REAL ESTATE AGENCY 1 BEFORE THE REAL ESTATE COMMISSIONER 2 3 4 In the Matter of the Real Estate License of 5 STIPULATED FINAL ORDER TINA JANELL MITCHELL 6 7 8 9 10 The Oregon Real Estate Agency (Agency) and Tina Janell Mitchell (Mitchell) do hereby 11 agree and stipulate to the following: 12 FINDINGS OF FACT, STATEMENTS OF LAW 13 **AND** 14 CONCLUSIONS OF LAW 15 1. 16 In establishing the violations set forth herein, the Agency may rely on one or more of the 17 definitions contained in ORS 696.010. 18 First Findings of Fact: 19 1.1 At all times mentioned herein, Mitchell was licensed as a property manager doing 20 business under the registered business name of All-4-U Property Management. 21 1.2 On June 9, 2021, Shirley Miller (Miller) submitted a complaint against Mitchell on 22 behalf of owner Stephen White (White) and the Agency opened an investigation. 23 1.3 Mitchell purchased All-4-U Property Management (APM) from Miller in August 24 2020. Miller managed 8 properties for White. 25 1.4 Mitchell said she had a problem with her accounting software; she couldn't send 26 owner distributions over \$5,000 and had to send White multiple payments. 27 1.5 When she was completing her 2020 year-end accounting, Mitchell said she 28 discovered several of White's owner distributions bounced, and White was owed \$936.06. On 29 December 31, 2020, Mitchell wrote White a check for the discrepancy. 30 1.6 When asked for an accounting of how she determined the amount owed to

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White, Mitchell provided handwritten notes for transactions occurring between August and December 2020, with no clear explanation of when the distribution to White bounced.

First Statement of Law: ORS 696.301(3) authorizes the Commissioner to reprimand a licensee's real estate license who has disregarded or violated any provision of ORS 659A.421, 696.010 to 696.495, 696.600 to 696.785, 696.800 to 696.870 and 696.890 or any rule of the Agency. ORS 696.301(3) is implemented in part by ORS 696.890(4)(c),(d), and (e). ORS 696.890(4)(c),(d), and (e) (2019 Edition) states: (4) a real estate property manager owes the property owner the following affirmative duties: (c) to exercise reasonable care and diligence; (d) to account in a timely manner for all funds received from or on behalf of the owner; and (e) to act in a fiduciary manner in all matters relating to trust funds.

First Conclusion of Law: When completing the year-end accounting Mitchell found White's owner distributions had bounced, and he was owed \$936.66. When asked for an accounting of how she determined the amount owed, Mitchell provided handwritten notes for transactions occurring between August and December 2020, with no clear explanation of when the distribution bounced, in violation of ORS 696.301(3) and its implementing statute ORS 696.890(4)(c),(d), and (e) (2019 Edition).

Second Findings of Fact:

1.7 By her admission, Mitchell failed to provide monthly owner statements to White.

Second Statement of Law: ORS 696.301(3) authorizes the Commissioner to reprimand a licensee's real estate license who has disregarded or violated any provision of ORS 659A.421, 696.010 to 696.495, 696.600 to 696.785, 696.800 to 696.870 and 696.890 or any rule of the Real Estate Agency. Implementation of ORS 696.301(3) is made through OAR 863-025-0055(4) (1-1-2020 and 1-1-2021 Editions). OAR 863-025-0055(4) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions), states a property manager must report in writing to each owner any change in the owner's ledger. A monthly report, showing all receipts and disbursements for the account is sufficient under this section. A copy of such report must be preserved and filed in the property manager's records. If an annual reports contains information not required to be provided by the property manager under these rules, the property manager must set forth such information separately.

Second Conclusion of Law: Mitchell failed to ensure Stephen White received his

monthly owner statements in violation of ORS 696.301(3) and its implementing rule OAR 863-025-0055(4) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions).

Third Findings of Fact

 1.8 On March 24, 2021 Mitchell emailed White a 30- day notice of termination. The same day Mitchell forwarded White copies of 8 rental agreements.

 1.9 On April 23, 2021, the effective termination date of the property management agreement, White informed Mitchell that all records closing out his property management should be forwarded to Miller.

