

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Contact the Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel at 877-953-5535, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals at 512-427-1578 or txboda.org, or the State Commission on Judicial Conduct at 512-463-5533. Some attorneys might share the same or similar names. To identify an attorney, please verify using that attorney's bar card number. Go to texasbar.com and use the "Find a Lawyer" tool to search for an attorney.

JUDICIAL ACTIONS

To read the entire public sanctions, go to scjc.texas.gov.

On February 7, 2025, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct issued a public admonition to **LAURINE BLAKE**, judge of the 336th District Court in Bonham, Fannin County.

BODA

On January 8, 2025, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals entered a judgment of suspension in the reciprocal discipline case against Colorado Springs, Colorado, attorney **TARA EDEN LATUS** [#24062825]. On April 3, 2024, an order approving stipulation to discipline under C.R.C.P. 242.19(c) was entered by the presiding disciplinary judge for the Supreme Court, State of Colorado in the matter styled *The People of the State of Colorado v. Tara Eden Latus, #51871*, Case Number 23PDJ058, in which Latus was suspended from the practice of law for three years. Latus agreed she violated Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct 1.15A(a) (failure to maintain client funds separate from personal funds), 1.15B(a)(1) (failure to maintain trust account), 1.16(d) (failure to return unearned fees), 3.4(c) (disobeying a court order), 5.5(a)(1) (unauthorized practice of law), and 8.4(c) (dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation). She is suspended for three years beginning January 8, 2025, and extending through January 7, 2028. BODA Case No. 69924.

On August 14, 2023, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals issued a judgment in the appeal filed by Fort Worth attorney **ANNETTE R. LOYD** [#16731100]. The board affirmed the default judgment of active suspension issued by an evidentiary panel of the District 7 Grievance Committee of the State Bar of Texas on November

18, 2022. The evidentiary panel found that Loyd violated Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct 8.04(a)(7) (violation of disciplinary judgment) and 8.04(a)(8) (failure to respond to grievance). Loyd is suspended for 36 months beginning November 2, 2022, and ending October 31, 2025. On December 20, 2024, the Supreme Court of Texas affirmed the judgment, and on February 14, 2025, denied Loyd's motion for rehearing. [Case No. 23-0684]. BODA Case No. 67358.

SUSPENSIONS

On February 4, 2025, **TROY J. WILSON** [#00786356], of Richmond, accepted a two-year fully probated suspension beginning February 3, 2025, and ending February 2, 2027. An evidentiary panel of the District 5

Grievance Committee found that Wilson neglected the legal matter entrusted to him.

Wilson violated Rule 1.01(b)(1). He was ordered to pay \$1,000 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On January 21, 2025, **RAGAN SIERRA MORENO** [#24121741], of Dallas, agreed to a 36-month active suspension effective January 1, 2025. An evidentiary panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that on or about September 9, 2023, Moreno, while serving as a public defender for the Dallas County Public Defender's Office, misused her county-provided work computer to access restricted search engines to view criminal records, including probable cause affidavits that contained victim information. Moreno disclosed the

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criminal case information, which included the names of complaining witnesses, to Moreno's former client, who Moreno represented in a prior criminal matter and thereafter pursued a romantic relationship. Thereafter, the improperly obtained information Moreno disclosed was used by Moreno's client to contact the assault victim in the client's brother's pending criminal matter in a threatening manner.

Moreno violated Rule 8.04(a)(2). She was ordered to pay \$1,000 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On February 5, 2025, **ASHLEY JANE PALL WEATHERSBY** [#24067813], of Port O'Connor, received a one-year fully probated suspension effective February 15, 2025. The 24th Judicial District Court of Calhoun County found that Weathersby committed professional misconduct by violating Rules 1.15(d) [failing to return the

unearned portion of the fee], 1.14(a) [failing to keep money in a trust account], and 8.04(a)(8) [failing to file a response].

Weathersby was ordered to pay \$3,500 in restitution and \$800 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

PUBLIC REPRIMANDS

On February 7, 2025, **CARLOS DANTES MEJIAS JR.** [#24094841], of Houston, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Mejias entered into a business transaction with his client wherein the transaction and terms were not fair and reasonable and were not fully disclosed in a manner which could have been reasonably understood by his client. The client was also not given a reasonable opportunity to seek

the advice of independent counsel and moreover, did not consent in writing to the business transaction.

Mejias violated Rule 1.08(a). He was ordered to pay \$1,500 in attorneys' fees.

On February 19, 2025, **PATRICK CORDERO** [#00787286], of Midland, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 16 Grievance Committee found that Cordero failed to keep attorneys' fees paid by his client in a trust account separate from his personal property.

Cordero violated Rule 1.14(a). He agreed to pay \$800 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

PRIVATE REPRIMANDS

Listed here is a breakdown of Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct violations for nine attorneys, with the number in parentheses indicating the frequency of the violation. Please note that an attorney may be reprimanded for more than one rule violation.

1.01(b)(1)—In representing a client, a lawyer shall not neglect a legal matter entrusted to the lawyer (5).

1.03(a)—A lawyer shall keep a client reasonably informed about the status of a matter and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information (6).

1.03(b)—A lawyer shall explain a matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the client to make informed decisions regarding the representation (3).

1.14(a)—A lawyer shall hold funds and other property belonging in whole or in part to clients or third persons that are in a lawyer's possession in connection with a representation separate from the lawyer's own property. Such funds shall be kept in a separate account, designated as a "trust" or "escrow" account, maintained in the state where the lawyer's office is

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situated, or elsewhere with the consent of the client or third person. Other client property shall be identified as such and appropriately safeguarded. Complete records of such account funds and other property shall be kept by the lawyer and shall be preserved for a period of five years after termination of the representation (1).

1.14(b)—Upon receiving funds or other property in which a client or third person has an interest, a lawyer shall promptly notify the client or third person. Except as stated in this rule or otherwise permitted by law or by agreement with the client, a lawyer shall promptly deliver to the client or third person any funds or other property that the client or third person is entitled to receive and, upon request by the client or third person, shall promptly render a full accounting regarding such property (1).

1.15(d)—Upon termination of representation, a lawyer shall take steps to the extent reasonably practicable to protect a client’s interests, such as giving reasonable notice to the client, allowing time for employment of other counsel, surrendering papers and property to which the client is entitled, and refunding any advance payments of fees that have not been earned. The lawyer may retain papers relating to the client to the extent permitted by other law only if such retention will not prejudice the client in the subject matter of the representation (3).

4.04(a)—In representing a client, for using means that have no substantial purpose other than to embarrass, delay, or burden a third person, or use methods of obtaining evidence that violate the legal right of such a person (1).

8.04(a)(8)—A lawyer shall not

fail to timely furnish to the Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel or a district grievance committee a response or other information as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure, unless he or she in good faith timely asserts a privilege or other legal ground for failure to do so (2).

8.04(a)(11)—A lawyer shall not engage in the practice of law when the lawyer is on inactive status, except as permitted by section 81.053 of the Government Code and Article XIII of the State Bar Rules, or when the lawyer’s right to practice has been suspended or terminated, including, but not limited to, situations where a lawyer’s right to practice has been administratively suspended for failure to timely pay required fees or assessments or for failure to comply with Article XII of the State Bar Rules relating to Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (1). **TBJ**

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