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Attorney Grievance Commission

MARYLAND ATTORNEYS

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FY 2009

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DISCIPLINARY SUMMARIES FY 2009

ALLEGANY COUNTY

THOMAS, C. Trent - Commission reprimand by consent for failure to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing his client and failure to respond to requests for production of documents and evidence of causation in a timely manner, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 1.3.

WASSER, Nathan H. - Disbarred by consent on February 3, 2009 for misappropriation of escrow funds, failure to safekeep client property and illegal conduct, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.5(a) and 8.4(b),(c) and (d).

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

ROUSE, Joseph H. - Commission reprimand by consent for failure to substantively pursue the administration of an estate.

TANKO, Louis P., Jr. - 60-day Suspension on April 17, 2009 for misleading the Court by filing documents requesting expungement of cases which he knew were not entitled to be expunged and not alerting the court to the timing requirements, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 3.3 and 8.4(d).

BALTIMORE CITY

BUTLER, Anthony Ignatius, Jr. - Commission reprimand for failure to diligently pursue his client's collection cases and failure to communicate with the client.

BUTLER, Anthony Ignatius, Jr. - Suspended for 30 days by consent on November 26, 2008, effective as of December 1, 2008 for his failure to follow the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and repeatedly missing deadlines.

GARDNER, Paul W., III - Commission Reprimand for failure to deposit a client's retainer into an attorney trust account, maintained pursuant to Maryland Rules, Title 16, Chapter 600 for safekeeping. The client's retainer payment was in anticipation of future legal services yet to be rendered, pursuant to the retainer agreement, to be withdrawn only as fees were earned.

JONES, Rodney M. - Commission reprimand for failure to act with diligence and promptness in representing his client, resulting in a direct criminal contempt hearing, in which the Court issued an Order of Contempt. His misconduct is a violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 1.3.

PETTIT, A. Dwight - Reprimand by Commission on July 16, 2008 for being remiss and negligent in supervising his employee over a long period of time and in monitoring his cases.

BALTIMORE COUNTY

DOUGLAS, Yalonda M. - Disbarred by consent for engaging in fraudulent conduct in connection with the receipt of a loan to refinance property, handling the settlement on the refinance, and signing another lawyer's name to the settlement statement for the transaction.

GLASS, Joseph E. - Commission reprimand for failing to adequately communicate the terms of the fee agreement to his client before or within a reasonable time after the engagement.

JORDAN, Cynthia - 30-day Suspension on April 6, 2009 for making a false reports to police and her insurance company that her automobile had been stolen by an unknown individual, when she knew it had been taken by a friend who abandoned it after having an accident, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 8.4(b), (c) and (d).

McLAUGHLIN, J. Michael - Commission reprimand for failure to respond to a lawful demand for information from a disciplinary authority, the Attorney Grievance Commission of Maryland.

PAWLAK, Thomas F. - Indefinite Suspension on April 14, 2009 for a lack of competence and diligence by failing to handle an estate matter for over a decade and for failing to respond to Bar Counsel, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.1, 1.3 and 8.1(b).

POWELL, Roger N. - Commission reprimand for the wrongful disbursement of funds from his escrow account.

TURNER, Robert C. - 90-day Suspension by consent for engaging in a conflict of interest and neglecting his clients' cases.

WEINRAUCH, Aaron D. - Disbarred by consent for failure to withhold income taxes and failure to pursue cases after taking fees.

CARROLL COUNTY

NEE, Dawn Allison - Commission reprimand for creating her own mediation services to be performed outside of her employment with the firm. In doing so, she used the firm's malpractice policy information without the firm's knowledge, in order to offer such services as a court-appointed mediator, which conduct violated Maryland Rule of Professional Conduct 8.4(c).

DORCHESTER COUNTY

BOHLEN, Lawrence G. - Commission Reprimand for commingling his personal funds with his clients' funds held in his escrow account, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct 1.15(a) and 16-607.

FREDERICK COUNTY

BRENNAN, Richard A. - Disbarred by consent on January 28, 2009 for various violations, including lack of diligence and communication, misappropriation of client funds in connection with his "debt settlement" business, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.16, 8.4 and the Annotated Code of MD, Business Occupations and Professions Article, Section 10-306.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

ALEXANDER, David, Jr. - Disbarred by consent for failure to diligently pursue his clients' matters, failure to forward client files timely upon termination, failure to refund unused retainer fees upon termination, misappropriated escrow monies, and failure to respond to Bar Counsel's office.

BYRD, Ralph T. - Disbarred on April 14, 2009 for filing false business reports and disobeying court orders in his bankruptcy, as well as multiple violations with respect to District Court practices, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.1, 1.3, 1.4(a)(2), 3.3(a)(1), 3.4(c) and 8.4(b), (c) and (d).

GARCIA, Jose Expedito - Interim Suspension by Consent on March 17, 2009, effective immediately, until the case is decided on the merits and subject to further order of the Court of Appeals.

GARRETT, Dwayne L. - Reprimand by Consent by the Court of Appeals on May 4, 2009 for failure to respond to Bar Counsel, in violation of Maryland Rules of

Professional Conduct, Rule 8.1(b).

HALL, Ralph Edward, Jr. - Indefinite Suspension on April 15, 2009 (with the right to reapply after 24 months) for engaging in a sexual relationship with his client which constituted conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice and a conflict of interest; failure to advise the client about the possible negative implications on the representation; and failure to act with reasonable diligence and promptness, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.3, 1.4(b), 1.7 and 8.4(d).

HUANG, Paul C. - Commission Reprimand for violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 8.4(d), relating to the services of prostitutes sent to him by an escort service between 1995 and 2003; on approximately 6 occasions, he gratuitously reported to the escort service owner on the performance of her employees. His conduct does not involve dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation.

LARA, Joel D. - Commission reprimand for engaging in professional misconduct in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3, 1.4(a), 1.6(d) and 8.1(b). He failed to act with reasonable diligence and failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the matter; upon being discharged by his client, he ignored requests of client and client's new attorney for papers, including medical records from his file. He also failed to respond to lawful demands for information from the office of Bar Counsel concerning the complaint.

MEI, Howard Teng-Hao - Disbarred by consent on November 10, 2008 for entering into a relationship with an agency by assisting them in filing asylum applications that contained false information for the applicants; failure to represent clients who were referred to him by the agency in their asylum matters promptly and with reasonable diligence; and failure to communicate with his clients. He also shared fees with the non-lawyer agency and knowingly made a false statement about his relationship with a former client while representing her.

SCHWARTZ, Bradley David - Disbarred by Consent on March 23, 2009 for misuse of client funds, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.15, 8.4(b), (c) and (d), 16-609, and MD Annotated Code, Business Occupations and Professions Article 10-306.

UGWUONYE, Ephraim, Jr. - 90-day Suspension by the Court of Appeals on July 24, 2008 for failure to act with diligence and competence in representing a client by failing to respond to a notice of contemplated dismissal for lack of service. With regard to another client, he took a fee for a frivolous case and failed to return an unearned fee (which he had deposited in his operating account).

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

AZUEWAH, Ndukwe - Commission Reprimand for employing the services of an unpaid, non-lawyer assistant with no training as a legal assistant who provided legal advice/assistance to one or more clients, during which time he failed to make reasonable efforts to ensure that his assistant's conduct was compatible with his professional obligations, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 5.3.

FORD, Brian K. - Disbarred by consent for misappropriating trust funds from his title company.

HALL, John Morgan, Jr. - Commission reprimand for violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3 and 1.4 by failing to: inform the client that he had not filed a claim on her behalf; advise the client that he was not going to represent her; and advise the client to seek the advice of another lawyer.

HECHT, Ross D. - Commission reprimand for failure to respond timely to Bar Counsel's request for information concerning complaints and failure to provide written notice to his client that he was declining to represent her, causing confusing and misunderstanding.

McCLAIN, Charles E., Sr. - Disbarred by Court of Appeals on September 8, 2008 in connection with his representation of a client in a case in which the Circuit Court had ordered the sale of property owned as tenants in common by the client and another person. The Respondent made false and misleading representations to the Circuit Court and the Court of Special Appeals, in violation of Rules 8.4(c) and 3.3(a), failed to provide competent representation, in violation of Rule 1.1, failed to make reasonable efforts to expedite litigation, in violation of Rule 3.2, brought or defended a proceeding without a basis in law and/or fact which was not frivolous, in violation of Rule 3.1, used means that had no substantial purpose other than to delay or burden a third person, in violation of Rule 4.4(a), made a statement that he knew to be false and/or made a statement with reckless disregard of the truth concerning the qualifications of integrity of a judge, in violation of Rule 8.2(a), and engaged in conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice, in violation of Rule 8.4(d).

