

Metro

COUNTY / REGION / STATE

Gannett Suburban Newspapers/Saturday, June 22, 1991

Page A6

Lawyer suspended for refusing to take medical examination

By Michael Meek

Staff Writer

A White Plains divorce lawyer was suspended from practicing after refusing to submit to a medical examination to determine whether she was incapacitated.

Doris Sassower's indefinite suspension took effect Wednesday with an order from the state Appellate Division of state Supreme Court.

The order arose out of a disciplinary proceeding against Sassower initiated by the 9th Judicial District Grievance Committee, which handles complaints against lawyers in Westchester.

The court had ordered the medical examination of Sassower last October.

Sassower, a former president of the New York Women's Bar Association, said yesterday she was appealing the suspension, which she claims violates her civil rights.

Sassower said she refused to comply with the court's order because it violated its own procedures and regulations, violated her civil rights and improperly delegated the responsibility of finding a medical expert to the grievance committee.

She said she also refused to comply because defendants should be examined by at least one expert to have a lawful evaluation.

Sassower said the complaint against her came from a proceeding against her before state Supreme Court Justice Samuel G. Fredman. Fredman held the contempt hearings against Sassower last year because of Sassower's more than three-month delay in turning over a former client's file to another lawyer.

Fredman never issued a decision in the proceeding, Sassower said. The proceedings were delayed three times because of Sassower's claims of medical disability.

Gary Casella, chief counsel for the grievance committee, said confidentiality statutes prevented him from commenting on why the committee started proceedings against Sassower.

Sassower, 57, also was the lawyer representing the 9th District Judicial Committee, which unsuccessfully challenged the legality of cross-endorsements of judicial candidates. It is appealing the case to the state Court of Appeals.

C-1