

BEFORE THE DISTRICT 7 GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE  
EVIDENTIARY PANEL 7-1  
STATE BAR OF TEXAS

COMMISSION FOR LAWYER  
DISCIPLINE,  
Petitioner

V.

DEATRIA MECHELE NORFLEET,  
Respondent

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CASE NO. 201804759

**AGREED JUDGMENT OF FULLY PROBATED SUSPENSION**

**Parties and Appearance**

On this day, came to be heard the above-styled and numbered cause. Petitioner, Commission for Lawyer Discipline (Petitioner), and Respondent, **DEATRIA MECHELE NORFLEET** (Respondent), Texas Bar Number **15078100**, announce that an agreement has been reached on all matters including the imposition of a Probated Suspension.

**Jurisdiction and Venue**

The Evidentiary Panel 7-1, having been duly appointed to hear this complaint by the chair of the Grievance Committee for State Bar of Texas District 7, finds that it has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of this action, and that venue is proper.

**Professional Misconduct**

The Evidentiary Panel, having considered the pleadings, 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 Evidentiary 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 resides in and maintains her principal place of practice in Tarrant County, Texas.
3. In or about August 2016, Complainant Mae Johnson (Johnson) retained Respondent for representation in Johnson's effort to obtain the title to a certain condominium. Johnson paid an advanced legal fee of \$2,000 to Respondent.
4. Respondent provided financial assistance to Johnson by paying the mortgage and back-owed taxes on the condominium to prevent the foreclosure of the condominium. Respondent also agreed to pay the up-front costs to repair and improve the condominium in exchange for reimbursement by the proceeds of the sale of the condominium. Further, Respondent began leasing the condominium to tenants and collecting rent money, without Johnson's knowledge, permission, or approval.
5. Respondent entered into a business transaction with Johnson, but the transaction and terms were not fully disclosed to Johnson and Johnson did not consent in writing to the business transaction entered into with Respondent.
6. Respondent failed to promptly deliver to Johnson funds that Johnson was entitled to receive.
7. Respondent engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation.
8. Respondent owes restitution in the amount of Two Thousand and no/100 Dollars (\$2,000.00) payable to Mae Johnson.
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 and no/100 Dollars (\$500.00).

### **Conclusions of Law**

Petitioner and Respondent agree that, based on the foregoing findings of fact, the following Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct have been violated.

Accordingly, the Evidentiary Panel concludes that the following Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct have been violated: 1.08(a), 1.08(d), 1.14(b), and 8.04(a)(3).

### **Sanction**

It is **AGREED** and **ORDERED** that the sanction of a Probated Suspension shall be imposed against Respondent in accordance with 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 two (2) years, with the suspension being fully probated pursuant to the terms stated below. The period of probated suspension shall begin on January 1, 2021, and shall end on December 31, 2023.

### **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 address 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 Mae Johnson in the amount of Two Thousand and no/100 Dollars (\$2,000.00). Respondent shall pay the restitution by certified or cashier's check or money order made payable to Mae Johnson, and delivered contemporaneously with the signing of this judgment to the State Bar of Texas, 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 and no/100 Dollars (\$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 delivered contemporaneously with the signing of this judgment to the State Bar of Texas, 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 Rule 2.22 of 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 Mae Johnson in the amount of Two Thousand and no/100 Dollars (\$2,000.00). Respondent shall pay the restitution by certified or cashier's check or money order made payable to Mae Johnson, and delivered contemporaneously with the signing of this judgment to the State Bar of Texas, 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 and no/100 Dollars (\$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 delivered contemporaneously with the signing of this judgment to the State Bar of Texas, 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 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 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2020.

**EVIDENTIARY PANEL 7-1  
DISTRICT NO. 7  
STATE BAR OF TEXAS**



**GERALD PRUITT**  
District 7, Panel 7-1 Presiding Member

**AGREED AS TO BOTH FORM AND SUBSTANCE:**



Deatria Mechele Norfleet  
State Bar No. 15078100  
**Respondent**



Rachel Craig  
State Bar No. 24090049  
**Counsel for Petitioner**



Leon Haley, Jr.  
State Bar No. 08740560  
**Counsel for Respondent**