

FILE NO. 201903876

IN THE MATTER OF:	§	INVESTIGATORY PANEL 6-3
	§	
PAUL CRAIG LAIRD, II,	§	DISTRICT 6
	§	
BAR NO. 11795420	§	GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

AGREED JUDGMENT OF FULLY PROBATED SUSPENSION

Parties and Appearance

Chief Disciplinary Counsel and Respondent, **PAUL CRAIG LAIRD, II** (Respondent), Texas Bar Number **11795420**, announce that an agreement has been reached on all matters including the imposition of a Fully Probated Suspension.

Jurisdiction and Venue

The Investigatory Panel 6-3, having conducted an Investigatory Hearing on February 13, 2020, on the Complaint filed by Bethany Wood, finds that it has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of this action, and that venue is proper.

Professional Misconduct

The Investigatory Panel, having considered the admissions, stipulations and agreements of the parties, finds Respondent has committed Professional Misconduct as defined by Rule 1.06(CC) of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Findings of Fact

Petitioner and Respondent agree to the following findings of fact. Accordingly, the Investigatory Panel finds:

1. Respondent is an attorney licensed to practice law in Texas and is a member of the State Bar of Texas.
2. Respondent's Professional Misconduct occurred, in whole or in part, in Dallas County, Texas.

3. On April 3, 2017, Complainant, Bethany Wood (Wood), hired Respondent to represent her in a wrongful termination matter.
4. In representing Wood, Respondent neglected the legal matter entrusted to him.
5. Respondent failed to abide by Wood's decisions concerning the objectives and general methods of representation.
6. Respondent failed to keep Wood reasonably informed about the status of her wrongful termination matter.
7. Respondent failed to explain the matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit Wood to make informed decisions regarding the representation.
8. Respondent owes restitution in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$2,500.00) payable to Bethany Wood.
9. The Chief Disciplinary Counsel of the State Bar of Texas has incurred reasonable attorney's fees and direct expenses associated with this Disciplinary Proceeding in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$500.00).

Conclusions of Law

Based on the agreed foregoing findings of fact, the Investigatory Panel finds that the following Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct have been violated: Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.02(a)(1), 1.03(a) and 1.03(b).

Sanction

It is **AGREED** and **ORDERED** that the sanction of a Probated Suspension shall be imposed against Respondent and is in accordance with Part XV of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Accordingly, it is **ORDERED**, **ADJUDGED** and **DECREED** that Respondent be suspended from the practice of law for a period of one (1) year with the suspension being

fully probated pursuant to the terms stated below. The period of probated suspension shall begin on May 1, 2020, and shall end on April 30, 2021.

Terms of Probation

It is further **ORDERED** that during all periods of suspension, Respondent shall be under the following terms and conditions:

1. Respondent shall not violate any term of this judgment.
2. Respondent shall not engage in Professional Misconduct as defined by Rule 1.06(CC) of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.
3. Respondent shall not violate any state or federal criminal statutes.
4. Respondent shall keep State Bar of Texas membership department notified of current mailing, residence and business addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers.
5. Respondent shall comply with Minimum Continuing Legal Education requirements.
6. Respondent shall comply with Interest on Lawyers Trust Account (IOLTA) requirements.
7. Respondent shall promptly respond to any request for information from the Chief Disciplinary Counsel in connection with any investigation of any allegations of Professional Misconduct.
8. Respondent shall pay restitution to Complainant, Bethany Wood, in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$2,500.00). Respondent shall pay the restitution by certified or cashier's check or money order, made payable to Bethany Wood, and submitted contemporaneously with the signing of this judgment to the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, 14651 Dallas Parkway, Suite 925, Dallas, Texas 75254.
9. Respondent shall pay all reasonable and necessary attorney's fees and direct expenses to the State Bar of Texas in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$500.00). The payment shall be made by certified or cashier's check or money order, made payable to the State Bar of Texas, and submitted contemporaneously with the signing of this judgment to the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, 14651 Dallas Parkway, Suite 925, Dallas, Texas 75254.

10. Respondent shall make contact with the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Offices' Compliance Monitor at 877-953-5535, ext. 1334 and Special Programs Coordinator at 877-953-5535, ext. 1323, not later than seven (7) days after receipt of a copy of this judgment to coordinate Respondent's compliance.

Probation Revocation

Upon information that Respondent has violated a term of this judgment, the Chief Disciplinary Counsel may, in addition to all other remedies available, file a motion to revoke probation pursuant to the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure with the Board of Disciplinary Appeals (BODA) and serve a copy of the motion on Respondent pursuant to Tex.R.Civ.P. 21a.

BODA shall conduct an evidentiary hearing. At the hearing, BODA shall determine by a preponderance of the evidence whether Respondent has violated any term of this Judgment. If BODA finds grounds for revocation, BODA shall enter an order revoking probation and placing Respondent on active suspension from the date of such revocation order. Respondent shall not be given credit for any term of probation served prior to revocation.

It is further **ORDERED** that any conduct on the part of Respondent which serves as the basis for a motion to revoke probation may also be brought as independent grounds for discipline as allowed under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct and Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Restitution, Attorney's Fees and Expenses

It is further **ORDERED** Respondent shall pay restitution to Complainant, Bethany Wood, in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$2,500.00). Respondent shall pay the restitution by certified or cashier's check or money order, made

payable to Bethany Wood, and submitted contemporaneously with the signing of this judgment to the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, 14651 Dallas Parkway, Suite 925, Dallas, Texas 75254.

It is further **ORDERED** Respondent shall pay all reasonable and necessary attorney's fees and direct expenses to the State Bar of Texas in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$500.00). The payment shall be made by certified or cashier's check or money order, made payable to the State Bar of Texas, and submitted contemporaneously with the signing of this judgment to the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, 14651 Dallas Parkway, Suite 925, Dallas, Texas 75254.

It is further **ORDERED** that all amounts ordered herein are due to the misconduct of Respondent, are assessed as a part of the sanction in accordance with Rule 1.06(FF) of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure. Any amount not paid shall accrue interest at the maximum legal rate per annum until paid and the State Bar of Texas shall have all writs and other post-judgment remedies against Respondent in order to collect all unpaid amounts.

Publication

This suspension shall be made a matter of public record and appropriately published in accordance with the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Other Relief

All requested relief not expressly granted herein is expressly DENIED.

SIGNED this 14th day of April, 2020.

INVESTIGATORY PANEL 6-3
DISTRICT 6



ANDREW M. GOULD
PRESIDING MEMBER

AGREED AS TO FORM AND SUBSTANCE:



Paul Craig Laird, II
State Bar No. 11795420

RESPONDENT



Laurie Guerra
State Bar No. 24050696

ASSISTANT DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL