

**BEFORE EVIDENTIARY PANEL 4-1 OF THE
STATE BAR DISTRICT NO. 4 GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE**

FILED

09/17/2020



**Houston Office
Chief Disciplinary Counsel**

COMMISSION FOR LAWYER DISCIPLINE, Petitioner,	§ § § § § § §	201901598 [VALDEZ]
v.		
JEFFREY EARL CREWS, Respondent.		HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

JUDGMENT OF DISBARMENT

Parties and Appearance

On August 20, 2020, came to be heard the above styled and numbered cause. Petitioner, Commission for Lawyer Discipline, appeared by and through its attorney of record and announced ready. Respondent, Jeffrey Earl Crews, Texas Bar Number 24012475, although duly served with the Evidentiary Petition and notice of this default and sanctions hearing, failed to appear.

Jurisdiction and Venue

Evidentiary Panel 4-1, having been duly appointed to hear this complaint by the chair of the Grievance Committee for State Bar of Texas District No. 4, finds that it has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of this action and that venue is proper.

Default

The Evidentiary Panel finds that Respondent was properly served with the Evidentiary Petition and that Respondent failed to timely file a responsive pleading to the Evidentiary Petition as required by Rule 2.17(B) of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure. Accordingly, the Evidentiary Panel finds Respondent in default and further finds that all facts alleged in the Evidentiary Petition are deemed true pursuant to Rule 2.17(C) of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Professional Misconduct

The Evidentiary Panel, having deemed all facts as alleged in the Evidentiary Petition true, finds Respondent has committed Professional Misconduct as defined by Rule 1.06(CC) of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Findings of Fact

The Evidentiary Panel, having considered the allegations as deemed true, the pleadings, evidence and argument of counsel, makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law:

1. Respondent is an attorney licensed to practice law in Texas and is a member of the State Bar of Texas.
2. Respondent maintains his principal place of practice in Harris County, Texas.
3. In representing a Dora Valdez, Respondent neglected a legal matter entrusted to him.
4. In representing a Dora Valdez, Respondent frequently failed to carry out completely the obligations he owed to Dora. Valdez.
5. Respondent failed to keep Dora Valdez reasonably informed about the status of her legal matter and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information.
6. Respondent failed to explain a legal matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit Dora Valdez to make informed decisions regarding the representation.
7. Upon termination of representation, Respondent failed to refund advance payments of fee that had not been earned.
8. Respondent failed to timely furnish to the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel a response or other information as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.
9. The Chief Disciplinary Counsel of the State Bar of Texas has incurred reasonable attorneys' fees in the amount of \$875.00 and direct expenses in the amount of \$605.00 associated with this Disciplinary Proceeding.
10. Respondent owes restitution in the amount of \$2,500.00 payable to Dora Valdez.

Conclusions of Law

The Evidentiary Panel concludes that, based on foregoing findings of fact, the following Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct have been violated: Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.01(b)(2), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8).

Sanction

The Evidentiary Panel, having found that Respondent has committed Professional Misconduct, heard and considered additional evidence regarding the appropriate sanction to be imposed against Respondent. After hearing all sanction evidence and argument, the Evidentiary Panel finds that the proper discipline of the Respondent for each act of Professional Misconduct is Disbarment.

Disbarment

It is therefore ORDERED, ADJUDGED, and DECREED that effective the date of this judgment, Respondent, Jeffrey Earl Crews, State Bar Number 24012475, is hereby DISBARRED from the practice of law in the State of Texas.

It is further ORDERED that Respondent is prohibited from practicing law in Texas, holding himself out as an attorney at law, performing any legal services for others, accepting any fee directly or indirectly for legal services, appearing as counsel or in any representative capacity in any proceeding in any Texas court or before any administrative body or holding himself out to others or using his name, in any manner, in conjunction with the words "attorney at law," "attorney," "counselor at law," or "lawyer."

Notification

It is further ORDERED that Respondent shall immediately notify each of his current clients in writing of this disbarment. In addition to such notification, Respondent is ORDERED to return

any files, papers, unearned monies and other property belonging to clients and former clients in the Respondent's possession to the respective clients or former clients or to another attorney at the client's or former client's request.

Respondent is further ORDERED to file with the State Bar of Texas, Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701) within thirty (30) days of the signing of this judgment by the Panel Chair, an affidavit stating that all current clients have been notified of Respondent's disbarment and that all files, papers, monies and other property belonging to all clients and former clients have been returned as ordered herein. If it is Respondent's assertion that at the time of disbarment he possessed no current clients and/or Respondent was not in possession of any files, papers, monies or other property belonging to clients, Respondent shall submit an affidavit attesting that, at the time of suspension, Respondent had no current clients and did not possess any files, papers monies and other property belonging to clients.

It is further ORDERED that Respondent shall, on or before thirty (30) days from the signing of this judgment by the Panel Chair, notify in writing each and every justice of the peace, judge, magistrate, administrative judge or officer and chief justice of each and every court or tribunal in which Respondent has any matter pending of the terms of this judgment, the style and cause number of the pending matter(s), and the name, address and telephone number of the client(s) Respondent is representing.

Respondent is further ORDERED to file with the State Bar of Texas, Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701) within thirty (30) days of the signing of this judgment by the Panel Chair, an affidavit stating that each and every justice of the peace, judge, magistrate, administrative judge or officer

and chief justice has received written notice of the terms of this judgment. If it is Respondent's assertion that at the time of suspension he was not currently listed as counsel or co-counsel in any matter pending before any justice of the peace, judge, magistrate, administrative judge or officer, or chief justice of any court or tribunal, Respondent shall submit an affidavit attesting to the absence of any such pending matter before any justice of the peace, judge, magistrate, administrative judge or officer, or chief justice.

Surrender of License

It is further ORDERED that Respondent shall, within thirty (30) days of the signing of this judgment by the Panel Chair, surrender his law license and permanent State Bar Card to the State Bar of Texas, Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701), to be forwarded to the Supreme Court of the State of Texas.

Restitution, Attorneys' Fees and Expenses

It is further ORDERED that Respondent shall pay restitution on or before November 1, 2020, to Dora Valdez in the amount of \$2,500.00. Respondent shall pay the restitution by certified or cashier's check or money order made payable to Dora Valdez and delivered to the State Bar of Texas, Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701).

It is further ORDERED Respondent shall pay all reasonable and necessary attorneys' fees in the amount of \$875.00 and direct expenses in the amount of \$605.00 to the State Bar of Texas. The payment shall be due and payable on or before November 1, 2020, and shall be made by certified or cashier's check or money order. Respondent shall forward the funds, made payable to the State Bar of Texas, to the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, P.O. Box 12487, Austin,

TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701).

It is further ORDERED that all amounts ordered herein are due to the misconduct of Respondent and 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

It is further ORDERED this disbarment shall be made a matter of record and appropriately published in accordance with the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Conditions Precedent to Reinstatement

It is further ORDERED that payment of the foregoing restitution and attorneys' fees and expenses shall be a condition precedent to any consideration of reinstatement from disbarment as provided by Rules 2.19, 2.20 and 11.02(D) of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Other Relief

All requested relief not expressly granted herein is expressly DENIED.

SIGNED this 17th day of September, 2020.

**EVIDENTIARY PANEL 4-1
DISTRICT NO. 4
STATE BAR OF TEXAS**



**TESHA M. PEEPLES
Panel 4-1 Presiding Member**