

Rajinder Singh

Solicitor

027202

[Sanction Date: 27 November 2024](#)

Decision - Sanction

Outcome: Rebuke

Outcome date: 27 November 2024

Published date: 15 January 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at date of publication and at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Rajinder Singh & Co

Address(es): 85 London Road, Leicester, LE2 0PF

Firm ID: 283111

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

Rajinder Singh is a solicitor, practising as Rajinder Singh & Co (the firm). The firm is a recognised sole practice.

Short summary of decision

We have issued Mr Singh with a rebuke for allowing residual balances in excess of £135,000 to accumulate in the firm's client account from 2002 to 2022, and for failing to pay those sums back to clients promptly.

Facts of the misconduct

The firm's accountants' reports for the periods ending June 2021 and June 2022 were qualified, on the basis that the firm had retained over £130,000 in its client account without reason. This balance had accrued when the firm retained small residual balances on the client account at



the end of client matters, when there was no longer any reason for it to hold that money.

Between June 2021 and June 2022, the amounts held by the firm on client account (where there had been no postings on the relevant client ledger for at least 15 months) increased by approximately £5,000, to £135,171. The oldest balance retained by the firm dated back to 1 April 2002.

By 9 February 2022, Mr Singh had reduced the balance owed to clients on these matters to just over £74,000.

Short summary of decision

It was found that:

Allegation One

1. Between 2002 and June 2022, Mr Singh allowed residual client balances totalling £135,171 to accumulate in Rajinder Singh & Co's client account when there was no longer any valid reason for it to hold these funds.

Insofar as the conduct took place prior to 25 November 2019, Mr Singh breached rule 14.3 of the SRA Accounts Rules 2011 and Principle 6 of the SRA Principles 2011

Insofar as the conduct took place after 25 November 2019, Mr Singh breached rule 2.5 of the SRA Accounts Rules 2019 and Principle 2 of the SRA Principles 2019.

Allegation Two

2. After discovery of balances (totalling £130,319) being owed to clients by the firm as at 30 June 2021, where the firm had no reason to continue to hold these funds, Mr Singh failed to take adequate steps to promptly return these balances to clients.

In doing so, he breached rule 6.1 of the SRA Accounts Rules 2019 and Principle 2 of the SRA Principles 2019.

Decision on sanction

It was decided that a rebuke was an appropriate and proportionate sanction.

Mr Singh was issued with a written rebuke and ordered to pay costs of £600.

This was because Mr Singh's conduct was serious by reference to the following factors in the SRA Enforcement Strategy:

- The findings relate to client money. Over £100,000 was retained in the client account when it should not have been, with some balances being retained for more than 20 years.
- The breaches were continuing and had continued for longer than was reasonable.
- The conduct would diminish trust and confidence in the provision of legal services.
- Some public sanction was required to protect the public interest

A more serious sanction was not considered to be proportionate by reference to the following factors in the Enforcement Strategy:

- Most of the individual balances were small, although the largest balances were slightly in excess of £1,000.
- The risk of repetition was low. Mr Singh has put in place measures to manage residual balances in future.
- There were no allegations of dishonesty or a lack of integrity

SRA Standards and Regulations breached

SRA Accounts Rules 2011

Rule 14.3- Client money must be returned to the client (or other person on whose behalf the money is held) promptly, as soon as there is no longer any proper reason to retain those funds.

SRA Accounts Rules 2019

Rule 2.5- You ensure that client money is returned promptly to the client, or the third party for whom the money is held, as soon as there is no longer any proper reason to hold those funds.

Rule 6.1- You correct any breaches of these rules promptly upon discovery.

SRA Principles 2011

Principle 6- You must behave in a way that maintains the trust the public places in you and in the provision of legal services

SRA Principles 2019

Principle 2- You must act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.

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