

**BEFORE THE DISTRICT 14 GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE  
EVIDENTIARY PANEL 14-2  
STATE BAR OF TEXAS**

**COMMISSION FOR LAWYER  
DISCIPLINE,  
Petitioner**

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**V.**

**CASE NO. 202104147**

**JAMES BRUCE HARRIS  
Respondent**

**DEFAULT JUDGMENT OF PARTIALLY PROBATED SUSPENSION**

**Parties and Appearance**

On October 27, 2023, 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, **JAMES BRUCE HARRIS**, Texas Bar Number **24026926**, although duly served with the Evidentiary Petition and notice of this default and sanctions hearing, failed to appear.

**Jurisdiction and Venue**

The Evidentiary Panel 14-2, having been duly appointed to hear this complaint by the chair of the Grievance Committee for State Bar of Texas District 14, 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 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 resides in and maintains his principal place of practice in Wichita County, Texas.
3. On or about June 18, 2020, James Bruce Harris (Respondent) was hired to represent Complainant, Amanda Brown (Brown), on a criminal charge for Driving While Intoxicated. Respondent was paid \$1,500 for the legal representation.
4. During the representation, Respondent failed to explain the criminal matter to Brown to the extent reasonably necessary to permit Brown to make informed decisions regarding the representation. Respondent also failed to explain discovery matters to Brown regarding the criminal case.
5. 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 Two Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$2,300).

### **Conclusions of Law**

The Evidentiary Panel concludes that, based upon the foregoing findings of fact, the following Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct have been violated: 1.03(b).

### **Sanction**

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

discipline of the Respondent for each act of Professional Misconduct is a Partially Probated Suspension.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED, ADJUDGED, and DECREED that Respondent be suspended from the practice of law for a period of twenty-four (24) months, beginning December 1, 2023, and ending November 30, 2025. Respondent shall be actively suspended from the practice of law for a period of twelve (12) months beginning December 1, 2023, and ending November 29, 2024. If Respondent complies with all of the following terms and conditions timely, the twelve (12) month period of probated suspension shall begin November 30, 2024, and shall end on November 30, 2025:

1. Respondent shall pay all reasonable and necessary attorney's fees and direct expenses to the State Bar of Texas in the amount of Two Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$2,300). The payment shall be due and payable on or before December 1, 2023, 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, Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701).
2. Respondent shall make contact with the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Offices' Compliance Monitor at 512-427-1334 and Special Programs Coordinator at 512-427-1343, not later than seven (7) days after receipt of a copy of this judgment to coordinate Respondent's compliance.

Should Respondent fail to comply with all of the above terms and conditions timely, Respondent shall remain actively suspended until the date of compliance or until November 30, 2025, whichever occurs first.

### **Terms of Active Suspension**

It is further ORDERED that during the term of active suspension ordered herein, or that maybe imposed upon Respondent by the Board of Disciplinary Appeals as a result of a probation revocation proceeding, Respondent shall be 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 or Federal 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."

It is further ORDERED that, or before December 1, 2023, Respondent shall notify each of Respondent's current clients and opposing counsel in writing of this suspension.

In addition to such notification, it is further ORDERED Respondent shall return any files, papers, unearned monies and other property belonging to current clients in Respondent's possession to the respective clients or to another attorney at the client's request.

It is further ORDERED Respondent shall file with the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701) on or before December 1, 2023, an affidavit stating all current clients and opposing counsel have been notified of Respondent's suspension and that all files, papers, monies and other property belonging to all current clients have been returned as ordered herein. If it is Respondent's assertion that at the time of suspension 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 Respondent shall, on or before December 1, 2023, 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.

It is further ORDERED Respondent shall file with the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary

Counsel's Office, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701), on or before December 1, 2023, an affidavit stating Respondent has notified in writing each and every justice of the peace, judge, magistrate, and chief justice of each and every court 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 in Court. 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.

It is further ORDERED that, on or before December 1, 2023, Respondent shall surrender his law license and permanent State Bar Card to the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701), to be forwarded to the Supreme Court of Texas.

### **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 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 make contact with the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Offices' Compliance Monitor at 512-427-1334 and Special Programs Coordinator at 512-427-1343, 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.

### **Attorney's Fees and Expenses**

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 Two Thousand Three Hundred

Dollars (\$2,300). The payment shall be due and payable on or before December 1, 2023, 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 Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, 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, 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.

It is further ORDERED that Respondent shall remain actively suspended from the practice of law as set out above until such time as Respondent has completely paid attorney fees and direct expenses in the amount of Two Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$2,300) to the State Bar of Texas.

**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 8th day of November, 2023.

**EVIDENTIARY PANEL 14-2  
DISTRICT NO. 14  
STATE BAR OF TEXAS**

*Amie S. Peace*  
**Amie S. Peace  
District No. 14, Panel 14-2  
Presiding Member**