

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS**

BEFORE THE REAL ESTATE COMMISSION

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS**

v.

**DEIDRE SHAFFER & WILLOW HILL RENOVATORS AND
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT, LLC
CASE NOS. 23-56-010242; 23-56-010423**

FINAL ADJUDICATION AND ORDER

**ARION R. CLAGGETT, ACTING COMMISSIONER
BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND
OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS**

**KYLE J. SAMPSON, CHAIRPERSON
STATE REAL ESTATE COMMISSION**

**P.O. BOX 69523
HARRISBURG, PA 17106-9523**

DFP

Prothonotary Filed On:
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Department of State

HISTORY

This matter is before the State Real Estate Commission (Commission) to determine whether Deidre Shaffer (Respondent Shaffer) and Willow Hill Renovators and Property Management, LLC, (Respondent Willow Hill) (Respondents) should be disciplined under the Real Estate Licensing and Registration Act (RELRA)¹. On February 5, 2024, the Commonwealth filed a two-count Order to Show Cause (OSC) alleging that Respondents are subject to disciplinary action under the RELRA and the imposition of a civil penalty under 63 Pa.C.S. §3108(b)(4) and/or the imposition of the costs of investigation under 63 Pa.C.S. § 3108(b)(5)², because Respondents violated Section 301 of the Act, 63 P.S. § 455.301³ by acting in the capacity of a real estate broker without the required license.

¹ Act of February 19, 1980, P.L. 15, No. 9, *as amended*, 63 P.S. §§ 455.101-455.902.

² **Section 3108. Civil Penalties.**

* * * * *

(b) Additional powers.--In addition to the disciplinary powers and duties of the licensing boards and licensing commissions within the bureau under their respective practice acts, licensing boards and licensing commissions shall have the power, respectively:

* * * * *

(4) To levy a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 per violation on a licensee or unlicensed person who violates a provision of the applicable licensing act or licensing board regulation.

(5) To assess against the respondent determined to be in violation of the disciplinary provisions administered by a licensing board or licensing commission in a disciplinary proceeding pending before the licensing board or licensing commission for final determination, as part of the sanction, the costs of investigation underlying that disciplinary action. The cost of investigation shall not include those costs incurred by the licensing board or licensing commission after the filing of formal actions or disciplinary charges against the respondent.

* * * * *

63 Pa. C.S. § 3108(b)(4)(5).

³ **Section 301. Unlawful to conduct business without license or registration certificate.**

It shall be unlawful for any person, directly or indirectly, to engage in or conduct, or to advertise or hold himself out as engaging in or conducting the business, or acting in the capacity of a broker or salesperson, cemetery broker, cemetery salesperson, campground membership salesperson, time-share salesperson, builder-owner salesperson, rental listing referral agent or cemetery company within this Commonwealth without first being licensed or registered

Although the OSC was served upon Respondents, they have not filed an answer or otherwise responded. On December 30, 2024, the Commonwealth filed a Motion to Deem Facts Admitted and Enter Default (MDFA) and mailed a copy to Respondents. Respondents did not respond to the MDFA. The Commission deliberated this matter at its regularly scheduled meeting on February 11, 2025. By order dated February 12, 2025, the Commission granted the MDFA, deeming Respondents to have admitted all the factual allegations of the OSC, and closed the record. The Commission now issues this adjudication as a final disposition of the charges against Respondents.

as provided in this act, unless he is exempted from obtaining a license or registration certificate under the provisions of section 304.

63 P.S. § 455.301.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent Shaffer has never held an authorization to practice a profession or occupation issued by the Commission. (Commission records; OSC at ¶ 1).
2. Respondent Willow Hill has never held an authorization to practice a profession or occupation issued by the Commission. (OSC at ¶ 2).
3. It is believed that Respondent Shaffer's current address is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (Affidavit of Service, Exhibit A to MDFA).
4. Upon information and belief, Respondent Willow Hill's current address is: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. (OSC at ¶ 4).
5. The Commonwealth has incurred four hundred eighty-two dollars and seventy-three cents (\$482.73) in costs during the investigation of this matter. (OSC at ¶ 5).
6. Respondent Shaffer is the owner and operator of Respondent Willow Hill, which began operating in 2016. (OSC at ¶ 7).
7. Respondent Willow Hill manages fifty (50) rental units on behalf of others. (OSC at ¶ 8).
8. Respondent Shaffer, through Respondent Willow Hill, receives ten percent (10%) of the monthly rent for each of the rental units. (OSC at ¶ 9).
9. As part of the property management duties, Respondent Shaffer collects rent payments in her office, by mail or by phone application such as Zelle. (OSC at ¶ 10).
10. On her Zillow page, Respondent Shaffer identifies her specialties as "property management" and "landlord." (OSC at ¶¶ 11-12; Exhibit A).

