

State of Michigan
Attorney Discipline Board

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ATTORNEY DISCIPLINE BOARD
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Grievance Administrator,
Michigan Attorney Grievance Commission,

Petitioner,

Case Nos. 17-27-JC; 17-28-GA

v

Jason P. Ronning, P64779,

Respondent.

Consolidated Notice of Filing of Judgment of Conviction and Formal Complaint

(Parties and Jurisdiction)

1. Petitioner, Grievance Administrator, is authorized by MCR 9.109(B)(6) to prosecute this Formal Complaint by the Attorney Grievance Commission, which is the prosecution arm of the Supreme Court for the discharge of its constitutional responsibility to supervise and discipline Michigan attorneys.

2. As a licensed Michigan attorney, Respondent is subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and the Attorney Discipline Board as set forth in MCR 9.104.

3. Michigan attorneys have a duty to conduct themselves personally and professionally at all times in conformity with the standards imposed on members of the bar as a condition of the privilege to practice law.

4. Respondent is a Michigan attorney who was licensed in 2002 and who resides or has his place of business in the County of Ottawa.

NOTICE OF A FILING OF A JUDGMENT OF CONVICTION

Petitioner, in accordance with MCR 9.120(B)(3), files notice that Respondent has been convicted as follows:

5. On or about June 1, 2016, Respondent was convicted of misdemeanor welfare fraud – failure to inform, less than \$500 in *People v Jason Paul Ronning*, 58th District Court, Case No. HU-15-066294-FY. A certified copy of the Judgment of Conviction is appended as Attachment A.

6. Under MCR 9.120(B)(3), the Attorney Discipline Board shall issue an order to show cause why a final order of discipline should not be entered and refer the proceeding to a hearing panel for a hearing. At the hearing to be conducted in accordance with MCR 9.115(J)(3), the panel is to inquire into the specific facts of the case and consider all aggravating and mitigating circumstances. *Grievance Administrator v Deutch*, 455 Mich 149, 168-169 (1997).

FORMAL COMPLAINT

Count One

(Factual Allegations)

7. On February 18, 2016, a Grievance Administrator's Request for Investigation regarding the Judgment of Conviction referenced above was served on Respondent pursuant to MCR 9.112(C)(1)(b).

8. Respondent failed to answer the Request for Investigation within 21 days of service, as required by MCR 9.113(A).

9. On March 11, 2016, a Final Notice, with a copy of the Request for Investigation enclosed, was served on Respondent, by certified mail, return receipt requested, advising him that failure to answer within ten additional days would subject him to formal charges of misconduct.

10. Respondent did not answer the Request for Investigation.

11. On March 24, 2016, a subpoena was issued for Respondent to appear at the office of the Attorney Grievance Commission on April 22, 2016, and requiring him to bring with him a written answer to the Request for Investigation.

12. Respondent failed to appear on April 22, 2016 or otherwise respond to the subpoena.

13. As of the date of filing of this Complaint, Respondent has failed to answer the aforementioned Request for Investigation.

(Grounds for Discipline)

14. By reason of the conduct described in Count One of this Complaint, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a) failed to answer a Request for Investigation, in violation of MCR 9.104(7) and MCR 9.113(A) and (B)(2);
- b) knowingly failed to respond to a lawful demand for information from an admissions or disciplinary authority, in

- violation of MRPC 8.1(a)(2); and,
- c) engaged in conduct that violates the standards or rules of professional responsibility adopted by the Supreme Court, in violation of MCR 9.104(4) and MRPC 8.4(a).

Count Two

(Factual Allegations)

15. On or about October 26, 2011, Respondent was retained by Calvin Sherrill to represent him in an immigration matter.

16. Specifically, Respondent was retained to help Mr. Sherrill examine the possibility of modifying a previous conviction for his wife so that she could return to the United States.

17. On or about October 26, 2011, Mr. Sherrill paid Respondent \$2,500 for the representation.

18. On or about December 12, 2011, Mr. Sherrill paid Respondent another \$1,000 for the representation.

19. Respondent took no action on behalf of Mr. Sherrill.

20. Mr. Sherrill requested a refund of the unearned fees from Respondent.

21. Respondent did not respond to Mr. Sherrill.

22. After Mr. Sherrill filed a Request for Investigation, Respondent returned \$3,500 to him in February of 2015.

23.

(Grounds for Discipline)

23. By reason of the conduct described above in Count Two of this Complaint, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a) neglected a legal matter entrusted to him, in violation of MRPC 1.1(c);
- b) failed to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client, in violation of MRPC 1.3;
- c) failed to keep a client reasonably informed about the status of the matter and comply promptly with reasonable requests for information, in violation of MRPC 1.4;
- d) failed to timely refund an unearned fee, in violation of MRPC 1.16(d);
- e) engaged in conduct in violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct, in violation of MRPC 8.4(a) and MCR 9.104(4);
- f) engaged in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, in violation of MRPC 8.4(c) and MCR 9.104(1);
- g) engaged in conduct that exposes the legal profession or the courts to obloquy, contempt, censure, or reproach, in violation of MCR 9.104(2); and,
- h) engaged in conduct that is contrary to justice, ethics, honesty, or good morals, in violation of MCR 9.104(3).

Count Three

(Factual Allegations)

24. On or about November 22, 2013, Respondent was retained by Samantha Young to represent her son, Terron Young, in a criminal matter.
25. Ms. Young paid Respondent \$5,000 for the representation.
26. At the time that Ms. Young paid Respondent, he stated that if a plea agreement was reached, he would return half of the \$5,000 payment.
27. On or about February 21, 2014, Ms. Young's son was sentenced following a plea.
28. Respondent did not return \$2,500 to Ms. Young.
29. Respondent thereafter stopped communicating with Ms. Young.

(Grounds for Discipline)


30. By reason of the conduct described above in Count Three of this Complaint, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a) failed to keep a client reasonably informed about the status of the matter and comply promptly with reasonable requests for information, in violation of MRPC 1.4;
- b) failed to refund an unearned fee, in violation of MRPC 1.16(d);
- c) engaged in conduct in violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct, in violation of MRPC 8.4(a) and MCR 9.104(4);

- d) engaged in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, in violation of MRPC 8.4(c) and MCR 9.104(1);
- e) engaged in conduct that exposes the legal profession or the courts to obloquy, contempt, censure, or reproach, in violation of MCR 9.104(2); and,
- f) engaged in conduct that is contrary to justice, ethics, honesty, or good morals, in violation of MCR 9.104(3).

Wherefore, Respondent should be subjected to such discipline as may be warranted by the facts and circumstances of such misconduct.

Dated: March 23, 2017



Alan M. Gershel (P29652)
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