



ATTORNEY REGISTRATION AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION
of the
SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

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Terri Tepper & Jordan Weiner
By Email: jordon@internconsultinginc.com

Chicago
January 21, 2026

Re: Antonio DeBlasio
in relation to
Terri Tepper
No. 2025IN04977

Dear Ms. Tepper & Mr. Weiner:

Attached is a copy of Antonio DeBlasio's response to your complaint, submitted by the attorney's counsel, Allison Wood.

If you believe the response is inaccurate or if you wish to comment or provide additional information, please write to me within fourteen days. You may submit comments or additional information to me by email to emadry@iadc.org. If you send more information by regular mail, please do not staple or bind your correspondence and do not use exhibit tabs.

We will evaluate the matter and advise you of our decision. Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

/s/ John R. Cesario

John R. Cesario
Senior Counsel
ARDC Intake Division

JRC:edm
Attachment

4915-6647-4634, v. 1



January 16, 2026

VIA EMAIL

John Cesario
Senior Counsel/Intake Division
Illinois Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission
One Prudential Plaza
130 E. Randolph Drive, Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60601

**Re: Antonio DeBlasio in relation to Terri Tepper
Commission No. 2025IN04977**

Dear Mr. Cesario:

First, let me thank you for the professional courtesy of additional time to provide you with the information you requested in relation to the above-referenced matter.

The purpose of this letter is to provide a response to your letter wherein you seek information that relates to the matters raised in the complaint that was submitted to your office by Jordan Tepper Weiner, on behalf of his mother, Terri Tepper. You may note that Ms. Tepper and Mr. Weiner retained Mr. DeBlasio seeking to appeal an arbitration award. Mr. Weiner was Mr. DeBlasio's primary point of contact.

This letter will provide you with background information about Mr. DeBlasio; a brief description of the matter that is the subject of Mr. Weiner's complaint; and a discussion about the claims raised by Mr. Weiner and Mr. DeBlasio's response to his claims. We will conclude with a discussion as to why this matter should be closed.

I.

Brief Background on Mr. DeBlasio

Mr. DeBlasio obtained his Illinois law license in 1994. He is a former commercial litigation partner at one of Chicago's largest law firms, and he was a litigation partner at a small boutique law firm in DuPage County, Illinois that focused on representing government entities. In July 2009, he established his own firm, *DeBlasio Law Group*, now located in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois. In

Keeping good lawyers out of trouble and
providing ARDC defense when they need it
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2023, Attorney Brian Bosch joined his firm as a partner. Currently, he has two other attorneys in his firm who are Of Counsel. His firm has collectively represented clients with severe personal injuries, business owners, employees, foreign clients with interests in the United States, government agencies, as well as probate and estate matters. From 1994 through at least 1999, Mr. DeBlasio provided *pro bono* services on an annual basis with Chicago Volunteer Legal Services. He received the CVLS Distinguished Service Award in 1995 and 1999. He also served as a mentor to middle school and high school students for Elmhurst Community Unit School District from 2008 until 2018.

II.

A Discussion About Mr. DeBlasio's Firm's Representation of Ms. Tepper

Ms. Tepper filed a Statement of Claim in October 2024 against the brokerage firm, Oppenheimer & Co., Inc. (herein "Oppenheimer") claiming in part that it made improper charges to an account held by her deceased husband. The claim led to arbitration before the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA). Ms. Tepper was represented by her son, Mr. Weiner. After a hearing on her claims, the arbitrator issued an award in favor of Oppenheimer on May 23, 2025.

On June 7, 2025, Ms. Tepper and Mr. Weiner signed an attorney agreement with Mr. DeBlasio to file a motion to vacate the arbitrator's award.¹ Mr. DeBlasio asked one of his Of Counsel attorneys, Joseph Two, to take the lead on the case because he had experience working with FINRA matters.² It was understood that pursuant to the Federal Arbitration Act, 9 U.S.C §12, the motion needed to be filed within three months after the award is filed or delivered, or by August 23, 2025. Since that date fell on a Saturday, the deadline would be extended to Monday, August 25, 2025. During the weeks that followed the engagement, Mr. Weiner provided the firm with documentation and information needed to prepare the motion. Mr. DeBlasio's firm worked zealously on reviewing and analyzing that information, identifying an overall strategy for the motion, and drafting and revising the motion until it met with Mr. Weiner's approval.