1.10 On May 26, 2021, White emailed Mitchell instruction to forward all outstanding records and funds to Miller.

 1.11 In the complaint, Miller included 8 separate "Account Ledgers" for White's properties that were provided by Mitchell. The ledgers contained transactions between August 1, 2020, and June 9, 2021. It is unclear when Miller received these ledgers. The "Account Ledgers" appear to be an owner ledger and included a record of when rents were received, management fees, owner disbursements and other expenses. These records failed to include the following details required for an owner ledger; purpose of the funds received, the check number or cash receipt number for funds received, the check number or bank generated electronic tracking number for disbursements, and the purpose of the disbursement.

1.12 The ledgers included the checks Mitchell wrote to Miller between May 27, 2021, and June 9, 2021, for White's owner reserves and held security deposits.

Third Statement of Law ORS 696.301(3) authorizes the Commissioner to reprimand a licensee's real estate license who has disregarded or violated any provision of ORS 659A.421, 696.010 to 696.495, 696.600 to 696.785, 696.800 to 696.870 and 696.890 or any rule of the Real Estate Agency. Implementation of ORS 696.301(3) is made through OAR 863-025-0055(3)(b)(B),(C),(c)(C), and (E) (01/01/2020, and 01/01/2021 Editions). OAR 863-025-0055(3)(b)(B),(C),(c)(C), and (E) states: (3) all owner ledgers must contain at least the following information: (b) for each deposit of funds: (B) the purpose of the funds and identity of the person who tendered the funds; (C) the check number, cash receipt number or a unique series of letters and/or numbers that established an audit trail to the receipt of funds; (c) for each disbursement of funds: (C) the check number or bank generated electronic tracking

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number; (E) the purpose of the disbursement.

Third Conclusion of Law: By failing to include all the required elements on the owners ledger Mitchell violated ORS 696.301(3) and its implementing rule OAR 863-025-0055(3)(b)(B),(C), (c)(C), and (E) (01/01/2020, and 01/01/2021 Editions).

Fourth Findings of Fact

- 1.13 The account ledgers note multiple instances of disbursements made when there were insufficient funds to do so. The following instances were noted:
 - Account ledger "#23-B 1860 S 7 St. Unit B" had insufficient funds for disbursements made on December 28, 2020, and February 19, 2021, through February 20, 2021.
 - Account ledger "023-D 1860 S 7th Street #D" had insufficient funds for the disbursement made on October 21, 2020.
 - Account ledger "023-B S 7th St. Unit B" had insufficient funds for disbursements made between February 19, 2021, and February 20, 2021.
 - Account ledger "024-1 1275 Stonefield Ct-1" had insufficient funds for the disbursement made on February 21, 2021.
 - Account ledger "042-2 1277 Stonefield Court -2" had insufficient funds for the disbursement made on September 10, 2020.
- 1.14 Based on the provided documents it appears funds were transferred between White's ledger accounts. Per White's property management agreement, there is nothing noted in the terms that allows funds to be transferred between the separate ledger accounts.

Fourth Statement of Law: ORS 696.301(3) authorizes the Commissioner to reprimand a licensee's real estate license who has disregarded or violated any provision of ORS 659A.421, 696.010 to 696.495, 696.600 to 696.785, 696.800 to 696.870 and 696.890 or any rule of the Real Estate Agency. Implementation of ORS 696.301(3) is made through OAR 863-025-0027(3) and (5)(a) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions), which states (3) a property manager must not disburse funds from a clients' trust account or security deposits account unless there are sufficient funds, as defined in OAR 863-025-0010, in the ledger account against which the disbursement is made, (5) a property manager may only transfer funds between two or more owner ledger accounts maintained for the same owner if: (a) the owner

has given the property manager prior written approval in the property management agreement or in an addendum to the agreement.

Fourth Conclusion of Law: Mitchell made multiple disbursements out of the clients' trust account when there were insufficient funds in the ledger account to do so (see above). Additionally, Mitchell transferred funds between White's owner ledgers when nothing was noted in the property management agreement allowing the transfers. Mitchell violated ORS 696.301(3) and its implementing rule OAR 863-025-0027(3) and (5)(a) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions).

Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Findings of Fact:

- 1.15 On September 28, 2021, Agency Financial Investigator/Auditor Liz Hayes emailed Mitchell requesting records, including Mitchell's reconciliation records for May and June 2021 for account ending in #3269.
- 1.16 On November 2, 2021, Mitchell forwarded copies of the requested records, but failed to provide the reconciliation records. Hayes followed up the same day requesting the reconciliation records.
- 1.17 On November 3, 2021, Hayes spoke with Mitchell who disclosed that she had not reconciled the clients trust accounts. Mitchell said she hired a bookkeeper toward the end of 2020 to assist with the books and complete White's final accounting. While there was no record of receipts of disbursements provided by Mitchell, Mitchell submitted multiple account records that noted rent funds were deposited into the correct clients' trust account and when owner disbursements were made.
- 1.18 Mitchell was asked if she believed she had all the records required to complete a three-way reconciliation. Mitchell said she thought she did. In November 2021, Mitchell hired another bookkeeper to help recreate her accounting from when she took over the business.

Fifth Statement of Law: ORS 696.301(3) authorizes the Commissioner to reprimand a licensee's real estate license who has disregarded or violated any provision of ORS 659A.421, 696.010 to 696.495, 696.600 to 696.785, 696.800 to 696.870 and 696.890 or any rule of the Real Estate Agency. Implementation of ORS 696.301(3) is made through OAR 863-025-0028(2)(a) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions), which states (2) a property manager must reconcile each clients' trust account within 30 calendar days of the date of the bank statement

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pursuant to the requirements contained in this section, (a) the reconciliation must have three components that are contained in a single reconciliation document.

Fifth Conclusion of Law: By failing reconcile her clients' trust accounts monthly, Mitchell violated ORS 696.301(3) and its implementing rule OAR 863-025-0028(2)(a) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions).

Sixth Statement of Law: ORS 696.301(3) authorizes the Commissioner to reprimand a licensee's real estate license who has disregarded or violated any provision of ORS 659A.421, 696.010 to 696.495, 696.600 to 696.785, 696.800 to 696.870 and 696.890 or any rule of the Real Estate Agency. Implementation of ORS 696.301(3) is made through OAR 863-025-0035(1)(b) and (j) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions), which states (1) the property manager's records of the management of rental real estate are "complete and adequate" as required under ORS 696.280 if the records contain, at least, the following: (b) clients' trust account and security deposit account records required by OAR 863-025-0000 to 863-025-0080 and ORS Chapter 696; and (j) records of the reconciliation of each clients' trust account and security deposits account, including the reconciliation document.

Sixth Conclusion of Law: By failing to reconcile her clients' trust accounts monthly, Mitchell violated ORS 696.301(3) and its implementing rule OAR 863-025-0035(1)(b) and (j) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions).

Seventh Statement of Law: ORS 696.301(3) authorizes the Commissioner to reprimand a licensee's real estate license who has disregarded or violated any provision of ORS 659A.421, 696.010 to 696.495, 696.600 to 696.785, 696.800 to 696.870 and 696.890 or any rule of the Real Estate Agency. Implementation of ORS 696.301(3) is made through OAR 863-025-0035(3)(b) (01/01/2021 Edition) which states (3) if a property manager uses a computerized system for creating, maintaining and producing required records and reports: (b) posting of owner ledgers, record of receipts and disbursements, tenant ledgers and manipulation of information and documents must be maintained in a format that will readily enable tracking and reconciliation.

Seventh Conclusion of Law: By failing to retain records of receipts and disbursements in a format that readily enables tracking and reconciliation Mitchell violated ORS 696.301(3) and its implementing rule OAR 863-025-0035(3)(b) (01/01/2021 Edition).

Eighth Findings of Fact:

1.19 On November 23, 2021, Miller provided copies of the receipts and invoices received from Mitchell relating to White's properties. A review of the documentation provided show Mitchell posted some invoices on the corresponding ledger; however, it appears others were combined with other charges and not clearly explained.