⁴ At the time of the filing of the OSC, the Commonwealth had reason to believe that Respondent Shaffer's address was [REDACTED]. However, when service could not be made at that address, the Commonwealth achieved hand delivery of the OSC to both Respondents at [REDACTED].

11. Respondent Shaffer's business card identifies her as a property manager and advertises rental properties. (OSC at ¶¶ 13-14; Exhibit B).

12. Respondent Willow Hill identifies itself and advertises on its Facebook page as managing properties for others. (OSC at ¶¶ 17-18; Exhibit C).

13. Respondent Willow Hill advertises properties for rent on its Facebook page. (OSC at ¶¶ 19-20; Exhibit D).

14. Respondent Willow Hill has "for rent" signs advertising available rental properties. (OSC at ¶¶ 21-22; Exhibit E).

15. On February 5, 2024, the Commonwealth filed an OSC setting forth allegations that Respondents violated the RELRA. (MDFA at ¶ 1; Docket Entries, Case Nos. 23-56-010242; 23-56-010423).

16. The OSC was sent by certified mail, electronic return receipt requested, and first-class mail, postage prepaid, to Respondents' address on file with the Commission, [REDACTED]. (MDFA at ¶ 2; OSC at Certificate of Service).

17. Both the Certified and First-Class Mail were returned as undeliverable. (MDFA at ¶ 3).

18. A copy of the OSC was hand delivered to Respondents on June 13, 2024, by Kelley Lehman, an employee of the Department of State, Bureau of Enforcement and Investigation, and an authorized agent of the Commission. (MDFA at ¶¶ 4-5; MDFA Exhibit A).

19. Per the affidavit of service, Respondents' current mailing address is [REDACTED]. (MDFA at ¶ 6).

20. The OSC directed Respondents to file an answer within thirty (30) days of the date on the most recent Certificate of Service associated with the OSC. (MDFA at ¶ 7).

21. As of the date of the filing of the MDFA, Respondents had not filed an answer to the OSC. (MDFA at ¶ 8; (Docket Entries, Case Nos. 23-56-010242; 23-56-010423).

22. On December 30, 2024, the Commonwealth filed and mailed its MDFA to Respondents at: [REDACTED] (Docket Entries, Case Nos. 23-56-010242; 23-56-010423; Certificate of Service, MDFA).

23. On February 12, 2025, the Commission issued an Order granting the MDFA and mailed it to Respondents at: [REDACTED] (Docket Entries, Case Nos. 23-56-010242; 23-56-010423; Order granting).

24. Respondents did not answer the OSC, the MDFA, the Commission's Order granting the MDFA, or otherwise respond in this matter and have not requested a hearing. (Docket Entries, Case Nos. 23-56-010242; 23-56-010423).

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Commission has jurisdiction over Respondents in this matter. (Findings of fact nos. 1-14).

2. Respondents received notice of this proceeding and of the charges against them and were afforded the opportunity to be heard in accordance with section 4 of the Administrative Agency Law, 2 Pa.C.S. § 504. (Findings of fact nos. 1-4, 15-24).

3. The Commission is authorized to impose a civil penalty pursuant to Section 305 of the Act, 63 P.S. §455.305, and/or impose a civil penalty under 63 Pa.C.S. §3108(b)(4) and/or impose the costs of investigation under 63 Pa.C.S. § 3108(b)(5) upon Respondent Shaffer because Respondent Shaffer violated Section 301 of the Act, 63 P.S. §455.301, by acting in the capacity of a real estate broker without the required license. (Findings of fact nos. 6-11). Therefore, Count One of the OSC is sustained.

4. The Commission is authorized to impose a civil penalty pursuant to Section 305 of the Act, 63 P.S. §455.305, and/or impose a civil penalty under 63 Pa.C.S. §3108(b)(4) and/or impose the costs of investigation under 63 Pa.C.S. § 3108(b)(5) upon Respondent Willow Hill because Respondent Willow Hill violated Section 301 of the Act, 63 P.S. §455.301, by acting in the capacity of a real estate broker without the required license. (Findings of fact nos. 6-8, 12-14). Therefore, Count Two of the OSC is sustained.

