

**UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE  
BEFORE THE DIRECTOR OF THE  
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Alex Chihkuei Hu,	)	Proceeding No. D2026-9
	)	
Respondent	)	
_____	)	

**FINAL ORDER PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 11.26**

The Acting Director of the Office of Enrollment and Discipline (“OED Director”) for the United States Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO” or “Office”) and Alex Chihkuei Hu (“Respondent”) have submitted a Proposed Settlement Agreement (“Agreement”) to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO Director”) for approval.

The Agreement, which resolves all disciplinary action by the USPTO arising from the stipulated facts set forth below, is hereby approved. This Final Order sets forth the parties’ joint stipulated facts, joint legal conclusions, and agreed-upon sanction found in the Agreement.

**Jurisdiction**

1. At all times relevant hereto, Respondent of Fairfax, Virginia has been a registered patent attorney (Registration Number 77,909). Respondent is subject to the USPTO Rules of Professional Conduct, 37 C.F.R. § 11.101 *et seq.*
2. The USPTO Director has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §§ 2(b)(2)(D) and 32 and 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.19, 11.20, and 11.26.

**Joint Stipulated Facts**

3. Respondent is the founder and sole owner of IPPIVOT PATENT AGENCY LLC which is based in Fairfax, Virginia. Respondent is a registered patent attorney (Reg. No. 77,909) and is licensed to practice law in New Jersey and Washington, D.C.
4. China-based foreign agent 晟贝国际, the English translation of which is ZAN IP INTERNATIONAL LIMITED (“ZAN IP”), works with Respondent to file U.S. patent applications. ZAN IP does not employ any practitioners registered to practice before the USPTO in patent matters.
5. At the request of ZAN IP, Respondent took over as attorney of record in approximately 970 patent applications where the original power of attorney (“POA”) was to W&K IP. Respondent

was asked to reply to show cause orders (“SCOs”) that were issued in those applications after the USPTO determined that a person not authorized to practice in patent matters before the USPTO had inserted the S-signature of a registered practitioner on filings made in the applications.

6. Respondent received a separate email from ZAN IP for each of the approximately 970 applications in which an SCO was issued. Each email included a draft response to the SCO, a declaration of applicant, and a POA to Respondent. For each such application, Respondent reviewed the documents, signed the response, and then filed the response to the SCO with the USPTO. After filing the response, Respondent reported the filing to ZAN IP.

7. Respondent does not know with certainty that each applicant actually signed the declaration included in each SCO response he filed. Respondent, furthermore, is not sure how ZAN IP obtained the applicants’ signatures on the POAs to him.

8. On October 1, 2024, the USPTO issued orders terminating the proceedings in all of the approximately 970 patent matters in which Respondent had filed responses to SCOs. Respondent notified ZAN IP of the termination orders and relied on ZAN IP in turn to notify the patent applicant clients.

9. Respondent communicated with his clients through ZAN IP. He acknowledges that his reliance on ZAN IP to communicate with his clients was not ideal.

10. Respondent has amended his practice and now instructs foreign agents to copy him on all communications with his patent applicant clients regarding important procedural matters during prosecution. This new procedure is designed to enable Respondent to better ensure that, *inter alia*, applicants are signing their names themselves and are being properly notified regarding important USPTO correspondence

11. Respondent relied on his memory to identify any conflicts between his applicant clients.

U.S. Design Patent Application Nos. 29/838,941 and [REDACTED]

12. Respondent filed patent application nos. 29/838,941 (“the ’941 application”), filed May 17, 2022, and [REDACTED] (“the [REDACTED] application”), filed [REDACTED], which appear to claim the same invention but name different inventors. On May 23, 2023, the ’941 application issued as U.S. Design Patent No. D987,163 (“the ’163 patent”). On [REDACTED] a non-final Office action issued in the [REDACTED] application stating that the claimed invention is “clearly anticipated” by the ’163 patent.

13. Respondent asserts that given the nine-month time gap between the application filings, he “did not recall the details of the earlier submission at the time of the later filing, and therefore did not recognize the similarity in content between the two.”

14. On [REDACTED] Respondent filed patent application nos. [REDACTED] (“the [REDACTED] application”) and [REDACTED] (“the [REDACTED] application”) which name different inventors but appear to claim the same invention. On [REDACTED] a non-final Office action issued in the [REDACTED] application stating that the claimed invention was obvious in view of non-patent literature found on the Internet in view of a [REDACTED] patent issued to [REDACTED]. On [REDACTED] a requirement for information was issued by the examiner in the [REDACTED] application noting that the [REDACTED] application “discloses very similar subject matter.”

15. On [REDACTED] a notice of abandonment issued in the [REDACTED] application because no reply to the [REDACTED] Office action had been received. On [REDACTED] Respondent filed a request to withdraw from representation in the [REDACTED] application.

16. On [REDACTED] Respondent filed a request to withdraw from representation in the [REDACTED] application which was accepted by the Office on [REDACTED]. On [REDACTED] a notice of abandonment was issued in the [REDACTED] application.

17. Respondent asserts that these two applications were referred to him by ZAN IP and that he “did not detect the difference in inventorship between the two similar applications” and that this “was an inadvertent mistake and was not made intentionally.” Respondent further asserts that he “regret[s] the oversight and remain[s] committed to ensuring accuracy and compliance in future submissions.”

18. Respondent has now incorporated professional conflict identification software into his practice by which he is establishing a searchable database of keywords and technologies associated with his applicants and filed applications. This will enable Respondent to perform a conflict clearance check for new applicants and subject matters before application submission. This new protocol is designed to identify and resolve potential conflicts at the earliest possible stage, thereby safeguarding the intellectual property rights and best interest of his clients. This improvement to his practice should reasonably enable Respondent to identify conflicts of interest and, thus, abide by his ethical obligations under 37 C.F.R. § 11.107.

#### **Additional Considerations**

19. On December 16, 2025, Respondent voluntarily completed a continuing legal education program on conflicts of interest.

20. Respondent has acknowledged his ethical lapses, demonstrated genuine contrition, and accepted responsibility for his acts and omissions.

21. Respondent cooperated with OED’s investigation, *e.g.*, by participating in an interview with OED and by providing *sua sponte* informative, supplemental responses to his original responses to OED’s requests for information.

### Joint Legal Conclusions

22. Respondent acknowledges that, based on the information contained in the Joint Stipulated Facts, above, his acts and omissions violated the following provisions of the USPTO Rules of Professional Conduct:

- a. 37 C.F.R. § 11.103 (diligence) by not employing appropriate measures to (1) ensure documents provided to him for filing with the USPTO had been signed by the named signatory, (2) ensure that important USPTO correspondence was communicated to his patent applicant clients, or (3) identify conflicts of interest that may exist between his patent applicant clients;
- b. 37 C.F.R. § 11.104 (communication) by not employing appropriate measures to (1) ensure documents provided to him for filing with the USPTO had been signed by the named signatory, (2) ensure that important USPTO correspondence was communicated to his patent applicant clients, or (3) identify conflicts of interest that may exist between his patent applicant clients;
- c. 37 C.F.R. § 11.107 (conflict of interest) by filing patent applications claiming the same invention but naming different inventors;
- d. 37 C.F.R. § 11.301 (meritorious claims and contentions) by filing patent applications claiming the same invention but naming different inventors; and
- e. 37 C.F.R. § 11.804(d) (practitioner must not engage in conduct adversely affecting the integrity of the USPTO patent application process) by not employing appropriate measures to (1) ensure documents provided to him for filing with the USPTO had been signed by the named signatory, (2) ensure that important USPTO correspondence was communicated to his patent applicant clients, or (3) identify conflicts of interest that may exist between his patent applicant clients.

### Agreed-Upon Sanction

Respondent has freely and voluntarily agreed, and it is hereby ORDERED, that:

- a. Respondent shall be and is hereby publicly reprimanded;
- b. The OED Director shall electronically publish this Final Order at the OED'S electronic FOIA Reading Room, which is publicly accessible through the Office's website at: <https://foiadocuments.uspto.gov/oed/>;
- c. The OED Director shall publish a notice in the *Official Gazette* that is materially consistent with the following:

## Notice of Reprimand

This notice concerns Alex Chihkuei Hu of Fairfax, Virginia, who is a registered patent attorney (Registration Number 77,909). The USPTO Director has reprimanded Mr. Hu for violating 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.103 (diligence); 11.104 (communication); 11.107 (conflict of interest); 11.301 (meritorious claims and contentions); and 11.804(d) (conduct prejudicial to the integrity of the USPTO patent application process). The violations are predicated on Mr. Hu's failure to employ appropriate measures to (1) ensure documents provided to him for filing with the USPTO had been signed by the named signatory, (2) ensure that important USPTO correspondence was communicated to his patent applicant clients, or (3) identify conflicts of interest that may exist between his patent applicant clients.

At the request of China-based foreign agent 筑贝国际, the English translation of which is ZAN IP INTERNATIONAL LIMITED ("ZAN IP"), Mr. Hu took over as attorney of record in approximately 970 patent applications. Mr. Hu was asked to reply to show cause orders ("SCOs") that were issued because the USPTO previously determined that a person not authorized to practice in patent matters before the USPTO had inserted the S-signature of a registered practitioner on filings made in the applications.