Eighth Statement of Law: ORS 696.301(3) authorizes the Commissioner to reprimand a licensee's real estate license who has disregarded or violated any provision of ORS 659A.421, 696.010 to 696.495, 696.600 to 696.785, 696.800 to 696.870 and 696.890 or any rule of the Real Estate Agency. Implementation of ORS 696.301(3) is made through OAR 863-025-0040(5) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions) which states (5) upon any activity, the property manager must record each receipt, deposit or disbursement, as required in this rule and record each deposit or disbursement on the corresponding owner's ledger as required in OAR 863-025-0055 and/or tenant's ledger as required in 863-025-0050.

Eighth Conclusion of Law: Mitchell provided White with copies of invoices and receipts, however, not all the activity was recorded on the corresponding ledger in violation of ORS 696.301(3) and its implementing rule OAR 863-025-0040(5) (01/01/2020 and 01/01/2021 Editions).

Ninth Statement of Law: ORS 696.301(12) states a licensee's real estate license may be disciplined if they have demonstrated incompetence or untrustworthiness in performing any act for which the real estate licensee is required to hold a license.

Ninth Conclusion of Law: All of the above violations demonstrate incompetence and untrustworthiness in performing an act for which the licensee is required to hold a license in violation of ORS 696.301(12) (2019 Edition).

Tenth Conclusion of Law: The forgoing violations are grounds for discipline pursuant to ORS 696.301(3) and (12). Based on these violations a reprimand is appropriate for violations of ORS 696.301(3) and (12). As previously noted, the Agency has set forth the grounds of discipline as ORS 696.301(3) and (12).

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According to ORS 696.775, the lapsing, expiration, revocation or suspension of a real estate license, whether by operation of law, order of the Real Estate Commissioner or decision

of a court of law, or the inactive status of the license, or voluntary surrender of the license by the real estate licensee does not deprive the commissioner of jurisdiction to: (1) proceed with an investigation of the licensee; (2) conduct disciplinary proceedings relating to the licensee; (3) Take action against a licensee, including assessment of a civil penalty against the licensee for a violation of ORS 696.020(2); or (4) revise or render null and void an order suspending or revoking a license.

3.

The Agency reserves the right to investigate and pursue additional complaints that may be received in the future regarding this licensee.

STIPULATION AND WAIVER

I, Tina Janell Mitchell, have read and reviewed this Stipulated Final Order and its Findings of Fact, Statements of Law and Conclusions of Law. I understand that the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and this Stipulation and Waiver of Hearing rights embody the full and complete agreement and stipulation between the Agency and me. I further understand that if I do not agree with this stipulation I have the right to request a Hearing on this matter and to be represented by legal counsel at such a Hearing. I also understand that any Hearing would be conducted in accordance with the procedures set forth in ORS Chapter 183 and in accordance with the Rules of Practice and Procedure adopted by the Attorney General of the State of Oregon. By signing this Stipulated Final Order I freely and voluntarily waive my rights to a Hearing, to representation by legal counsel at such a Hearing, and to judicial review of this matter.

I hereby agree and stipulate to the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and understand that the Order which follows hereafter, which I have also read and understand, may be completed and signed by the Real Estate Commissioner or may be rejected by the Real Estate Commissioner. I further understand that, in accordance with the provisions of ORS 696.445(3), notice of this Order shall be published in the Oregon Real Estate News Journal.

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In addition to all of the above, I agree that once the Commissioner executes this 1 2 Stipulated Final Order, I will accept service of the Stipulated Final Order by email, and hereby waive the right to challenge the validity of service. 3 4 5 **ORDER** IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Tina Janell Mitchell's property manager license be, and 6 7 hereby is reprimanded. 8 9 IT IS SO ORDERED: 10 IT IS SO STIPULATED: 11 12 DocuSigned by: DocuSigned by: Tina Janell Mitchell Steven Strode 13 14 TINA JANELL MITCHELL STEVEN STRODE 15 Real Estate Commissioner Date 2/7/2022 | 10:12 AM PST Date 2/8/2022 | 7:51 AM PST 16 17 Date of Service: 02/08/2022 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

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