

**SOUTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND REGULATION
DIVISION OF INSURANCE**

**IN THE MATTER OF
GINA NISTA**

)
)

**FINAL DECISION
INS 16-12**

After reviewing the record and the proposed decision of the Hearing Examiner in this matter,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that pursuant to SDCL 1-26D-4, the Hearing Examiner's Proposed Decision, dated December 19, 2016 is adopted in full.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED the South Dakota nonresident insurance producer license of Gina Nista is hereby revoked.

Parties are hereby advised of the right to further appeal the final decision to Circuit Court within (30) days of receiving such decision, pursuant to the authority of SDCL 1-26.

Dated this 28 day of December, 2016.



Marcia Hultman, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation
123 W. Missouri Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501

**STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
OFFICE OF HEARING EXAMINERS**

**IN THE MATTER OF
GINA NISTA**

**INS 16-18
PROPOSED DECISION**

This matter came for hearing before the Office of Hearing Examiners on December 16, 2016, pursuant to a Notice of Hearing issued by the South Dakota Division of Insurance ("Division") on November 22, 2016. Frank Marnell and Benjamin Eirikson appeared as counselors for the Division. Gina Nista did not appear, either in person or through counsel. The Division admitted its Exhibits 1 through 4 into evidence and moved that the Hearing Examiner enter these Proposed Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Proposed Decision as a default disposition in this contested case.

ISSUE

Whether the Non-Resident Insurance Producer License of Gina Nista should be revoked due to failing to timely respond to the Division; failing to timely report an administrative action(s) to the Division; for demonstrating incompetence, untrustworthiness, or financial irresponsibility in the conduct of business in this state or elsewhere; and for having a revocation or suspension action(s) in another state(s) in violation of SDCL 58-30-167(2), (8), and (9), 58-30-193, 58-33-66, and 58-33-68.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Gina Nista was licensed by the Division as an insurance producer on April 18, 2005. The license is currently active. (Exhibit 1).
2. Gina Nista was the subject of an administrative action another jurisdiction. (Exhibit 2).
3. Gina Nista had her insurance license suspended in January 2016 by the state of Ohio. (Exhibit 2).
4. Gina Nista did not timely report the Ohio administrative action to the Division.
5. The Division sent inquiries to Gina Nista at the address of record regarding licensure matters. (Exhibit 3).
6. Gina Nista did not respond to the Division's inquiries. (Exhibit 3).
7. Gina Nista was also subject to an August 22, 2016 administrative action in the State of Delaware revoking her license and fining her \$500. (Exhibit 4).

8. Any additional Findings of Fact included in the Reasoning section of this decision are incorporated herein by reference.
9. To the extent any of the foregoing are improperly designated and are instead conclusions of law, they are hereby redesignated and incorporated herein as conclusions of law.

REASONING

This case involves a request by the Division to revoke the South Dakota Non-Resident Insurance Producer's License of Gina Nista. As a consequence of the potential loss of Respondent's livelihood from the lack of licensure, the burden of proof in this matter is higher than the preponderance of evidence standard, which applies in a typical administrative hearing. "In matters concerning the revocation of a professional license, we determine that the appropriate standard of proof to be utilized by an agency is clear and convincing evidence." *In re Zar*, 434 N.W.2d 598, 602 (S.D. 1989). Our Supreme Court has defined "clear and convincing evidence" as follows:

The measure of proof required by this designation falls somewhere between the rule in ordinary civil cases and the requirement of our criminal procedure, that is, it must be more than a mere preponderance but not beyond a reasonable doubt. It is that measure or degree of proof which will produce in the mind of the trier of facts a firm belief or conviction as to the allegations sought to be established. The evidence need not be voluminous or undisputed to accomplish this.

Brown v. Warner, 78 S.D. 647, 653, 107 NW2d 1, 4 (1961). SDCL 58-30-193 states that "[A]n insurance producer shall report to the director any administrative action taken against the insurance producer in another jurisdiction... within thirty days of the final disposition of the matter. This report shall include a copy of the order, consent order, or other relevant legal documents." SDCL 58-33-66 requires licensees to respond to the Division and supply requested documents within twenty days from the receipt of a request. In addition, the Division considers SDCL 58-30-167 (shown in pertinent part) as follows:

The director may... revoke or refuse to continue, any license issued under this chapter... after a hearing... The director may... revoke... an insurance producer's... for any one or more of the following causes:

- (2) Violating any insurance laws or rules, subpoena, or order of the director or of another state's insurance director, commissioner, or superintendent;
- (8) Using fraudulent, coercive, or dishonest practices, or demonstrating incompetence, untrustworthiness, or financial irresponsibility in the conduct of business in this state or elsewhere;

- (9) Having an insurance producer license, or its equivalent, denied, suspended, or revoked in any other state, province, district, or territory;

The evidence indicates that Gina Nista violated the insurance laws of other jurisdictions, failed to report the actions, and failed to respond to Division inquiries regarding the action. Applying the law to the Findings of Fact it is clear the Non-Resident Insurance Producer License of Gina Nista is subject to revocation and should be revoked.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Division has jurisdiction over Gina Nista and the subject matter of this contested case. The Office of Hearing Examiners is authorized to conduct the hearing and issue a proposed decision pursuant to SDCL 1-26D-4.
2. The Division bears the burden of establishing the alleged statutory violations by clear and convincing evidence.
3. The Division established by clear and convincing evidence that Gina Nista violated SDCL § 58-30-193 by failing to report her administrative action in Ohio.
4. The Division established by clear and convincing evidence that Gina Nista violated SDCL § 58-30-193 by failing to report her administrative action in Delaware.
5. The Division established by clear and convincing evidence that Gina Nista violated SDCL § 58-33-66 by failing to respond to the Division's inquiries.
6. The Division established by clear and convincing evidence that the South Dakota Non-Resident Insurance Producer License of Gina Nista is subject to revocation.
7. The Division established by clear and convincing evidence that the South Dakota Non-Resident Insurance Producer License of Gina Nista should be revoked.

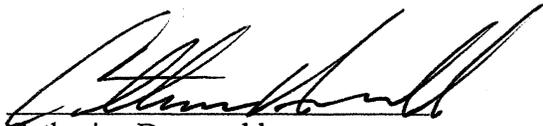
8. Any additional Conclusions of Law included in the Reasoning section of this decision are incorporated herein by reference.
9. To the extent any of the foregoing are improperly designated and are instead findings of fact, they are hereby redesignated and incorporated herein as Findings of Fact.

Based on the above Findings of Fact, Reasoning, and Conclusions of Law, the Hearing Examiner enters the following:

PROPOSED DECISION

The South Dakota Non-Resident Insurance Producer License of Gina Nista should be revoked.

Dated this 19th day of December, 2016.



Catherine Duenwald
Office of Hearing Examiners
523 East Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify on December 20th, 2016, at Pierre, South Dakota, a true and correct copy of this Proposed Decision was mailed to each of the parties below.



Ashley Couillard

Gina Nista
5723 Shawnee Road
Lyndhurst, OH 44124

Progressive Direct Ins. Co.
PO Box 94964
EP3-Licensing/Compliance
Cleveland, OH 44101

Progressive Northern Ins. Co.
EP3-Licensing/Compliance
PO Box 94964
Cleveland, OH 44101

Frank A. Marnell
South Dakota Division of Insurance
124 S. Euclid Ave., 2nd Floor
Pierre, SD 57501