self-reporting

Rule 1:20-13. Attorneys charged with or convicted of crimes

(a) Reporting Criminal Matters.

(1) Duty of Attorney Charged. An attorney who has been charged with an indictable offense in this state or with an equivalent offense in any other state, territory, commonwealth, or possession of the United States or in any federal court of the United States or the District of Columbia shall promptly inform the Director of the Office of Attorney Ethics in writing of the charge. The attorney shall thereafter promptly inform the Director of the disposition of the matter.



c.) Announcement of the Rule

In re Magid, 139 NJ 449, 455 (1995)

Respondent's conduct was a serious violation of *RPC 8.4(b)*. But for the fact that we have not previously addressed the appropriate discipline to be imposed on an attorney who is convicted of an act of domestic violence, and that respondent did not engage in a pattern of abusive behavior, respondent's discipline would be greater than the public reprimand we hereby impose. We caution members of the bar, however, that the Court in the future will ordinarily suspend an attorney who is convicted of an act of domestic violence.

[Accord In re Principato, 139 NJ 456 (1995)]



d.) Implementation of Rule

In re Margrabia, 150 NJ 198, 203 (1997)

We are persuaded that a suspension is the appropriate discipline. As we have stated, we "will ordinarily suspend an attorney who is convicted of an act of domestic violence." Respondent is suspended from the practice of law for three months and shall reimburse the Disciplinary Oversight Committee for appropriate administrative costs.

e.) Subsequent Cases

In re Toronto, 150 NJ 191 (1997) (3 months)

In re Viggiano, 153 NJ 40 (1998) (3 months)

In re Predham, 132 NJ 276 (1993) (Indictable - 6-months)



2. Judges - Disqualification

Directive 7-99



At its January 5, 1998 Administrative Conference, the Supreme Court adopted a policy for assigning cases to judges involved in domestic violence matters. The policy applies to all judges who have been charged with or convicted of domestic violence or related offenses as well as judges who are complainants in a domestic violence matter, sitting in Municipal Court and Superior Court, including temporary assignments.

Judges charged with or convicted of domestic violence offenses and judges who are complainants in domestic violence matters shall not hear any domestic violence cases while the charges are pending and, if convicted, during the period any sentence is served. If, at the time the charges are brought, the judge has reserved decision in any domestic violence case, that case shall be transferred by the Assignment Judge to another judge. The matter shall be determined on the papers unless the defendant objects. If the defendant interposes an objection, a mistrial shall be declared and the case will be retried before the judge to whom the matter was transferred.

The Court has further determined that a judge who has been disqualified from hearing domestic violence matters under this policy shall not thereafter hear such cases without the prior approval of the Supreme Court on the application of the judge.

Supreme Court approval of an application to resume hearing domestic violence cases will not preclude a judge from exercising his or her power or recusal in any particular domestic violence case or in any category of such cases.

This supplements [the preceding paragraphs] regarding the assignment of cases to judges involved in domestic violence matters, and is intended to clarify the Supreme Court's policy on this statement. A judge against whom a temporary or permanent order of restraint has been issued shall not hear any domestic violence matters during the pendency of such an order. Furthermore, a judge disqualified under this policy may not automatically resume hearing domestic violence matters if a temporary order of restraint is vacated, or if the matter in which the judge is involved is concluded. Once disqualified under this policy, a judge must obtain the approval of the Supreme Court prior to hearing any domestic violence cases.

3. Immigration & Removal

a.) To which clients does the law apply?

1. Those Unlawfully in United States
2. Those Who Are Lawfully in The United States
 - a. Green Card
 - b. Asylum (Refugee)
 - c. Student
 - d. Worker
 - e. Tourist
 - f. Other
 - g. Note – Non-citizens are subject to removal regardless of immigration status; length of time in US; existence of family members who are US citizens; or strength of ties to the community

[Note - federal law does not distinguish between crimes and offenses, unlike New Jersey law. Accordingly, a disorderly persons offenses may be considered a crime for purposes of these federal statutes.]



b.) Statutory authority for removal

Other Criminal Offenses - 8

USCA 1227(a)(2)(iv) *et seq.*



(E) Crimes of domestic violence, stalking, or violation of protection order, crimes against children and¹

(i) Domestic violence, stalking, and child abuse

Any alien who at any time after admission is convicted of a crime of domestic violence, a crime of stalking, or a crime of child abuse, child neglect, or child abandonment is deportable.