The Motion to Vacate the arbitrator's award was filed in federal court on August 20, 2025, in a matter that was styled as *Terri Tepper, as Executor of the Estate of Lawrence Weiner v. Oppenheimer & Co., Inc.*, Case No. 1:25 cv 09985.³ On that date, summons was also issued for Oppenheimer. On August 21, 2025, the firm received notice that the summons was not processed

¹ A copy of the attorney agreement is attached.

² Mr. DeBlasio and his partner Mr. Bosch also worked on the case and would become counsel of record.

³ A copy of the Motion is attached.



because no judge had yet been assigned to the case. The case was later assigned to Judge Franklin Valderamma who issued a minute order on August 25, 2025. On August 27, 2025, Mr. DeBlasio sent a copy of the motion and a request to waive service to counsel for Oppenheimer.⁴

By letter dated September 23, 2025, counsel for Oppenheimer advised Mr. DeBlasio that the motion was time-barred and legally defective because pursuant to the Federal Arbitration Act, the motion needed to be served on them within three months after the award was filed or issued, or by August 25, 2025. In other words, the motion was defective because it had been served on Oppenheimer two days after the statutory deadline. The letter further advised that if the motion was not withdrawn by October 14, 2025, they would seek sanctions, including attorney's fees and costs against Mr. DeBlasio and his clients.

Mr. DeBlasio asked Mr. Two to review the letter and conduct research and to provide him with an assessment of the points raised therein. In addition to the legal research, Mr. Two also investigated the service date of the arbitrator's award. It was not mailed to the parties in a traditional sense; it was made available through a portal with FINRA. Although the firm tried to identify a defense, it concluded that the deadline referenced in the sanction letter was valid. Mr. Two expressed his apologies to Mr. DeBlasio for missing the fact that the motion had to be served within three months; he had mistakenly believed the three-month time frame was directed solely to the filing of the motion.

On October 14, 2025, Mr. DeBlasio had a meeting with Mr. Weiner and Ms. Tepper to explain what happened and to discuss next steps.⁵ During the meeting, Mr. DeBlasio acknowledged that although the error was made by Mr. Two, he was ultimately responsible for it as the managing partner of the firm. He also advised Mr. Weiner that he would need time to consult with his insurance carrier to report the possible claim and to discuss whether the firm should withdraw. Mr. Weiner indicated he understood the situation. He expressed his intention to pursue the case with or without the firm. Shortly after the meeting, Mr. Weiner demanded that he be provided with a full refund of the \$15,000 that he paid the firm so that he could retain new counsel if Mr. DeBlasio decided to withdraw. Notably, in an email dated October 22, 2025, Mr. Weiner thanked Mr. DeBlasio for how he handled the matter and that he believed it was an honest mistake.

⁴ A copy of the letter without attachments is attached.

⁵ Notably, Mr. Weiner recorded this meeting without Mr. DeBlasio's informed consent. Recording private conversations without informed consent is a violation of the Illinois Eavesdropping statute (730 ILCS 5/14-2) and is classified as a Class 4 Felony. The purported transcript of that recording is attached to his submission to your office. We would respectfully request that the transcript be given no weight in your consideration of this matter.



By letter dated October 23, 2025, Mr. DeBlasio advised Mr. Weiner that the firm would be withdrawing from his case.⁶ He explained to Mr. Weiner that the firm could not in good faith continue to pursue the defective motion which would leave him and his mother exposed to having sanctions and fees entered against them. Mr. Weiner indicated that he understood Mr. DeBlasio's position and told him that he would seek new counsel. Mr. DeBlasio filed a Motion to Withdraw, and it was granted on October 24, 2025.⁷ Mr. DeBlasio provided Mr. Weiner with a full refund of the \$15,000 he paid for the legal services. In an email dated October 27, 2025, Mr. Weiner wrote to Mr. DeBlasio and his counsel, Michael Hannigan, "*Dear Mike, I wanted to update you on the status of my situation with Tony DeBlasio and his firm. The Good News – Tony refunded the full \$15,000 retainer, which I genuinely appreciate, that demonstrates some accountability for the service deadline issue*"

III.

Mr. Weiner's Claims Against Mr. DeBlasio

Less than a month later, on November 21, 2025, Mr. Weiner sent your office a 176-page complaint against Mr. DeBlasio. In addition to the missed service deadline, Mr. Weiner complains that Mr. DeBlasio was negligent, incompetent, failed to communicate with him, was dishonest and withdrew from the case at a critical point that compelled him to represent his mother. As stated herein, Mr. DeBlasio admits to the missed service deadline. These additional claims that Mr. Weiner has decided to pile on are without merit.

