

COMMISSION FOR LAWYER DISCIPLINE

REPORT

TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ON
ATTORNEY DISCIPLINE

APRIL 2021

Disciplinary Sanctions
12/01/2020 - 02/28/2021

DISBARMENTS	District	# of Complaints Resolved
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Board of Disciplinary Appeals:

Cortese, Perry	BODA	1
Total:	1	1

RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	District	# of Complaints Resolved
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Board of Disciplinary Appeals:

Young, John S.	BODA	1
Total:	1	1

SUSPENSIONS	District	# of Complaints Resolved
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Arkuss, Brett Newton	9	1
Chase, Arthur Scot	4	1
Cosey, Henri M	5	1
Djiba, Pape Malick Indiss	8	1
Ferguson, Roland M. Jr.	1	1
Hammond, Charles E. III	4	4
Hammond, Charles E. III	4	3
Hammond, Charles E. III	4	2
Hammond, Charles E. III	4	4
Hatchett, Byron William	14	1
Hoffman, Sarah Gwynne	14	2
Hoffman, Sarah Gwynne	14	1
Hoffman, Sarah Gwynne	14	1

Hoffman, Sarah Gwynne	14	2
Luna, Joe Luis	12	1
Luna, Joe Luis	12	1
Mastriani, John Victor	4	4
Mastriani, John Victor	4	4
Mastriani, John Victor	4	4
Molina, Juan R.	12	1
Norfleet, Deatria Mechele	7	1
Norman, Marcus Donnell	1	1
Sadick, Jan Laurence	4	1
Saenz, David	12	1
Sanchez-Akers, Renee A	14	1
Schaefer, Stephen Langton	15	1
Stein, Jerome Neal	6	1
Teeter, Gregory Allen	11	2
Teeter, Gregory Allen	11	1
Thering, Daniel Robert	9	1
Thering, Daniel Robert	9	1
Villalobos, Jaime A.	17	1

Board of Disciplinary Appeals:

Nolte, Shasta Marie	BODA	1
Odle, Robert Phillip	BODA	1
Odle, Robert Phillip	BODA	1

Total:	35	56
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PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	District	# of Complaints Resolved
Anapolsky, Jeffrey Mark	4	1
AuClair, Devin Michelle	7	1
Diaz, Tony	9	1
Hall, Michael Isaac	14	1
Howen, Stephen Dale	8	1
Levy, Glenn Deutsch	12	2
Nalbantov, Ivan Trifonov	6	1
Portley, Kirby Jerome	10	1
Sinoski, Syria	4	1
Stickels, John William	7	1
Thering, Daniel Robert	9	1
West, John David Jr.	3	1
Total:	12	13

PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	Grievance Comm.	# of Sanctions	# of Complaints Resolved
	1	1	1
	3	1	1
	4	2	2
	5	1	1
	6	9	9
	7	1	1
	10	2	2
	11	3	3
	12	3	3
	14	2	2
	15	3	3
	17	1	1
Total:		29	29
Grievance Referral Program		16	16
Grand Total:		94	116

Disciplinary Actions - Current Bar Year

BAR YEARS 2020-2021	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	11	31
RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	9	20
SUSPENSIONS	78	108
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	26	31
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	75	77
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	53	53
Total:	252	320

*does not reflect year-end figures/summary data includes ytd

Disciplinary Actions - Previous Bar Year

BAR YEARS 2019-2020	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	21	28
RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	9	35
SUSPENSIONS	140	188
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	39	41
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	106	115
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	86	88
Total:	401	495

BAR YEARS 2018-2019	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	14	38
RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	17	88
SUSPENSIONS	152	209
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	32	39
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	124	138
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	74	81
Total:	413	593

BAR YEARS 2017-2018	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	21	49
RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	23	103
SUSPENSIONS	113	159
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	25	29
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	70	74
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	79	80
Total:	331	494

BAR YEARS 2016-2017	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	21	63
RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	28	124
SUSPENSIONS	126	182
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	30	37
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	90	98
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	50	50
Total:	345	554

BAR YEARS 2015-2016	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	22	61
RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	27	146
SUSPENSIONS	132	205
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	30	33
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	67	72
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	47	47
Total:	325	564

BAR YEARS 2014-2015	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	27	56
RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	19	56
SUSPENSIONS	113	147
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	32	36
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	66	72
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	63	71
Total:	320	438

BAR YEARS 2013-2014	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	22	41
RESIGNATIONS IN LIEU OF DISCIPLINE	17	59
SUSPENSIONS	130	169
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	31	35
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	63	70
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	58	58
Total:	321	432