Mr. Hu received a separate email from ZAN IP for each of the approximately 970 applications in which an SCO was issued. Each email included a draft response to the SCO, a declaration of applicant, and a power of attorney ("POA") to Mr. Hu. For each such application, Mr. Hu reviewed the documents, signed the response, and then filed the response with the USPTO. After filing each response, he reported the filing to ZAN IP.

Mr. Hu does not know with certainty that each applicant actually signed the declaration included in each SCO response he filed. Mr. Hu, furthermore, is not sure how ZAN IP obtained the applicants' signatures on the POAs to him.

On October 1, 2024, the USPTO issued orders terminating the proceedings in all of the approximately 970 patent matters in which Mr. Hu had filed responses to SCOs. Mr. Hu notified ZAN IP of the termination orders and relied on ZAN IP in turn to notify his patent applicant clients.

Mr. Hu communicated with his clients through ZAN IP. He acknowledges his reliance on ZAN IP to communicate with his clients was not ideal.

Mr. Hu has amended his practice and now instructs foreign agents to copy him on all communications with his patent applicant clients regarding important procedural matters during prosecution. This new procedure is designed to enable Mr. Hu to better ensure that, *inter alia*, applicants are signing their names themselves and are being properly notified regarding important USPTO

correspondence.

Mr. Hu has relied, at times unsuccessfully, on his memory to identify any conflicts between his applicant clients. In one matter, Mr. Hu filed two different design patent applications approximately eight months apart which claimed the same invention but named different inventors. In another matter, Mr. Hu filed two different design patent applications on the same day which claimed the same invention but named different inventors.

Mr. Hu has now incorporated professional conflict identification software into his practice by which he is establishing a searchable database of keywords and technologies associated with his applicants and filed applications. This will enable Mr. Hu to perform a conflict clearance check for new applicants and subject matters before application submission.

Mr. Hu has acknowledged his ethical lapses, demonstrated genuine contrition, and accepted responsibility for his acts and omissions. Mr. Hu was cooperative with OED's investigation, including agreeing to an interview with OED and providing sua sponte informative, supplemental responses to his original responses to requests for information. Mr. Hu voluntarily completed a continuing legal education program on conflicts of interest.

This action is the result of a settlement agreement between Mr. Hu and the OED Director pursuant to the provisions of 35 U.S.C. §§ 2(b)(2)(D) and 32 and 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.19, 11.20, and 11.26. Disciplinary decisions involving practitioners are posted for public reading at the Office of Enrollment and Discipline Reading Room accessible at: <https://foiadocuments.uspto.gov/oed/>;

- d. Respondent shall cooperate fully with the USPTO in any present or future inquiry into any third-party entities (*e.g.*, foreign representatives or foreign associates, including, but not limited to W&K IP and ZAN IP) or person(s) who were involved in reviewing, preparing, signing, filing, or arranging for the reviewing, preparing, signing, or filing of any of the responses to the show cause orders issued in the approximately 970 applications;
- e. Nothing in the Agreement or this Final Order shall prevent the Office from considering the record of this disciplinary proceeding, including this Final Order: (1) when addressing any further complaint or evidence of the same or similar misconduct concerning Respondent brought to the attention of the Office and (2) in any future disciplinary proceeding against Respondent (i) as an aggravating factor to be taken into consideration in determining any discipline to be imposed, and/or (ii) to rebut any statement or representation by or on Respondent's behalf;
- f. Respondent has agreed to waive all rights to seek reconsideration of this Final Order under 37 C.F.R. § 11.56, to waive the right to have this Final Order reviewed under

37 C.F.R. § 11.57, and to waive the right otherwise to appeal or challenge this Final Order in any manner; and

- g. The parties to the Agreement shall bear their own costs incurred to date and in carrying out the terms of the Agreement and this Final Order.

**TRICIA  
CHOE**

Digitally signed by  
TRICIA CHOE  
Date: 2026.02.11  
10:21:50 -05'00'

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Tricia Choe  
Associate General Counsel for General Law  
United States Patent and Trademark Office

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Date

on delegated authority by

John A. Squires  
Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and  
Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Final Order was sent, on this day, to the parties in the manner indicated below:

Via first-class certified mail, return receipt requested:

Mr. Alex Chihkuei Hu  
IPPIVOT Patent Agency  
4000 Legato Road  
Suite 1100  
Fairfax, Virginia 22033  
*Respondent*

Via email:

Sydney O. Johnson  
[REDACTED]  
*Counsel for OED Director*

2/11/2026  
Date

  
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450