

grounds for suspension or debarment. The term “incompetence” encompasses conduct that reflects a lack of the knowledge, judgment and skill that a professional would ordinarily and reasonably be expected to exercise in adequately representing the rights and interests of a client. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Handling a matter which the individual knows or should know that he or she is not competent to handle, without associating with a professional who is competent to handle such matter.
- (b) Handling a matter without adequate preparation under the circumstances.
- (c) Neglect in a matter entrusted to him or her.

**§ 19.196 Disreputable conduct.**

Disreputable conduct for which an individual may be censured, debarred or suspended from practice before the OCC includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Willfully violating or willfully aiding and abetting the violation of any provision of the Federal banking or applicable securities laws or the rules and regulations thereunder or conviction of any offense involving dishonesty or breach of trust.
- (b) Knowingly giving false or misleading information, or participating in any way in the giving of false information to the OCC or any officer or employee thereof, or to any tribunal authorized to pass upon matters administered by the OCC in connection with any matter pending or likely to be pending before it. The term “information” includes facts or other statements contained in testimony, financial statements, applications for enrollment, affidavits, declarations, or any other document or written or oral statement.
- (c) Directly or indirectly attempting to influence, or offering or agreeing to attempt to influence, the official action of any officer or employee of the OCC by the use of threats, false accusations, duress or coercion, by the offer of any special inducement or promise of advantage or by the bestowing of any gift, favor, or thing of value.
- (d) Disbarment or suspension from practice as an attorney, or debarment or suspension from practice as a cer-

tified public accountant or public accountant, by any duly constituted authority of any state, possession, or commonwealth of the United States, or the District of Columbia for the conviction of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude in matters relating to the supervisory responsibilities of the OCC, where the conviction has not been reversed on appeal.

- (e) Knowingly aiding or abetting another individual to practice before the OCC during that individual’s period of suspension, debarment, or ineligibility.
- (f) Contemptuous conduct in connection with practice before the OCC, and knowingly making false accusations and statements, or circulating or publishing malicious or libelous matter.
- (g) Suspension or debarment from practice before the Board of Governors, the FDIC, the OTS, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, or any other Federal agency based on matters relating to the supervisory responsibilities of the OCC.
- (h) Willful violation of any of the regulations contained in this part.

**§ 19.197 Initiation of disciplinary proceeding.**

- (a) *Receipt of information.* An individual, including any employee of the OCC, who has reason to believe that an individual practicing before the OCC in a representative capacity has engaged in any conduct that would serve as a basis for censure, suspension or debarment under § 19.192, may make a report thereof and forward it to the OCC or to such person as may be delegated responsibility for such matters by the Comptroller.
- (b) *Censure without formal proceeding.* Upon receipt of information regarding an individual’s qualification to practice before the OCC, the Comptroller or the Comptroller’s delegate may, after giving the individual notice and opportunity to respond, censure such individual.
- (c) *Institution of formal disciplinary proceeding.* When the Comptroller has reason to believe that any individual who practices before the OCC in a representative capacity has engaged in conduct that would serve as a basis for censure, suspension or debarment