BAR YEARS 2012-2013	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	39	51
RESIGNATIONS	24	46
SUSPENSIONS	122	160
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	37	40
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	89	91
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	56	56
Total:	367	444

BAR YEARS 2011-2012	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	38	45
RESIGNATIONS	27	87
SUSPENSIONS	137	174
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	40	41
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	106	115
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	54	54
Total:	402	516

BAR YEARS 2010-2011	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	28	52
RESIGNATIONS	23	101
SUSPENSIONS	157	254
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	40	50
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	77	82
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	46	46
Total:	371	584

BAR YEARS 2009-2010	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	25	33
RESIGNATIONS	22	40
SUSPENSIONS	111	169
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	37	47
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	81	89
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	39	39
Total:	315	417

BAR YEARS 2008-2009	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	32	43
RESIGNATIONS	26	104
SUSPENSIONS	127	189
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	46	54
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	68	73
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	36	36
Total:	335	499

BAR YEARS 2007-2008	Total Sanctions	Total Complaints Resolved
DISBARMENTS	24	63
RESIGNATIONS	24	90
SUSPENSIONS	121	224
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	28	35
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	69	73
GRIEVANCE REFERRAL PROGRAM	33	33
Total:	299	518

BAR YEARS 2006-2007	Total Sanctions
DISBARMENTS	30
RESIGNATIONS	31
SUSPENSIONS	110
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	62
PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	87
Total:	320

DISTRICT 1:

Ferguson, Roland M. Jr.: #00786425
12/07/2020-Partially Probated Suspension
07/15/2023-01/14/2025: SUSPENSION
01/15/2025-07/14/2025: PROBATED

On December 7, 2020, **Roland M. Ferguson, Jr.** [#00786425], 65, of Hopkins, received a 24-month partially probated suspension, effective July 15, 2023, with the first 18 months actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 1 Grievance Committee found that starting in June 2013, the Complainant retained Ferguson for various representations of herself, her son, and her son's common law wife. In representing the son, Ferguson neglected the legal matters entrusted to him by failing to file a petition for divorce or for modification of custody, and by failing to enter appearances in criminal matters. Ferguson also failed to communicate with Complainant. Ferguson represented the Complainant and her son in a substantially related matter adverse to his former client. Ferguson failed to hold funds belonging to the Complainant that were in Ferguson's possession in connection with the representation separate from his own property. Ferguson also failed to keep funds in a separate trust account. Upon termination of representation, Ferguson failed to surrender papers and property to which the Complainant was entitled. Upon termination of representation, Ferguson failed to refund advance payments of fee that had not been earned. Ferguson also engaged in the practice of law when his right to practice had been suspended.

Ferguson violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.09(a)(3), 1.14(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(11). He was ordered to pay \$3,193.50 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses and \$15,500.00 in restitution.

Norman, Marcus Donnell: #24007759
02/12/2021-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
02/15/2021-02/14/2022: PROBATED

On February 12, 2021, **Marcus Donnell Norman** [#24007759], 50, of McKinney, agreed to a 12-month fully probated suspension, effective February 15, 2021. The District 1 Grievance Committee found that a disciplinary judgment was entered August 3, 2017, that suspended Norman from the practice of law from November 1, 2017, until October 31, 2019. Norman was actively suspended from November 1, 2017, until April 30, 2018, and remaining suspension was to be probated provided that Norman complied with the terms of the judgment and remained actively suspended until July 24, 2019. Despite being actively suspended, Norman sent out a letter of representation on behalf of a client in Cause No. A05426 on September 25, 2018, and filed a petition on behalf of another client in Cause No. 401-53224-2019 pending in Collin County on May 24, 2019. Norman violated the terms of a disciplinary judgment and engaged in the practice of law while his license was actively suspended.

Norman violated Rules 8.04(a)(7), and 8.04(a)(11). He was ordered to pay \$500.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Dallas Attorney
12/11/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.01(b)(2)

In representing a client, a lawyer shall not frequently fail to carry out completely the obligations that the lawyer owes to a client or clients.

DISTRICT 3:

Houston Attorney
12/16/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 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 fee that was not earned.

Rule 8.04(a)(8)

Failed to timely furnish a district grievance committee a response or other information as required unless he/she timely asserts a privilege or other legal ground for failure to do so.