(a) Mr. DeBlasio Provided Mr. Weiner with Competent and Zealous Representation.

Mr. Weiner represented his mother in an arbitration against a brokerage company. He was not successful and they wanted to appeal the arbitrator's decision. When he sought the services of Mr. DeBlasio, he was advised that it would be very difficult to obtain a reversal of the arbitrator's decision because such decisions are given great deference. Even though the probability of success was not great, Mr. DeBlasio and his firm devoted countless hours and effort to review the voluminous file, listen to the audio recording of the arbitration, conducted substantial research, and developed a strategy for the best defense to set forth in the motion. When Mr. Weiner reached out *via* email to Mr. Two and/or Mr. DeBlasio, he received timely and thoughtful responses. Notably, Mr. Weiner

⁶ A copy of the October 23, 2025, letter to Mr. Weiner is attached.

⁷ A copy of the Motion to Withdraw is attached.



reached out quite often because he had his own ideas about the motion and the strategy. In fact, Mr. Weiner had drafted his own motion for the firm to consider. They patiently had to explain to him why certain parts of his motion could not be used. When Mr. Weiner suggested that the firm threaten Oppenheimer with criminal charges to leverage the civil lawsuit, the firm patiently advised him it would be unethical to do so. After providing Mr. Weiner with a draft motion, Mr. Two reviewed Mr. Weiner's comments and patiently addressed his concerns. It was only after Mr. Weiner approved of the draft that it was filed on August 20, 2025. Mr. Weiner's claims that Mr. DeBlasio was negligent, incompetent, and failed to communicate with him are simply not true.

(b) Mr. DeBlasio Was Honest and Transparent in Advising Mr. Weiner that the Service Deadline Date was not met.

Mr. Weiner claims that when Mr. DeBlasio told him the motion was timely filed, he falsely represented that there were no problems and did not tell him that the service deadline had not been met. The motion was timely filed on August 20, 2025. At that time, Mr. DeBlasio had no knowledge that there was an issue in relation to the service of the motion. The summons he submitted bounced back the next day because no judge had been assigned to the case. The judge was assigned on August 25, 2025. Mr. DeBlasio sent the summons and a request to waive service to counsel for Oppenheimer on August 27, 2025. Mr. DeBlasio was not alerted to the issue of the service deadline until counsel of Oppenheimer sent him a sanctions letter on September 23, 2025, explaining that the service deadline had not been met. Mr. DeBlasio thereafter shared the letter with Mr. Weiner, met with Mr. Weiner, and advised him why the service deadline had not been met and how it would impact the motion. Mr. DeBlasio was honest and transparent throughout the situation and accepted responsibility for the error. Mr. Weiner's claim that Mr. DeBlasio was not honest with him is simply not true.

(c) Mr. DeBlasio's Withdrawal from the Case Was Required and Granted by the Court.

Mr. Weiner claims that Mr. DeBlasio improperly withdrew from the case at a critical point, leaving him with no recourse but to proceed in the case on his mother's behalf. Upon learning that the service deadline had not been met, Mr. DeBlasio is on notice that the motion is defective. Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 3.1 *Meritorious Claims and Contentions*, would have prohibited him from proceeding on a defective motion. Upon being provided notice that Oppenheimer would *seek sanctions*,



including attorney's fees and costs, pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 11, 28 U.S.C. § 1927, and the Court's inherent authority unless the time barred Motion is withdrawn and this action is voluntarily dismissed with prejudice," Mr. DeBlasio is also on notice that if he proceeds with the defective motion he will expose his firm and his clients to sanctions and costs. Given his ethical obligations and the risk of sanctions against his firm and Mr. Weiner, Mr. DeBlasio advised Mr. Weiner to withdraw the motion. This was sound advice that was soundly rejected by Mr. Weiner who insisted the firm proceed with the motion despite the risks. Since such representation would cause him to violate his ethical obligations, Mr. DeBlasio was mandated to withdraw from the case pursuant to Rule 1.16 (a) *Declining or Termination Representation*, which states the attorney shall withdraw if the representation will result in a violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

The timing of the withdrawal on October 24, 2025, did not occur during a critical time in the case. The only pending date in the case was for the parties to submit a status report on November 8, 2025. Certainly, if the court thought the timing of the withdrawal was critical, it would not have granted the motion. After granting the motion, the court gave Mr. Weiner 30 days to obtain new counsel. As a side note, Mr. Weiner states that he could not identify new counsel to represent him. That is not surprising as no reasonable lawyer would agree to proceed on a defective motion and risk the imposition of sanctions and/or a disciplinary complaint.