5. The Respondents are subject to the imposition of the costs of investigation in this matter under 63 Pa.C.S. § 3108(b)(5) in the amount of four hundred eighty-two dollars and seventy-three cents (\$482.73). (Finding of Fact no. 5).

DISCUSSION

Respondents did not file an answer to the OSC. Under the foregoing circumstances, the Commission must ascertain whether Respondents have been afforded the appropriate due process to enable it to render a final decision on the merits of the case.

Due process rights are protected if Respondents are made sufficiently aware of the charges against them and the procedures by which they can defend themselves. *Gutman v. Com., State Dental Council & Examining Bd., Bureau of Prof'l Affairs*, 76 Pa. Cmwlth. 193, 463 A.2d 114 (1983); *Clark v. Com., Dep't of Pub. Welfare*, 58 Pa. Cmwlth. 142, 427 A.2d 712 (1981); and *Celane v. Com., Ins. Com'r*, 51 Pa. Cmwlth. 633, 415 A.2d 130, 132 (1980).

Section 33.31 of the General Rules of Administrative Practice and Procedure, 1 Pa. Code § 33.31, authorizes service by mail. "Notice of administrative action which is mailed to the interested party's last known address has been found to be reasonable notice." *Kobylski v. Com., Milk Mktg. Bd.*, 101 Pa. Cmwlth. 155, 516 A.2d 75 (1986). A Respondent is deemed to be in default and relevant facts stated in the OSC may be admitted if the Respondent fails to file an answer within the time provided in the OSC. 1 Pa. Code § 35.37. *See also, Kinniry v. Prof'l Standards & Practices Comm'n*, 678 A.2d 1230 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1996).

In this case, the Commonwealth made an effort that was reasonably calculated under the circumstances to notify Respondents of the charges against them by mailing the OSC by certified mail, electronic return receipt, and by first class mail, postage prepaid, to Respondents address's at: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] When these attempts at service were unsuccessful, the Commonwealth had the OSC hand delivered to Respondents at [REDACTED] on June 13, 2024. To date, Respondents have failed to file an answer to the OSC or otherwise respond in this matter.

In the OSC and attached Notice, there were specific instructions as to how Respondents could answer the OSC and obtain a hearing. In the “Procedures” section of the OSC, Respondents were also warned what might happen if they did not file an answer as directed: **“IF RESPONDENTS FAIL TO FILE A WRITTEN REQUEST FOR HEARING WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS OF THE DATE ON THE MOST RECENT CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE, RESPONDENTS WILL BE DEEMED TO HAVE WAIVED THEIR RIGHT TO A HEARING AND FINAL JUDGMENT MAY BE ENTERED WITHOUT A HEARING.”**

Despite Respondents’ receipt of notice, Respondents failed to answer the OSC and did not respond to the MDFA or the Commission’s Order granting the MDFA. Thus, the Commission concludes that Respondents were given sufficient notice and opportunity to be heard.

The two count OSC charges that Respondents violated Section 301 of the Act, 63 P.S. § 455.301, by acting in the capacity of a real estate broker without the required license. As established by the facts deemed admitted, Respondent Shaffer and Respondent Willow Hill have never held an authorization to practice a profession or occupation issued by the Real Estate Commission. Respondent Shaffer is the owner and operator of Respondent Willow Hill, which began operating in 2016. Respondent Willow Hill manages fifty (50) rental units on behalf of others. Respondent Shaffer, through Respondent Willow Hill, receives ten percent (10%) of the monthly rent for each rental unit. As part of the property management duties, Respondent Shaffer collects rent payments in her office, by mail or by phone application such as Zelle.

On her Zillow page, Respondent Shaffer identifies her specialties as “property management” and “landlord,” and her business card identifies her as a property manager and advertises rental properties. Respondent Willow Hill identifies itself and advertises on its

Facebook page as managing properties for others. Respondent Willow Hill advertises properties for rent on its Facebook page and has “for rent” signs advertising available rental properties.

Respondents both offered to perform property management services and actively managed fifty (50) rental units on behalf of others. While doing so, they performed actions consistent with a broker’s services when representing a property owner in a real estate transaction. In order to perform these services, Respondents were required to hold a real estate broker license issued by the Commission. It is undisputed that neither Respondent holds a real estate broker license issued by the Commission. As such, Respondents are subject to disciplinary action under section 301 because they held themselves out as, and engaged in and conducted the business of brokers, without first being licensed under the RELRA. Therefore, Counts One and Two of the OSC are sustained.

The facts deemed admitted have established the Commonwealth’s case, and the Commission must now determine the appropriate sanction. The Commission may impose a civil penalty of up to \$10,000 per violation of the RELRA, and the costs of investigation under 63 Pa.C.S. § 3108(b)(5).

In determining a sanction, the Commission considers the seriousness of the offenses and any evidence offered in mitigation. Because Respondents did not file an answer to the OSC or request a hearing, the Commission has no mitigating evidence to consider. Respondents held themselves out as and conducted the business of a broker without first being licensed under the RELRA. Respondents reaped the benefits of performing services that required them to be properly licensed by the Commission, and actively sought more clients through their advertising of their services on Facebook and through “for rent” signs advertising available rental properties, without holding the required licenses.

The Commission considers Respondents' violations very serious. The Commission's rules and regulations are in place to protect consumers of real estate services in this Commonwealth from untrained and possibly incompetent representation in real estate transactions. Respondents herein enjoyed the financial benefits of managing the property of others without first obtaining the education, knowledge, and experience needed to competently and professionally perform these services for their clients. Respondents subverted the licensing, education, and experience requirements to earn fees for their own personal gain and profit. In short, Respondents sought all the benefits of acting as brokers in Pennsylvania, without having first paid the costs and meeting the requirements associated with becoming licensed brokers in Pennsylvania. This is the very type of opportunistic behavior that the Commission strives to eliminate in Pennsylvania. In order to impress the seriousness of their transgressions upon Respondents, as well as to dissuade any other similarly situated individuals that may consider engaging in such conduct, the Commission finds that the appropriate sanction is to levy a civil penalty in the amount of \$10,000 against each Respondent, as well as assessing the costs of investigation in the amount of \$482.73. Respondents shall be jointly and severally liable for payment of the entire sanction. Respondents shall also cease and desist from engaging in the practice of the real estate profession.

Accordingly, the Commission enters the following Order.

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BEFORE THE STATE REAL ESTATE COMMISSION**

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
Bureau of Professional and
Occupational Affairs**

v.

**Deidre Shaffer & Willow Hill Renovators
and Property Management, LLC,
Respondents**

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**Case Nos. 23-56-010242
 23-56-010423**

FINAL ORDER

AND NOW, this 19th day of May, 2025, the State Real Estate Commission, having duly met and considered the entire record and based on the foregoing findings of fact, conclusions of law and discussion, hereby **ASSESSSES** upon Respondents Deidre Shaffer and Willow Hill Renovators and Property Management, LLC, jointly and severally a **CIVIL PENALTY** in the amount of **\$20,000**, and imposes the costs of investigation in the amount of **\$482.73**, for a total penalty of **\$20,482.73**. It is further **ORDERED** that Respondents shall **CEASE AND DESIST** from practicing real estate in this Commonwealth without first obtaining a license to so practice.

Respondents shall pay the full penalty imposed by certified check, cashier's check, attorney's check or U.S. postal money order made payable to "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

The payment of the penalty imposed shall be forwarded to the following address:

Commission Counsel
Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs
P.O. Box 69523
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9523

Failure to pay the entire penalty imposed within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order may result in further disciplinary action and/or enforcement activity by the Office of Attorney General.

This Order is effective immediately. The sanction imposed shall take effect on June 18, 2025, thirty (30) days after the date of mailing indicated below.

**BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND
OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS**


ARION R. CLAGGETT
ACTING COMMISSIONER

Respondents Address:
Tracking # 9489 0090 0027 6644 1980 86

Prosecuting Attorney:

Commission Counsel:

Date of Mailing:

**BY ORDER:
STATE REAL ESTATE COMMISSION**


KYLE J. SAMPSON
CHAIRPERSON

Deidre Shaffer

[REDACTED]

Caroline A. Bailey, Esquire

Dean F. Picarella, Esquire

May 19, 2025

NOTICE

The attached Final Order represents the final agency decision in this matter. It may be appealed to the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania by the filing of a Petition for Review with that Court within 30 days after the entry of the order in accordance with the Pennsylvania Rules of Appellate Procedure. See Chapter 15 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Appellate Procedure entitled “Judicial Review of Governmental Determinations,” Pa. R.A.P. 1501 – 1561. Please note: An order is entered on the date it is mailed. If you take an appeal to the Commonwealth Court, you must serve the Board with a copy of your Petition for Review. The agency contact for receiving service of such an appeal is:

Commission Counsel
P.O. Box 69523
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9523

The name of the individual Counsel is identified on the Final Order.