

BEFORE THE IOWA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION
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ANKENY, IOWA

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| IN RE: |) | |
| |) | CASE NUMBER: A06-020 |
| Mary A. Farus |) | |
| Broker (B08525) |) | |
| |) | COMBINED STATEMENT OF |
| First Choice Realty GMAC |) | CHARGES, INFORMAL |
| 250 North Clark Street |) | SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT |
| Forest City, Iowa 50436 |) | AND CONSENT ORDER IN A |
| |) | DISCIPLINARY CASE |
| Respondent. |) | |

The Iowa Real Estate Commission (Commission) and **Mary A. Farus** (Respondent) enter into this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement Agreement, and Consent Order in a Disciplinary Case (Order) pursuant to Iowa Code Sections 17A.10(1) and 272C.3(4) (2005).

1. The Commission issued the Respondent real estate broker's license number B08525 on June 15, 1982. Respondent's license is current and in full force and effect through December 31, 2008. At all times relevant to this matter, the Respondent was a licensed broker sole proprietor, d.b.a. First Choice realty GMAC, a licensed real estate trade-name, license number T02110, in Forest City, Iowa.

2. The Commission has jurisdiction of this disciplinary matter pursuant to Iowa Code chapters 17A, 272C, and 543B (2005). Licenses issued by the Commission are subject to the laws of the State of Iowa and to the administrative rules of the Commission.

STATEMENT OF CHARGES

COUNT I

3. Respondent is charged with engaging in practices harmful or detrimental to the public in violation of Iowa Code sections 543B.29(3), 543B.29(10), 543B.34, and 543B.46 (2005) by:

- (a) Failing to deposit personal funds to cover bank charges within fifteen calendar days of the closing date of that bank statement resulting in a commingling of funds. See Iowa Code section 543B.46(4) and 193E Iowa Admin Code § 13.1(1)(c).
- (b) Failing to properly maintain and/or account for Brokers Equity in the

Respondent's Trust Account. See Iowa Code § 543B.46(4) (2005); 193E Iowa Admin. Code § 13.1(1)(c).

- (c) Failing to properly account for interest balances in the Respondent's Trust Account. See Iowa Code § 543B.46(1) (2005); 193E Iowa Admin. Code § 18.14(5)(e).
- (d) Failing to maintain the general ledger, individual ledgers, and bank reconciliation to reflect accurate current balances. See 193E Iowa Admin. Code §§ 13.1(6), 18.14(5)(e).
- (e) Failing to include the total of the individual ledgers in monthly reconciliations so as to document agreement with the general ledger balance and the bank balance (i.e. "three-way tie"). See 193E Iowa Admin. Code § 13.1(6)(a)(3).

CIRCUMSTANCES

- 4. On or about August 30, 2006, an audit of the Respondent's trust account and records was conducted.
- 5. The auditor found that on July 31, 2006, the Trust Account showed a negative balance of \$217.98, resulting in a commingling of funds.
- 6. The auditor also found that individual ledgers were not created to track the Broker's Equity balances and Interest balances.
- 7. The auditor found a variance between the total of the individual ledgers, the general ledger balance, and the reconciled bank balance.
- 8. The auditor found that the monthly reconciliations are not including the total of the individual ledgers to document the "three-way tie".
- 9. Upon becoming aware of the problems, the Respondent took corrective measures.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

- 10. Respondent does not admit all allegations in the charges, but agrees that upon hearing the evidence may support one or more of the allegations against her.
- 11. Respondent acknowledges that she has a right to receive notice of the above-stated charges and to request a hearing before the Commission on the merits of the charges. By freely and voluntarily entering into this Order, the Respondent waives her right to notice and a hearing and all attendant rights, including the right to seek judicial review. This Order constitutes

discipline against the Respondent, and is the final agency order in this contested case pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.10 and 193 Iowa Administrative Code 7.4.

12. Respondent agrees that the State's attorney and/or Commission staff may present this Order to the Commission and may have *ex parte* communications with the Commission while presenting it. Respondent waives any right of notice of this meeting or any right that the Respondent might have to participate in the discussion of this Order among the Commission, the Commission staff and the State's attorney.

13. This Order shall be part of the permanent record of Respondent and shall be considered by the Commission in determining the nature and severity of any future disciplinary action to be imposed in the event of any future violations of the laws and rules governing the practice of real estate by the Respondent.

14. Failure to comply with the terms of this Order shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of Iowa Code sections 543B.29(3), 543B.34(2) and 272C.3(2)(a) (2005) and shall be grounds for further disciplinary action. However, no action may be taken against the Respondent for violations of this Order without a hearing, or waiver of hearing.

15. This Order is not binding on the Iowa Real Estate Commission until it has been formally approved by a majority of the Commission members.

- (a) In the event that this Order is rejected by the Commission it shall be of no force or effect to either party, and it shall not be admissible for any purpose in further proceedings in this matter.
- (b) If the Commission approves this Order, it shall fully dispose of all issues in this case.

16. Upon acceptance by both the Commission and Respondent, this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement and Consent Order shall be a public record available for inspection and copying in its entirety in accordance with the requirements of Iowa Code chapter 22 (2005).

CONSENT ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

17. **REPRIMAND.** Pursuant to 193E Iowa Administrative Code section 18.14(1)(j), the Respondent is reprimanded.

18. **CIVIL PENALTY.** The Respondent shall pay a civil penalty to the Commission in the amount of \$1,000 no later than 30 calendar days after acceptance of this Order by the

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Commission. The civil penalty must come under a cover letter addressed to the Commission's Executive Officer and refer to case A06-020.

19. EDUCATION. The Respondent shall attend the Commission approved eight (8) hour course "Trust Accounts." These hours shall be in addition to any real estate continuing education required by law for license renewal. The original certificate of attendance must be submitted to the Iowa Real Estate Commission within twelve (12) months of the signing of this agreement by the Commission and must come under a cover letter addressed to the Commission's Executive Officer and refer to case A06-020.

20. FUTURE COMPLIANCE. The Respondent also shall at all future times fully and promptly comply with all pertinent Orders of the Commission and the statutes and Commission rules regulating the practice of real estate.

WHEREFORE, the terms of this Combined Statement of Charges, Informal Settlement Agreement, and Consent Order are agreed to and accepted by the Iowa Real Estate Commission and the Respondent.

FOR THE RESPONDENT:

Voluntarily agreed to and accepted by **Mary A. Farus** on this 3rd day of May, 2007.

[Redacted Signature]

MARY A. FARUS, Respondent

State of Iowa)

County of Winnebago)

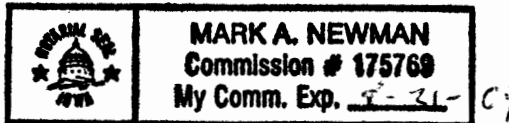
Signed and sworn to before me on this 3rd day of May, 2007, by

[Redacted Signature]

Notary Public, State of Iowa

Printed Name: Mark A. Newman

My Commission Expires: 5-31-09



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FOR THE COMMISSION:

Voluntarily agreed to and accepted by the **IOWA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION** on
this 24 day of May, 2007.



JAMES E. HUGHES, Chair
Iowa Real Estate Commission