For purposes of this clause, the term “crime of domestic violence” means any crime of violence (as defined in [section 16 of Title 18](#)) against a person committed by a current or former spouse of the person, by an individual with whom the person shares a child in common, by an individual who is cohabiting with or has cohabited with the person as a spouse, by an individual similarly situated to a spouse of the person under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction where the offense occurs, or by any other individual against a person who is protected from that individual's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the United States or any State, Indian tribal government, or unit of local government.

(ii) Violators of protection orders

Any alien who at any time after admission is enjoined under a protection order issued by a court and whom the court determines has engaged in conduct that violates the portion of a protection order that involves protection against credible threats of violence, repeated harassment, or bodily injury to the person or persons for whom the protection order was issued is deportable. For purposes of this clause, the term “protection order” means any injunction issued for the purpose of preventing violent or threatening acts of domestic violence, including temporary or final orders issued by civil or criminal courts (other than support or child custody orders or provisions) whether obtained by filing an independent action or as a *pendente lite* order in another proceeding.



c.) Waiver for DV Victims

(7) Waiver for victims of domestic violence

(A) In general

The Attorney General is not limited by the criminal court record and may waive the application of paragraph (2)(E)(i) (with respect to crimes of domestic violence and crimes of stalking) and (ii) in the case of an alien who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty and who is not and was not the primary perpetrator of violence in the relationship--

(i) upon a determination that--

(I) the alien was acting in² self-defense;

**(II) the alien was found to have violated a protection order intended to protect the alien;
or**



(III) the alien committed, was arrested for, was convicted of, or pled guilty to committing a crime--

(aa) that did not result in serious bodily injury; and

(bb) where there was a connection between the crime and the alien's having been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty.

(B) Credible evidence considered

In acting on applications under this paragraph, the Attorney General shall consider any credible evidence relevant to the application. The determination of what evidence is credible and the weight to be given that evidence shall be within the sole discretion of the Attorney General.

c.) Alternatives to FRO and DV Prosecution

Advantage of Civil restraints as an adjunct to PSA





4. Pets, Property & Firearms

a.) Initial Seizure of firearms

NJSA 25:21(d).(1) In addition to a law enforcement officer's authority to seize any weapon that is contraband, evidence or an instrumentality of crime, a law enforcement officer who has probable cause to believe that an act of domestic violence has been committed shall:

(a) question persons present to determine whether there are weapons on the premises; and

(b) upon observing or learning that a weapon is present on the premises, seize any weapon that the officer reasonably believes would expose the victim to a risk of serious bodily injury. If a law enforcement officer seizes any firearm pursuant to this paragraph, the officer shall also seize any firearm purchaser identification card or permit to purchase a handgun issued to the person accused of the act of domestic violence.

(2) A law enforcement officer shall deliver all weapons , firearms purchaser identification cards and permits to purchase a handgun seized pursuant to this section to the county prosecutor and shall append an inventory of all seized items to the domestic violence report.

(3) Weapons seized in accordance with the “Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of 1991”, P.L.1991, c. 261(C.2C:25-17 et seq.) shall be returned to the owner except upon order of the Superior Court. The prosecutor who has possession of the seized weapons may, upon notice to the owner, petition a judge of the Family Part of the Superior Court, Chancery Division, within 45 days of seizure, to obtain title to the seized weapons, or to revoke any and all permits, licenses and other authorizations for the use, possession, or ownership of such weapons pursuant to the law governing such use, possession, or ownership, or may object to the return of the weapons on such grounds as are provided for the initial rejection or later revocation of the authorizations, or on the grounds that the owner is unfit or that the owner poses a threat to the public in general or a person or persons in particular.

A hearing shall be held and a record made thereof within 45 days of the notice provided above. No formal pleading and no filing fee shall be required as a preliminary to such hearing. The hearing shall be summary in nature. Appeals from the results of the hearing shall be to the Superior Court, Appellate Division, in accordance with the law. If the prosecutor does not institute an action within 45 days of seizure, the seized weapons shall be returned to the owner.

After the hearing the court shall order the return of the firearms, weapons and any authorization papers relating to the seized weapons to the owner if the court determines the owner is not subject to any of the disabilities set forth in N.J.S.2C:58-3c. and finds that the complaint has been dismissed at the request of the complainant and the prosecutor determines that there is insufficient probable cause to indict; or if the defendant is found not guilty of the charges; or if the court determines that the domestic violence situation no longer exists.

Nothing in this act shall impair the right of the State to retain evidence pending a criminal prosecution. Nor shall any provision of this act be construed to limit the authority of the State or a law enforcement officer to seize, retain or forfeit property pursuant to chapter 64 of Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes.

If, after the hearing, the court determines that the weapons are not to be returned to the owner, the court may:

(a) With respect to weapons other than firearms, order the prosecutor to dispose of the weapons if the owner does not arrange for the transfer or sale of the weapons to an appropriate person within 60 days; or

(b) Order the revocation of the owner's firearms purchaser identification card or any permit, license or authorization, in which case the court shall order the owner to surrender any firearm seized and all other firearms possessed to the prosecutor and shall order the prosecutor to dispose of the firearms if the owner does not arrange for the sale of the firearms to a registered dealer of the firearms within 60 days; or

(c) Order such other relief as it may deem appropriate. When the court orders the weapons forfeited to the State or the prosecutor is required to dispose of the weapons, the prosecutor shall dispose of the property as provided in [N.J.S.2C:64-6](#).



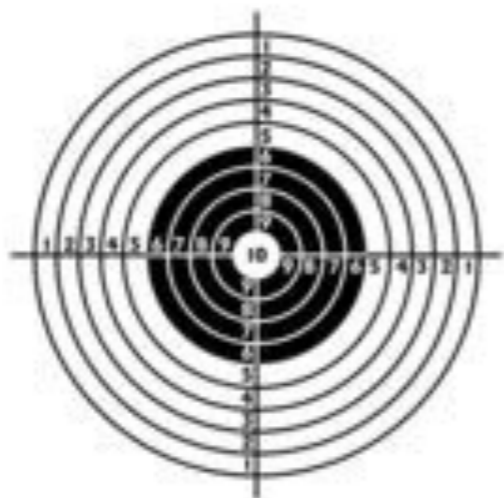
(4) A civil suit may be brought to enjoin a wrongful failure to return a seized firearm where the prosecutor refuses to return the weapon after receiving a written request to do so and notice of the owner's intent to bring a civil action pursuant to this section. Failure of the prosecutor to comply with the provisions of this act shall entitle the prevailing party in the civil suit to reasonable costs, including attorney's fees, provided that the court finds that the prosecutor failed to act in good faith in retaining the seized weapon.

(5) No law enforcement officer or agency shall be held liable in any civil action brought by any person for failing to learn of, locate or seize a weapon pursuant to this act, or for returning a seized weapon to its owner.



b.) Restraint on possession/ownership on FRO

2C:25-29(b). In proceedings in which complaints for restraining orders have been filed, the court shall grant any relief necessary to prevent further abuse. In addition to any other provisions, any restraining order issued by the court shall bar the defendant from purchasing, owning, possessing or controlling a firearm and from receiving or retaining a firearms purchaser identification card or permit to purchase a handgun pursuant to N.J.S.2C:58-3 during the period in which the restraining order is in effect or two years whichever is greater, except that this provision shall not apply to any law enforcement officer while actually on duty, or to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or member of the National Guard while actually on duty or traveling to or from an authorized place of duty. At the hearing the judge of the Family Part of the Chancery Division of the Superior Court may issue an order granting any or all of the following relief:



Disqualifications from Firearm ownership or possession



NJSA 2C:58-3(c)

c. Who may obtain. No person of good character and good repute in the community in which he lives, and who is not subject to any of the disabilities set forth in this section or other sections of this chapter, shall be denied a permit to purchase a handgun or a firearms purchaser identification card, except as hereinafter set forth. No handgun purchase permit or firearms purchaser identification card shall be issued:

(1) To any person who has been convicted of any crime, or a disorderly persons offense involving an act of domestic violence as defined in section 3 of P.L.[1991, c.261](#) (C.2C:25-19), whether or not armed with or possessing a weapon at the time of such offense;

(2) To any drug dependent person as defined in section 2 of P.L.[1970, c.226](#) (C.24:21-2), to any person who is confined for a mental disorder to a hospital, mental institution or sanitarium, or to any person who is presently an habitual drunkard;

(3) To any person who suffers from a physical defect or disease which would make it unsafe for him to handle firearms, to any person who has ever been confined for a mental disorder, or to any alcoholic unless any of the foregoing persons produces a certificate of a medical doctor or psychiatrist licensed in New Jersey, or other satisfactory proof, that he is no longer suffering from that particular disability in such a manner that would interfere with or handicap him in the handling of firearms; to any person who knowingly

falsifies any information on the application form for a handgun purchase permit or firearms purchaser identification card;

(4) To any person under the age of 18 years for a firearms purchaser identification card and to any person under the age of 21 years for a permit to purchase a handgun;

(5) To any person where the issuance would not be in the interest of the public health, safety or welfare;