(d) None of Mr. Weiner's remaining claims have merit.

Mr. Weiner claims that Mr. DeBlasio failed to correct the court record to reflect the fact that the service deadline error was his fault and not the fault of Mr. Weiner or his mother. There simply are no rules, statutes, or court protocols that would have required Mr. DeBlasio to tell the court he made a mistake in the service of the motion. That fact that he made the mistake, and not Mr. Weiner or his mother, does not cure the fact that the motion is defective. Indeed, as has been explained, it is a defect that could not be cured and that is why it should have been withdrawn.

Mr. Weiner claims that Mr. DeBlasio's mistake caused him and his mother's reputational harm, exposure to sanctions, the potential dismissal of the motion, and emotional and financial distress. These claims fail for at least two reasons. First and foremost, Mr. Weiner needs to understand that these claims cannot be remedied by the ARDC. There are civil remedies for these claims. Second, it must be underscored that Mr. DeBlasio advised Mr. Weiner to withdraw the defective motion to avoid the exposure to sanctions. Mr. Weiner's decision to proceed on a defective motion is the only



reason they have exposure to sanctions. Further, any harm sustained by Mr. Weiner and his mother will be the direct result of the actions and decisions made by Mr. Weiner after Mr. DeBlasio withdrew from the case.

We want to take a minute to address the issue of reputational harm. While there is no evidence whatsoever that Mr. Weiner or his mother has or will experience reputational harm as the result of anything Mr. DeBlasio did or failed to do, there is evidence that Mr. DeBlasio may have or will experience reputational harm as the result of the actions of Mr. Weiner and his mother. On November 21, 2025, nearly a month after Mr. DeBlasio withdrew from the case, they filed a document with the court entitled, *Terri Tepper's Motion to Withdraw as Petitioner*. It is a 16-page document. The first 8 pages set forth in excruciating detail what a terrible lawyer they believe Mr. DeBlasio to be. They set forth many of the claims in that motion that they made to your office. They included excerpts from the transcript of the illegal recording they took of their meeting with him.⁸ This is a document they filed in federal court that could potentially be seen by anyone who wanted to view the case file.

Lastly, Mr. Weiner complains that Mr. DeBlasio failed to order the transcript from the arbitration hearing after he repeatedly asked him to order it. However, after Mr. DeBlasio's firm conducted research to track it down, it was learned that there was no written transcript. The hearing was conducted over Zoom with no court reporter, so the only record was an audio recording. Mr. Weiner represented his mother in the arbitration so he must have known there was no court reporter, and that the only transcript was the audio recording. Mr. Weiner made repeated requests for something that did not exist and then complained to your office that he did not get it.

IV.

A Formal Complaint is Not Warranted

Mr. DeBlasio has had a stellar career for over 30 years. He is an experienced and competent commercial litigator. He made a mistake. He did not realize that the timing for the Motion to Vacate the Arbitrator's Award required it to be served within the three-month period. He has admitted the mistake, and he is genuinely remorseful that this occurred. In compliance with his ethical obligations, he advised Mr. Weiner to withdraw the defective motion. Mr. Weiner's rejection of this sound advice required Mr. DeBlasio to withdraw from the case. After he withdrew, he provided Mr. Weiner with a full refund of the \$15,000 he paid in legal fees.

⁸ A copy of the motion is attached.



Nevertheless, Mr. Weiner has submitted multiple claims and multiple harms inflicted on him as a result of the missed service date deadline. To be clear, the only potentially viable claim that Mr. Weiner has is the missed service date deadline. Mr. DeBlasio internally relied upon the advice provided to him by Mr. Two regarding the deadline for the Motion to Vacate the Arbitrator's Award. Furthermore, Mr. Weiner and Ms. Tepper continue to litigate the claim in federal court *pro se*, and the court has not yet ruled on the Motion, or on Oppenheimer's Cross-Motion to Confirm the Arbitrator's Award on the Merits. There is a possibility that Mr. Weiner's Motion could be denied on the merits which would render the missed service deadline moot.

This is a case of an honest mistake. An isolated incident of human error. To the extent that Mr. Weiner is seeking monetary damages for that mistake, there are civil remedies available for him to pursue. There is no reason for this matter to proceed any further.

Conclusion

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this submission to you, and we hope that we have addressed your concerns such that this investigation of Mr. DeBlasio can now be closed.

Warm Regards,

Allison Wood

Allison L. Wood

Enc: