

AUG - 2 2024

DEPT. OF REAL ESTATE

By_

BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Accusation against:)	DRE No. H-42823 LA
RUSSELL PAUL BATES,)	DRE NO. 11-42025 EA
Respondent(s).)	

DECISION

This Decision is being issued in accordance with the provisions of Section 11520 of the Government Code, on evidence of compliance with Section 11505 of the Government Code and pursuant to the Order of Default filed on June 12, 2024, and the Findings of Fact set forth herein, which are based on one or more of the following: (1) The express admissions of Respondent, RUSSELL PAUL BATES ("Respondent"); (2) affidavits; and (3) other evidence.

This Decision revokes one or more real estate licenses on the grounds of the violation of the Real Estate Law, Part 1 commencing with Section 10000 of the Business and Professions Code ("Code") and/or the Regulations of the Real Estate Commissioner, Title 10, Chapter 6 of the California Code of Regulations ("Regulations").

Pursuant to Government Code Section 11521, the California Department of Real Estate ("the Department") may order reconsideration of this Decision on petition of any party. The party seeking reconsideration shall set forth new facts, circumstances, and evidence, or errors in law or analysis, that show(s) grounds and good cause for the Commissioner to reconsider the Decision. If new evidence is presented, the party shall specifically identify the new evidence and explain why it was not previously presented. The Department's power to order reconsideration of this Decision shall expire 30 days after mailing of this Decision, or on the effective date of this Decision, whichever occurs first. The right to reinstatement of a revoked real estate license, or to the reduction of a penalty, is controlled by Section 11522 of the Government Code. A copy of Government Code Sections 11521 and 11522 and a copy of the Commissioner's Criteria of Rehabilitation are attached hereto for the information of respondent.

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FINDINGS OF FACT

1.

On March 26, 2024, Veronica Kilpatrick made the Accusation in her official capacity as a Supervising Special Investigator of the Department. The Accusation, Statement to Respondent, and Notice of Defense were mailed, by certified mail, return receipt requested, to Respondent's last known mailing address on file with the Department on March 27, 2024, and on April 10, 2024.

2.

On June 11, 2024, no Notice of Defense having been received or filed herein within the time prescribed by Section 11506 of the Government Code, Respondent's default was entered herein.

3.

Respondent is presently licensed and/or has license rights under the Real Estate Law (Part 1 of Division 4 of the California Business and Professions Code).

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To date, the Department has incurred investigation costs of \$2,253.70 and enforcement costs of \$1,716.00.

5.

Attached as Exhibit "A" is a true and correct copy of the Accusation filed on March 27, 2024, which is incorporated herein as part of this Decision.

DETERMINATION OF ISSUES

6.

Respondent's acts in using Rancho Vacation Properties, Inc. ("RVPI"), an unlicensed entity, to conduct property management activities, as described above in Paragraphs 3 through 20 of the Accusation, constitute cause for the suspension or revocation of all licenses and license rights of Respondent pursuant to Code section 10177, subdivisions (d) and/or (g), for violation of Code sections 10130, 10137, and 10157.

7.

Respondent conducted property management activities which require a real estate broker license, while doing business as RVPI, an unlicensed fictitious name, which constitutes cause for the suspension or revocation of all licenses and license rights of Respondent pursuant to Code section 10177, subdivisions (d) and/or (g), for violation of Code section 10159.5 and Regulation 2731.

Respondent's conduct, acts and/or omissions, in failing to maintain on file with the Department the address of Respondent's principal place of business and Respondent's current mailing address, constitutes cause for the suspension or revocation of all licenses and license rights of Respondent pursuant to Code section 10165 and Code section 10177, subdivisions (d) and/or (g), for violation of Code section 10162 and Regulation 2715.

9.

Respondent's conduct acts and/or omissions, in failing to retain records in connection with the rental of the Sunningdale property, constitutes cause for the suspension or revocation of all licenses and license rights of Respondent pursuant to Code section 10177, subdivisions (d) and/or (g), for violation of Code section 10148.

10.

The conduct, acts and/or omissions of Respondent, in mishandling trust funds and failing to return or refund the \$2,500.00 security deposit owed to the tenants of the Sunningdale property, as described above in Paragraphs 3 through 20 of the Accusation, constitutes cause for the suspension or revocation of all licenses and license rights of Respondent pursuant to Code section 10176, subdivision (i), or Code section 10177, subdivision (j), and Code section 10177, subdivisions (d) and/or (g), for violation of Code section 10145, subdivision (a).

11.

The standard of proof applied was clear and convincing evidence to a reasonable certainty.

ORDER

All licenses and licensing rights of Respondent RUSSELL PAUL BATES under the provisions of Part I of Division 4 of the Business and Professions Code are revoked.

This Decision shall become effective at 12 o'clock noon on 3 22 2024.

DATED: 7/22/7074

CHIKA SUNQUIST
REAL ESTATE COMMISSIONER

By:

Marcus L. McCarther Chief Deputy Real Estate Commissioner Department of Real Estate 320 West Fourth St, Ste 350 Los Angeles, CA, 90013



BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Accusation against:)	DRE NO. <i>H-42823 LA</i>
RUSSELL PAUL BATES,)	DEFAULT ORDER
Respondent.)	
)	

Respondent RUSSELL PAUL BATES, having failed to file a Notice of Defense within the time required by Section 11506 of the Government Code, is now in default. It is, therefore, ordered that a default be entered on the record in this matter.

IT IS SO ORDERED June 11, 2024.

CHIKA SUNQUIST REAL ESTATE COMMISSIONER

By:								
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Ass	sistan	t Co	ommi	issio	ner,	Enfor	ceme	ent

Ex. "A"

1 LISSETE GARCIA, Counsel (SBN 211552) Department of Real Estate 2 320 West 4th Street, Suite 350 Los Angeles, California 90013-1105 3 (213) 576-6982 Telephone: MAR 2 7 2024 Direct: (213) 576-6914 DEPT. OF REAL ESTATE 4 Fax: (213) 576-6917 Staff Attorney for Complainant 5 6 7 8 BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE 9 STATE OF CALIFORNIA 10 11 In the Matter of the Accusation against DRE No. H-42823 LA 12 RUSSELL PAUL BATES. ACCUSATION 13 Respondent. 14 15 The Complainant, Veronica Kilpatrick, a Supervising Special Investigator for the 16 Department of Real Estate¹ ("Department") of the State of California, for cause of Accusation 17 against RUSSELL PAUL BATES, aka Rusty Bates ("Respondent"), is informed and alleges as 18 follows: 19 All references to the "Code" are to the California Business and Professions Code l. 20 and all references to "Regulations" are to the Regulations of the Real Estate Commissioner, 21 Title 10, Chapter 6, California Code of Regulations. 22 /// 23

¹ Between July 1, 2013 and July 1, 2018, the Department of Real Estate operated as the Bureau of Real Estate under the Department of Consumer Affairs.

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Respondent for the return of their \$2,500.00 security deposit.

² Initials are used in place of individuals' full names to protect their privacy. Documents containing individuals' full names will be provided during the discovery phase of this case to Respondent(s) and/or their attorneys, after service of a timely and proper request for discovery on Complainant's counsel.

- 14. Respondent has failed to refund or return the \$2,500.00 security deposit owed to the tenants, despite repeated requests for reimbursement, in violation of Code section 10145, subdivision (a), and Code section 10176, subdivision (i).
- 15. The tenants filed a complaint with the Department and the Department instigated an investigation into Respondent's property management activities.
- 16. At all times relevant herein, Respondent listed with the Department,
 Respondent's mailing address, and main office address, where Respondent conducted business,
 as: 60164 Devils Ladder, Mountain Center, California 92561. The Department served inquiries
 and requests for records via email, regular, and certified mail to Respondent's known addresses
 of record, including the main office address and mailing address listed above. The post office
 returned some of the Department's mailings to Respondent as undeliverable.
- Respondent's failure to maintain a valid, current main office address and mailing
 address with the Department is in violation of Code section 10162 and Regulation 2715.
- 18. Respondent failed to respond to the Department's inquiries and requests for records related to the rental of the Sunningdale property, in violation of Code section 10148.
- 19. For an unknown period of time including the previous three years, Respondent, while doing business as RVPI, an unlicensed entity, performed or offered to perform one or more of the following acts for another or others, for or in expectation of compensation: lease or rent or offer to lease or rent, or place for rent, or solicit listings of places for rent, or solicit for prospective tenants, or collect rents from real property, or improvements thereon. Said property management activities require a license pursuant to Code section 10131, subdivision (b). Said acts include, but are not limited to, posting online advertisements for several rental properties in Rancho Mirage, California, for periods longer than 30 days.

Fifth Cause of Accusation

Trust Fund Handling / Fraud or Dishonest Dealing

- 28. There is hereby incorporated in this Fifth, separate and distinct Cause of Accusation, all of the allegations contained in Paragraphs 3 through 27, with the same force and
- effect as if herein fully set forth.
- 29. The conduct, acts and/or omissions of Respondent, in mishandling trust funds and failing to return or refund the \$2,500.00 security deposit owed to the tenants of the Sunningdale property, as described above in Paragraphs 3 through 20, constitutes cause for the suspension or revocation of all licenses and license rights of Respondent pursuant to Code section 10176, subdivision (i), or Code section 10177, subdivision (j), and Code section 10177, subdivisions (d) and/or (g), for violation of Code section 10145, subdivision (a).