MOORE, Richard A. - Commission reprimand for failure to keep an account on the insurance proceeds of his sister and claiming "under the penalties of

perjury" that he was the sole heir to his mother's estate, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.15(a), 3.3 and 8.4(a), (c) and (d).

RHODES, Laura K. - Commission reprimand for failure to diligently represent her client, failure to keep her client adequately informed, and failure to expedite litigation.

RYAN, Michael W., Jr. - Disbarred by consent for a series of violations of multiple Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct dealing with competence, diligence, communication and safekeeping property.

SHAKIR, Saladin Eric - Indefinite Suspension by consent for failing to provide diligent representation, failing to adequately communicate, charging an unreasonable and/or excessive fee, failing to hold a pre-paid fee in trust until earned, failing to promptly refund the unearned portion of a pre-paid fee, and failing to timely respond to lawful demands for information from Bar Counsel's office.

SHRYOCK, Charles M., III - Disbarred on March 18, 2009 for misconduct, including the unauthorized practice of law while indefinitely suspended, committing in the process a criminal act bearing on his trustworthiness and fitness to practice law, conduct involving dishonesty and misrepresentation, and failure to cooperate with Bar Counsel's investigation, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 5.5, 8.1(b) and 8.4(a), (b) and (c).

TAYLOR, Michael F. - Reprimand by Court of Appeals on September 4, 2008 for misuse of attorney trust account and violation of Rules of Professional Conduct 1.15 and Maryland Rule 16-607.

UGWANYI, Chinyere M. - Commission Reprimand for violating the requirements of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 5.3(d)(3) relating to the hiring of a disbarred attorney and also for giving the disbarred attorney the title of "Director of Litigation & Negotiations" which could give the mistaken impression that he is an attorney licensed to practice law.

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

COPPER, Catherine R. - Disbarred by consent on November 25, 2008 for misrepresentation to her client regarding the status of his legal matter and claimed the case settled when she never did any work on the case.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY

LAWRENCE, John Douglas, Jr. - Indefinite Suspension by Consent on May 1, 2009 for placing unearned, flat fees in a non-attorney escrow account and used same for his personal and business purposes, failing to promptly refund unearned fees to his client and attempting to negotiate a refund in exchange for his client not reporting him to the Attorney Grievance Commission, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.15(a), 1.16(d) and 8.4(d).

TALBOT COUNTY

FARRIS, Peter Daniel - Indefinite Suspension by consent for failure to take action in an estate case.

WICOMICO COUNTY

SNYDER, Albert R. - Reprimand by Court of Appeals for giving incorrect advice to a client in an immigration matter, then delayed returning his fee, as he had promised.

WORCESTER COUNTY

FARNAN, Michael T. - Indefinite Suspension for chronically violating traffic laws in violation of Maryland Rule of Professional Conduct 8.4(d).

OUT OF STATE

HALL, Carey Bartlow - Suspended for eighteen months on October 31, 2008, effective as of May 6, 2008 based on a previous suspension from the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as well as in New Jersey.

HARRIS, Robert John - Suspended for 60 days by consent for his neglect of his clients' cases.

KIMMEL, Craig - Suspended indefinitely for failure to supervise an associate and failure to communicate with a client.

MITTENDORF, Robert E. - Disbarred by consent in three matters, for agreeing to represent his clients, abandoning the representations after accepting prepaid fees, failing to communicate with his clients and Bar Counsel, and failing to return the unearned portions of the fees.

QUEEN, Thomas Howard - Reprimand by Court of Appeals on March 12, 2009 for incompetence, lack of diligence and failure to respond to demands for information from Bar Counsel, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.1, 1.3 and 8.1(b).

SILVERMAN, Robert - Suspended indefinitely for failure to supervise an associate and failure to communicate with a client.

WHITE, Jeffrey T. - Disbarred by consent for misappropriating funds.

ZIMMER, David Howard - Disbarred by consent on May 5, 2009 for failure to respond to Bar Counsel and for his continued pro hac vice representation of several plaintiffs in a federal court in Georgia after he had been decertified in Maryland for failing to comply with mandatory pro bono legal service reporting requirements, in violation of Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 8.1(b) and 8.4(d).