(6) To any person who is subject to a restraining order issued pursuant to the "Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of 1991," P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-17 et seq.) prohibiting the person from possessing any firearm;

(7) To any person who as a juvenile was adjudicated delinquent for an offense which, if committed by an adult, would constitute a crime and the offense involved the unlawful use or possession of a weapon, explosive or destructive device or is enumerated in subsection d. of section 2 of P.L.[1997, c.117](#) (C.2C:43-7.2);

(8) To any person whose firearm is seized pursuant to the "Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of 1991," P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-17 et seq.) and whose firearm has not been returned; or

(9) To any person named on the consolidated Terrorist Watchlist maintained by Terrorist Screening Center administered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

d.) Congratulations! You are now a "certain person!"

2C:39-7(b). (1) A person having been convicted in this State or elsewhere of the crime of aggravated assault, arson, burglary, escape, extortion, homicide, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, bias intimidation in violation of N.J.S.2C:16-1, endangering the welfare of a child pursuant to N.J.S.2C:24-4, stalking pursuant to P.L. 1992, c.209 (C.2C:12-10) or a crime involving domestic violence as defined in section 3 of P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-19), whether or not armed with or having in his possession a weapon enumerated in subsection r. of N.J.S.2C:39-1, or a person having been convicted of a crime pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.2C:35-3 through N.J.S.2C:35-6, inclusive; section 1 of P.L.1987, c.101 (C.2C:35-7); N.J.S.2C:35-11; N.J.S.2C:39-3; N.J.S.2C:39-4; or N.J.S.2C:39-9 who purchases, owns, possesses or controls a firearm is guilty of a crime of the second degree and upon conviction thereof, the person shall be sentenced to a term of imprisonment by the court. The term of imprisonment shall include the imposition of a minimum term, which shall be fixed at five years, during which the defendant shall be ineligible for parole. If the defendant is sentenced to an extended term of imprisonment pursuant to N.J.S.2C:43-7, the extended term of imprisonment shall include the imposition of a minimum term, which shall be fixed at, or between, one-third and one-half of the sentence imposed by the court or five years, whichever is greater, during which the defendant shall be ineligible for parole.



(2) A person having been convicted in this State or elsewhere of a disorderly persons offense involving domestic violence, whether or not armed with or having in his possession a weapon enumerated in subsection r. of N.J.S.2C:39-1, who purchases, owns, possesses or controls a firearm is guilty of a crime of the third degree.

(3) A person whose firearm is seized pursuant to the "Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of 1991," P.L.1991,c.261 (C.2C:25-17 et seq.) and whose firearm has not been returned, or who is subject to a court order prohibiting the possession of firearms issued pursuant to the "Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of 1991," P.L.1991,c.261 (C.2C:25-17 et seq.) who purchases, owns, possesses or controls a firearm is guilty of a crime of the third degree, except that the provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to any law enforcement officer while actually on duty, or to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or member of the National Guard while actually on duty or traveling to or from an authorized place of duty.

c. Whenever any person shall have been convicted in another state, territory, commonwealth or other jurisdiction of the United States, or any country in the world, in a court of competent jurisdiction, of a crime which in said other jurisdiction or country is comparable to one of the crimes enumerated in subsection a. or b. of this section, then that person shall be subject to the provisions of this section.



e.) Pets

2C:25-27 Conditions of sentencing of defendant found guilty of domestic violence.

11. a. When a defendant is found guilty of a crime or offense involving domestic violence and a condition of sentence restricts the defendant's ability to have contact with the victim, the victim's friends, co-workers, or relatives, or an animal owned, possessed, leased, kept, or held by either party or a minor child residing in the household, that condition shall be recorded in an order of the court and a written copy of that order shall be provided to the victim by the clerk of the court or other person designated by the court. In addition to restricting a defendant's ability to have contact with the victim, the victim's friends, co-workers, or relatives, or an animal owned, possessed, leased, kept, or held by either party or a minor child residing in the household, the court may require the defendant to receive professional counseling from either a private source or a source appointed by the court, and if the court so orders, the court shall require the defendant to provide documentation of attendance at the professional counseling. In any case where the court order contains a requirement that the defendant receive professional counseling, no application by the defendant to dissolve the restraining order shall be granted unless, in addition to any other provisions required by law or conditions ordered by the court, the defendant has completed all required attendance at such counseling.



b. In addition the court may enter an order directing the possession of an animal owned, possessed, leased, kept, or held by either party or a minor child residing in the household. Where a person has abused or threatened to abuse such animal, there shall be a presumption that possession of the animal shall be awarded to the non-abusive party.



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