INVESTIGATION AND ENFORCEMENT COSTS

30. Code section 10106 provides, in pertinent part, that in any order issued in resolution of a disciplinary proceeding before the Department of Real Estate, the Commissioner may request the administrative law judge to direct a licensee found to have committed a violation of this part to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of the case.

STATUTORY PROVISIONS

License requirement

Code section 10130, provides:

It is unlawful for any person to engage in the business of, act in the capacity of, advertise as, or assume to act as a real estate broker or a real estate salesperson within this state without first obtaining a real estate license from the department, or to engage in the business of,

act in the capacity of, advertise as, or assume to act as a mortgage loan originator within this state without having obtained a license endorsement.

The commissioner may prefer a complaint for violation of this section before any court of competent jurisdiction, and the commissioner and his or her counsel, deputies, or assistants may assist in presenting the law or facts at the trial.

It is the duty of the district attorney of each county in this state to prosecute all violations of this section in their respective counties in which the violations occur.

Code section 10131, subdivision (b), provides:

A real estate broker within the meaning of this part is a person who, for a compensation or in expectation of a compensation, regardless of the form or time of payment, does or negotiates to do one or more of the following acts for another or others:

(b) Leases or rents or offers to lease or rent, or places for rent, or solicits listings of places for rent, or solicits for prospective tenants, or negotiates the sale, purchase, or exchanges of leases on real property, or on a business opportunity, or collects rents from real property, or improvements thereon, or from business opportunities.

Code section 10137 provides:

It is unlawful for any licensed real estate broker to retain, compensate, directly or indirectly, any person for performing any of the acts within the scope of this chapter who is not a licensed real estate broker, or a real estate salesperson licensed under the responsible broker retaining or compensating him or her, or to retain or compensate, directly or indirectly, any licensee for engaging in any activity for which a mortgage loan originator license endorsement is required, if that licensee does not hold a mortgage loan originator license endorsement; provided, however, that a licensed real estate broker may pay a commission to a broker of another state.

No real estate salesperson shall accept compensation for activity requiring a real estate license from any person other than the broker under whom he or she is at the time licensed.

It is unlawful for any licensed real estate salesperson to pay any compensation for performing any of the acts within the scope of this chapter to any real estate licensee except through the broker under whom he or she is at the time licensed. A licensee may enter into an agreement with another licensee to share that compensation provided that any compensation is paid through the responsible broker.

For a violation of any of the provisions of this section, the commissioner may temporarily suspend or permanently revoke the license of the real estate licensee, in accordance with the provisions of this part relating to hearings.

34. <u>Code section 10157</u> provides:

No real estate license gives authority to do any act specified in this chapter to any person, other than the person to whom the license is issued.

Fictitious Names

- 35. <u>Code section 10159.5</u> provides:
- (a)(1) Every person applying for a license under this chapter who desires to have the license issued under a fictitious business name shall file with the application a certified copy of their fictitious business name statement filed with the county clerk pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 17900) of Part 3 of Division 7.
- (2) A responsible broker may, by contract, permit a salesperson to do all of the following:
 - (A) File an application on behalf of a responsible broker with a county clerk to obtain a fictitious business name.

1	(e) Where a licensee is a natural person, the use of a nickname in place of his or her
2	legal given name (first name) shall not constitute a fictitious name for purposes of this section,
3	provided that where the nickname is used, the licensee also uses as a surname (last name) his or
4	her surname as it appears on his or her real estate license, and includes his or her Bureau-issued
5	license identification number as required by Section 10140.6 of the Code.
6	Place of Business
7	37. <u>Code section 10162</u> provides:
8	(a) Every licensed real estate broker shall have and maintain a definite place of business
9	in the State of California that serves as the broker's office for the transaction of business. This
10	office shall be the place where the broker's license is displayed and where personal
11	consultations with clients are held.
12	(b) A real estate license does not authorize the licensee to do business except from the
13	location stipulated in the real estate license as issued or as altered pursuant to Section 10161.8.
14	(c)(1) Every real estate broker and salesperson licensee shall provide to the
15	commissioner their current office or mailing address, a current telephone number, and a current
16	electronic mail address that they maintain or use to perform any activity that requires a real
17	estate license, at which the department may contact the licensee.
18	(2) Every real estate broker and salesperson licensee shall inform the commissioner of
19	any change to their office or mailing address, telephone number, or electronic mail address no
20	later than 30 days after making the change.
21	(d) Notwithstanding Section 10185, a violation of this section is not a misdemeanor.
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Code section 10165 provides:

For a violation of Section 10161.8, 10162, 10163, or subdivision (b) of Section 10164, the commissioner may temporarily suspend or permanently revoke the license of the real estate licensee in accordance with this part relating to hearings.

39. Regulation 2715 provides:

Every real estate broker, except a broker acting in the capacity of a salesperson to another broker under written agreement, shall maintain on file with the commissioner the address of his or her principal place of business for brokerage activities, the address of each branch business office and his or her current mailing address, if different from the business address.

Every broker who is acting in the capacity of a salesperson to another broker under written agreement shall maintain on file with the Commissioner the address of the business location where he or she expects to conduct most of the activities for which a license is required and his or her current mailing address.

A real estate salesperson shall maintain on file with the Commissioner his or her current mailing address, and when applicable, the address of the principal business office of the responsible broker to whom the salesperson is at the time licensed.

Whenever there is a change in the location or address of the principal place of business or of a branch office of a broker, that broker shall notify the Commissioner thereof not later than the next business day following the change.

This section shall apply to those who are licensed and to those who have license rights under Section 10201 of the Code.

Retention of Records

40. Code section 10148 provides:

(a) A licensed real estate broker shall retain for three years copies of all listings, deposit receipts, canceled checks, trust records, and other documents executed by the broker or obtained by the broker in connection with any transactions for which a real estate broker license is required. The retention period shall run from the date of the closing of the transaction or from the date of the listing if the transaction is not consummated. After notice, the books, accounts, and records shall be made available for examination, inspection, and copying by the commissioner or the commissioner's designated representative during regular business hours; and shall, upon the appearance of sufficient cause, be subject to audit without further notice, except that the audit shall not be harassing in nature. This subdivision shall not be construed to require a licensed real estate broker to retain electronic messages of an ephemeral nature, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 1624 of the Civil Code.

- (b) The commissioner shall charge a real estate broker for the cost of any audit, if the commissioner has found, in a final desist and refrain order issued under Section 10086 or in a final decision following a disciplinary hearing held in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code that the broker has violated Section 10145 or a regulation or rule of the commissioner interpreting Section 10145.
- (c) If a broker fails to pay for the cost of an audit as described in subdivision (b) within 60 days of mailing a notice of billing, the commissioner may suspend or revoke the broker's license or deny renewal of the broker's license. The suspension or denial shall remain in effect until the cost is paid or until the broker's right to renew a license has expired.

- (d) The commissioner may maintain an action for the recovery of the cost of an audit in any court of competent jurisdiction. In determining the cost incurred by the commissioner for an audit, the commissioner may use the estimated average hourly cost for all persons performing audits of real estate brokers.
- (e) The department may suspend or revoke the license of any real estate broker, real estate salesperson, or corporation licensed as a real estate broker, if the real estate broker, real estate salesperson, or any director, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation licensed as a real estate broker knowingly destroys, alters, conceals, mutilates, or falsifies any of the books, papers, writings, documents, or tangible objects that are required to be maintained by this section or that have been sought in connection with an investigation, audit, or examination of a real estate licensee by the commissioner.

Trust Fund Handling

- 41. Code section 10145, subdivision(a), provides:
- (a)(1) A real estate broker who accepts funds belonging to others in connection with a transaction subject to this part shall deposit all those funds that are not immediately placed into a neutral escrow depository or into the hands of the broker's principal, into a trust fund account maintained by the broker in a bank or recognized depository in this state. All funds deposited by the broker in a trust fund account shall be maintained there until disbursed by the broker in accordance with instructions from the person entitled to the funds.

Grounds for Suspension or Revocation

42. 10176, subdivision (a), provides:

The commissioner may, upon his or her own motion, and shall, upon the verified complaint in writing of any person, investigate the actions of any person engaged in the business or acting in the capacity of a real estate licensee within this state, and he or she may

1	WHEREFORE, Complainant prays that a hearing be conducted on the allegations of this
2	Accusation and that upon proof thereof, a decision be rendered imposing disciplinary action
3	against all licenses and/or license rights of Respondent under the Real Estate Law (Part 1 of
4	Division 4 of the Business and Professions Code), for the cost of investigation and enforcement
5	as permitted by law, and for such other and further relief as may be proper under other
6	provisions of law.
7	Dated Mar 26, 2024 at San Diego, California.
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11	VERONICA KILPATRICK Supervising Special Investigator
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14	cc: Russell Paul Bates Veronica Kilpatrick
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