West, John David Jr.: #24029898
12/21/2020-Agreed Public Reprimand

On December 21, 2020, **John David West, Jr.** [#24029898], 46, of Beaumont, received a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 3 Grievance Committee found that West failed to keep the client reasonably informed about the status of the matter; failed to comply with reasonable requests for information, failed to refund advance payment of fees that had not been earned and failed to timely furnish to the Chief Disciplinary Counsels office a response or other information as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure. West did not, in good faith, timely assert a privilege or other legal ground for failure to do so.

West violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8) and was ordered to pay \$500.00 in attorneys' fees and costs.

DISTRICT 4:

**Anapolsky, Jeffrey Mark: #24038742
12/29/2020-Agreed Public Reprimand**

On December 29, 2020, **Jeffrey Mark Anapolsky** [#24038742], 49, of Houston, received a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Anapolsky brought or defended a proceeding, or asserted or controverted an issue therein, where there was no basis for doing so that was not frivolous. Anapolsky also accepted employment as an advocate before a tribunal in a pending adjudicatory proceeding when he knew or believed that he was or would be a witness necessary to establish an essential fact on behalf of his client. In representing his client, Anapolsky communicated about the subject of the representation with a person he knew to be represented by another lawyer regarding that subject. Anapolsky did not have the consent of the other lawyer to make the communication and was not authorized by law to make the communication. Lastly, Anapolsky used means that had no substantial purpose other than to embarrass, delay, or burden a third person, or used methods of obtaining evidence that violated the legal rights of such a person.

Anapolsky violated Rules 3.01, 3.08(a), 4.02(a), and 4.04(a).

**Chase, Arthur Scot: #04148550
12/14/2020-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
12/11/2020-01/10/2021: SUSPENSION
01/11/2021-12/10/2021: PROBATED**

On December 14, 2020, **Arthur Scot Chase** [#04148550], 60, of Houston, accepted a one-year partially probated suspension, effective December 11, 2020, with the first month actively suspended and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Chase neglected his client's case, failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of her case, failed to promptly comply with his client's reasonable requests for information, and failed to return the client's file. Additionally, Chase failed to respond to the grievance.

Chase violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$895.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

**Houston Attorney
12/12/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand**

Rule 4.04(b)(1)

Presenting, participating in presenting, or threatening to present criminal or disciplinary charges solely to gain an advantage in a civil matter.

Hammond, Charles E. III: #00793128
12/09/2020-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
01/01/2021-07/01/2021: SUSPENSION
07/02/2021-01/02/2024: PROBATED

On December 9, 2020, **Charles E. Hammond, III** [#00793128], 57, of Houston, accepted a three-year partially probated suspension [six months active and 30 months probated] effective January 1, 2021. An evidentiary panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Hammond failed to respond to a grievance without asserting a privilege or other legal ground for his failure to do so. In a second case, the panel found that Hammond neglected a legal matter entrusted to him, failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the client's legal matter and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. Hammond also upon termination of representation failed to surrender papers and property to which his client was justly entitled and failed to refund any advance payments of fee that had not been earned. Hammond failed to supervise nonlawyers at his firm and ordered, encouraged, or permitted the conduct of the nonlawyers working on his client's case and failed to respond to a grievance without asserting a privilege or other legal ground for his failure to do so. In a third a case, the panel found that Hammond neglected a legal matter entrusted to him, failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the client's legal matter and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. Hammond also upon termination of representation failed to surrender papers and property to which his client was justly entitled and failed to refund any advance payments of fee that had not been earned. Additionally, Hammond failed to respond to a grievance without asserting a privilege or other legal ground for his failure to do so. In a fourth case, the panel found that Hammond neglected a legal matter entrusted to him, failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the client's legal matter and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. Hammond also upon termination of representation failed to surrender papers and property to which his client was justly entitled and failed to refund any advance payments of fee that had not been earned. Additionally, Hammond failed to respond to a grievance without asserting a privilege or other legal ground for his failure to do so.

Hammond violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), 5.03(a), 5.03(b), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$12,400.00 in restitution and \$2,750.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Hammond, Charles E. III: #00793128
01/08/2021-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
02/01/2021-08/01/2021: SUSPENSION
08/02/2021-02/01/2024: PROBATED

On January 8, 2021, **Charles E. Hammond, III** [#00793128], 57, of Houston, accepted a three-year partially probated suspension [six months active and 30 months probated], effective February 1, 2021. In two of the cases, an evidentiary panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Hammond neglected a legal matter entrusted to him. In all of the cases, the Committee found that Hammond failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the client's legal matter and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. Hammond also upon termination of representation failed to surrender papers and property to which his clients were justly entitled and refund any advance payments of fee that had not been earned. Lastly, Hammond failed to timely respond to the grievances filed against him without asserting a privilege or other legal ground for his failure to do so.

Hammond violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$26,500.00 in restitution and \$2,750.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Hammond, Charles E. III: #00793128
12/09/2020-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
01/01/2021-07/01/2021: SUSPENSION
07/02/2021-01/02/2024: PROBATED

On December 9, 2020, **Charles E. Hammond, III** [#00793128], 57, of Houston, accepted a three-year partially probated suspension [six months active and 30 months probated], effective January 1, 2021. In both cases, an evidentiary panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Hammond neglected a legal matter entrusted to him, failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the client's legal matter and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. Hammond also upon termination of representation failed to surrender papers and property to which his clients were justly entitled and refund any advance payments of fee that had not been earned. Lastly, Hammond failed to timely respond to the grievances filed against him without asserting a privilege or other legal ground for his failure to do so.

Hammond violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$2,600.00 in restitution and \$2,750.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Hammond, Charles E. III: #00793128
01/08/2021-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
02/01/2021-08/01/2021: SUSPENSION
08/02/2021-02/01/2024: PROBATED

On January 8, 2021, **Charles E. Hammond, III** [#00793128], 57, of Houston, accepted a three-year partially probated suspension [six months active and 30 months probated], effective February 1, 2021. In all of the cases, an evidentiary panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Hammond neglected a legal matter entrusted to him, failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the client's legal matter and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. Hammond also upon termination of representation failed to surrender papers and property to which his clients were justly entitled and refund any advance payments of fee that had not been earned. Lastly, Hammond failed to timely respond to the grievances filed against him without asserting a privilege or other legal ground for his failure to do so.

Hammond violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$40,100.00 in restitution and \$2,750.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Houston Attorney
01/07/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.01(b)(1)

In representing a client, a lawyer shall not neglect a legal matter entrusted to the lawyer.

Rule 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.

Mastriani, John Victor: #13184375
01/08/2021-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
02/15/2021-05/15/2021: SUSPENSION
05/16/2021-02/15/2023: PROBATED

On January 8, 2021, **John Victor Mastriani** [#13184375], 61, of Houston, accepted a 24-month judgment of partially probated suspension, effective February 15, 2021, with the first three months actively suspended and the remainder probated. An investigatory panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that, while representing four clients, Mastriani neglected the legal matters entrusted to him, failed to keep his clients reasonably informed about the status of their matters and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information, failed to refund advance payments of fee that had not been earned, and failed to timely furnish to the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's office a response or other information as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Mastriani violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$5,750.00 in restitution and \$2,987.68 in attorneys' fees and expenses.

Mastriani, John Victor: #13184375
01/08/2021-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
02/15/2021-05/15/2021: SUSPENSION
05/16/2021-02/15/2023: PROBATED

On January 8, 2021, **John Victor Mastriani** [#13184375], 61, of Houston, accepted a 24-month judgment of partially probated suspension, effective February 15, 2021, with the first three months actively suspended and the remainder probated. An investigatory panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that, while representing four clients, Mastriani neglected the legal matters entrusted to him, failed to keep his clients reasonably informed about the status of their matters and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information, failed to refund advance payments of fee that had not been earned to three clients, and failed to timely furnish to the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's office a response or other information as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Mastriani violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$4,160.14 in restitution and \$2,042.14 in attorneys' fees and expenses.

Mastriani, John Victor: #13184375
12/10/2020-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
02/15/2021-05/15/2021: SUSPENSION
05/16/2021-02/15/2023: PROBATED

On December 10, 2020, **John Victor Mastriani** [#13184375], 61, of Houston, accepted a 24-month judgment of partially probated suspension, effective February 15, 2021, with the first three months actively suspended and the remainder probated. An investigatory panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that, while representing four clients, Mastriani neglected the legal matters entrusted to him, failed to keep his clients reasonably informed about the status of their matters and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information, failed to refund advance payments of fee that had not been earned, and failed to timely furnish to the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's office a response or other information as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Mastriani violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$6,250.00 in restitution and \$6,290.00 in attorneys' fees and expenses.

Sadick, Jan Laurence: #17508400
12/12/2020-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/01/2021-12/31/2021: PROBATED

On December 12, 2020, **Jan Laurence Sadick** [#17508400], 66, of Houston, accepted a one-year fully probated suspension, effective January 1, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Sadick failed to hold funds belonging to his client that were in Sadick's possession in connection with the representation separate from his own property and failed to promptly deliver to his client's funds that he was entitled to receive.

Sadick violated Rules 1.14(a), and 1.14(b). He was ordered to pay \$1,000.00 in attorneys' fees and expenses.

Sinoski, Syria: #24079344
01/29/2021-Agreed Public Reprimand

On January 29, 2021, **Syria Sinoski** [#24079355], 43, of Harris County, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that, in representing a client, Sinoski neglected a legal matter entrusted to her and frequently failed to carry out completely the obligations that she owed to the client.

Sinoski violated Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct 1.01(b)(1), and 1.01(b)(2). She was ordered to pay \$1,000.00 in attorneys' fees.

DISTRICT 5:

Cosey, Henri M.: #00783883

02/10/2021-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension

03/01/2021-08/31/2021: SUSPENSION

09/01/2021-02/28/2023: PROBATED

On February 10, 2021, **Henri M. Cosey** [#00783883], 66, of Fort Bend, received a two-year partially probated suspension, effective March 1, 2021, with the first six months actively suspended and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 5 Grievance Committee found that in representing Complainant in a business financial transaction, Cosey neglected the legal matter entrusted to him. Cosey failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the matter and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. Upon receiving funds or other property, Cosey failed to promptly notify the client and failed to promptly render a full accounting regarding such property.

Cosey violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), and 1.14(b). He was ordered to pay \$2,000.00 in restitution and \$1,500.00 in attorneys' fees.

Dallas Attorney

12/07/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 8.04(a)(3)

A lawyer shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty.

DISTRICT 6:

Dallas Attorney

11/20/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.02(a)(2)

Subject to paragraphs (b), (c), (d), and (e), (f), and (g), a lawyer shall abide by a client's decisions whether to accept an offer of settlement of a matter, except as otherwise authorized by law.

Rule 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.

Dallas Attorney

02/08/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 8.04(a)(3)

A lawyer shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation.

Dallas Attorney
11/17/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.01(b)(1)

In representing a client, a lawyer shall not neglect a legal matter entrusted to the lawyer.

Rule 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.

Rule 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.

Rule 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 fee that has 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.

Rule 5.03(a)

A lawyer having direct supervisory authority over the non-lawyer shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the persons conduct is compatible with the professional obligations of the lawyer.

Rule 8.04(a)(8)

A lawyer shall not fail to timely furnish to the Chief Disciplinary Councils office 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.

Dallas Attorney
02/10/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 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.

Dallas Attorney
02/24/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.01(b)(2)

In representing a client, a lawyer shall not frequently fail to carry out completely the obligations that the lawyer owes to a client or clients.

Rule 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.

Nalbantov, Ivan Trifonov: #24085491
01/04/2021-Agreed Public Reprimand

On January 4, 2021, **Ivan Trifonov Nalbantov** [#24085491], 32, of Dallas, agreed to a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that on January 6, 2020, Nalbantov entered a plea for Complainant in a misdemeanor criminal case without Complainant's knowledge or approval. The plea was entered onto the court record in Complainant's criminal case. Nalbantov failed to explain the criminal matters to Complainant to the extent reasonably necessary to permit Complainant to make informed decisions regarding the representation.

Nalbantov violated Rules 1.02(a)(3), and 1.03(b). He was ordered to pay attorneys' fees and direct expenses in the sum of \$500.00.

Stein, Jerome Neal: #19128290
01/04/2021-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
05/01/2021-10/31/2021: SUSPENSION
11/01/2021-10/31/2022: PROBATED

On January 4, 2021, **Jerome Neal Stein**. [#19128290], 62, of Dallas, received an 18-month partially probated suspension, effective May 1, 2021, with the first six months actively served and the remainder probated. An investigatory panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that starting in August 2015, the Complainant hired Stein to represent him in a divorce case. Stein failed to hold funds belonging in whole or in part to the Complainant that was in Stein's possession in connection with the representation separate from his own property. During Stein's representation of the Complainant, Stein became actively suspended from the practice of law. Stein failed to notify the Complainant of his suspension as required. Stein also failed to respond to the grievance.

Stein violated Rules 1.03(b), 1.14(a), 8.04(a)(7), 8.04(a)(8), and 8.04(a)(10). He was ordered to pay \$1,125.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Dallas Attorney
02/12/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.01(b)(2)

In representing a client, a lawyer shall not: Frequently fail to carry out completely the obligations that the lawyer owes to a client or clients.

