In the Matter of the

***FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT,* RSBC 1996, c.141**
(the "Act")

and the

INSURANCE COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
("Council")

and

SAROJ BALA SHARMA
(the "Licensee")

ORDER

As Council made an intended decision on February 26, 2019, pursuant to sections 231 and 236 of the Act; and

As Council, in accordance with section 237 of the Act, provided the Licensee with written reasons and notice of the intended decision dated May 6, 2019; and

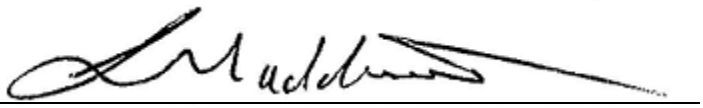
As the Licensee has not requested a hearing of Council's intended decision within the time period provided by the Act;

Under authority of sections 231 and 236 of the Act, Council orders that:

1. the Licensee is fined $500.00; and

2. a condition is imposed on the Licensee's life and accident and sickness insurance licence that failure to pay the above-ordered fine by **October 9, 2019** will result in the automatic suspension of the Licensee's life and accident and sickness insurance licence and the Licensee will not be permitted to complete any subsequent annual filings until such time as the fine is fully paid.

This order takes effect on the **11th day of July, 2019**.



Lesley Maddison
Chairperson, Insurance Council of British Columbia

INTENDED DECISION

of the

INSURANCE COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
("Council")

respecting

Saroj Bala Sharma
(the "Licensee")

Pursuant to section 232 of the *Financial Institutions Act* (the "Act"), Council conducted an investigation to determine whether the Licensee acted in compliance with the requirements of the Act.

As part of Council's investigation, on January 15, 2019, a Review Committee (the "Committee") met to discuss the allegation(s) that the Licensee failed to complete the Council Rules course prior to making their 2018 annual filing.

The Committee was comprised of three voting members and one non-voting member of Council. Prior to the Committee's meeting, an investigation report was distributed to the Committee for review. A discussion of this report took place at the meeting. Having reviewed the investigation materials, the Committee prepared a report for Council.

The Committee's report, along with the aforementioned investigation report, were reviewed by Council at its February 26, 2019 meeting, where it was determined the matter should be disposed of in the manner set out below.

Process

Pursuant to section 237 of the Act, Council must provide written notice to the Licensee of the action it intends to take under sections 231 and 236 of the Act before taking any such action. The Licensee may then accept Council's decision or request a formal hearing. This intended decision operates as written notice of the action Council intends to take against the Licensee.

Facts

The Licensee obtained a life and accident and sickness insurance licence from Council on April 10, 2017 and submitted their annual filing to Council in accordance with Council Rule 4(4)(b).

In making the 2018 annual filing, the Licensee acknowledged compliance with all Council Rules, including completion of the minimum continuing education ("CE") requirements.

As an individual who obtained a licence between March 1, 2017 and February 28, 2018, the Licensee was required, as part of the CE requirements, to complete the Council Rules course, which is available from Advocis. Notification of this requirement was provided to the Licensee when the licence was issued by Council. In addition, Council sent emails on April 19, 2018, May 3, 2018 and May 17, 2018 to remind the Licensee of the requirement.

As Council had no record of the Licensee completing the Council Rules course as required, the Licensee was given the opportunity to provide an explanation. The Licensee advised they were unaware of the requirement to complete the course. The Licensee subsequently completed the course.

Analysis

Council considered the actions of the Licensee, as well as their submission. Council found that the Licensee breached Council's Rule 7(5) by failing to complete the Council Rules course as required.

Based on the evidence before it, Council concluded that the Licensee, knew or ought to have known of their requirement to complete the course before completing their annual filing. After reviewing the Licensee's submission, Council could not identify sufficient reasons they did not complete the course prior to the deadline, particularly after multiple reminders of their requirement to do so.

Council finds the Licensee's failure to comply with Council Rule 7(5) warrants disciplinary action and has concluded that a fine is appropriate in the circumstances.

Intended Decision

Pursuant to sections 231 and 236 of the Act, Council made an intended decision to fine the Licensee $500.00.

The Licensee is advised that should the intended decision become final, the fine will be due and payable within 90 days of the date of the order. In addition, failure to pay the fine within the 90 days will result in the automatic suspension of the Licensee's life and accident and sickness insurance licence and the Licensee will not be permitted to complete any annual filing until such time as the fine is paid in full.

The Licensee is advised that should the intended decision become final, the fine will be due and payable within 90 days of the date of the order. In addition, failure to pay the fine within 90 days of Council's order will result in the automatic suspension of the Licensee's life and accident and sickness insurance licence and the Licensee will not be permitted to complete any annual filing until such time as the fine is paid in full.

Subject to the Licensee's right to request a hearing before Council pursuant to section 237 of the Act, the intended decision will take effect after the expiry of the hearing period.

Right to a Hearing

If the Licensee wishes to dispute Council's findings or its intended decision, the Licensee may have legal representation and present a case at a hearing before Council. Pursuant to section 237(3) of the Act, to require Council to hold a hearing, the Licensee must give notice to Council by delivering to its office written notice of this intention **within fourteen (14) days of receiving this intended decision**. A hearing will then be scheduled for a date within a reasonable period of time from receipt of the notice. Please direct written notice to the attention of the Executive Director of Council, Janet Sinclair.

If the Licensee does not request a hearing **within fourteen (14) days of receiving this intended decision**, the intended decision of Council will take effect.

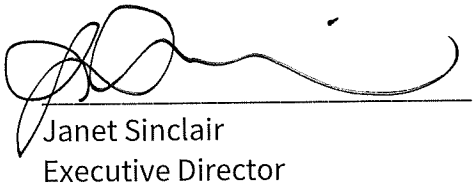
Even if this decision is accepted by the Licensee, pursuant to section 242(3) of the Act, the Financial Institutions Commission still has a right to appeal this decision of Council to the Financial Services Tribunal ("FST"). The Financial Institutions Commission has 30 days to file a Notice of Appeal, once Council's decision takes effect. For more information respecting appeals to the FST, please visit their website at fst.gov.bc.ca or contact them directly at:

Financial Services Tribunal
PO Box 9425 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 9V1

Reception: 250-387-3464
Fax: 250-356-9923
Email: FinancialServicesTribunal@gov.bc.ca

Dated in Vancouver, British Columbia, on the **6th day of May, 2019**.

For the Insurance Council of British Columbia



Janet Sinclair
Executive Director
604-695-2001
jsinclair@insurancecouncilofbc.com

JS/jr