Rule 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.

Dallas Attorney
02/12/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.01(b)(2)

In representing a client, a lawyer shall not: Frequently fail to carry out completely the obligations that the lawyer owes to a client or clients.

Rule 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.

Dallas Attorney
01/29/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 5.04(a)

A lawyer or law firm shall not share or promise to share legal fees with a non-lawyer, except that: (1) an agreement by a lawyer with the lawyer's firm, partner, or associate, or a lawful court order, may provide for the payment of money, over a reasonable period of time, to the lawyer's estate to or for the benefit of the lawyer's heirs or personal representatives, beneficiaries, or former spouse, after the lawyer's death or as otherwise provided by law or court order. (2) a lawyer who undertakes to complete unfinished legal business of a deceased lawyer may pay to the estate of the deceased lawyer that proportion of the total compensation which fairly represents the services rendered by the deceased lawyer; and (3) a lawyer or law firm may include non-lawyer employees in a retirement plan, even though the plan is based in whole or in part on a profit-sharing arrangement.

DISTRICT 7:

AuClair, Devin Michelle: #24069065
01/07/2021-Agreed Public Reprimand

On January 7, 2021, **Devin Michelle AuClair** [#24069065], 34, of Fort Worth, agreed to a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 7 Grievance Committee found that in 2018, AuClair was representing Complainant in criminal matters. Complainant had a court-ordered bond condition of "Do not possess or consume any alcoholic beverage." During her representation of Complainant, AuClair and Complainant drank alcoholic beverages together on multiple occasions. Complainant had a court-ordered bond condition of "No contact with [victims] in any manner, including third party contact."

During her representation of Complainant, AuClair socialized with Complainant and the victims together on multiple occasions, during which drinking alcoholic beverages by the adults was involved. AuClair assisted Complainant in engaging in conduct that she knew was fraudulent. AuClair engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation.

AuClair violated Rules 1.02(c), and 8.04(a)(3). She was ordered to pay attorneys' fees and direct expenses in the sum of \$500.00.

Dallas Attorney
01/29/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 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.

Dallas Attorney
01/13/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 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.

Norfleet, Deatria Mechele: #15078100
12/09/2020-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/01/2021-12/31/2023: PROBATED

On December 9, 2020, **Deatria Mechele Norfleet** [#15078100], 43, of Tarrant County, agreed to a two-year fully probated suspension, effective January 1, 2021. The District 7 Grievance Committee found that in or about August 2016, Complainant retained Norfleet for representation in Complainant's effort to obtain the title to a certain condominium. Complainant paid an advanced legal fee of \$2,000.00 to Norfleet. Norfleet provided financial assistance to the Complainant by paying the mortgage and back-owed taxes on the condominium to prevent the foreclosure of the condominium. Norfleet also agreed to pay the upfront costs to repair and improve the condominium in exchange for reimbursement by the proceeds of the sale of the condominium. Further, Norfleet began leasing the condominium to tenants and collecting rent money, without the Complainant's knowledge, permission, or approval. Norfleet entered into a business transaction with the Complainant, but the transaction and terms were not fully disclosed to the Complainant and the Complainant did not consent in writing to the business transaction entered into with Norfleet. Norfleet failed to promptly deliver funds that the Complainant was entitled to receive. Norfleet engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation.

Norfleet violated Rules 1.08(a), 1.08(d), 1.14(b), and 8.04(a)(3). She was ordered to pay \$500.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses and \$2,000.00 in restitution.

Stickels, John William: #19225300
01/15/2021-Agreed Public Reprimand

On January 15, 2020, **John William Stickels** [#19225300], 63, of Arlington, received a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 7 Grievance Committee found that in April 2016, Stickels was hired to represent Complainant in a criminal appeal. Stickels neglected the legal matter entrusted to him by failing to correct and resubmit a writ of certiorari petition that the Supreme Court rejected for inadequacies. In addition, Stickels failed to explain the legal matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit Complainant to make informed decisions regarding the representation. Further, Stickels failed to hold funds in connection with the representation belonging in whole or in part to Complainant separate from Stickels own property.

Stickels violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(b), and 1.14(a). He was ordered to pay \$2,500.00 in restitution and \$500.00 in attorneys' fees and costs.

DISTRICT 8:

Djiba, Pape Malick Indiss: #24087430
12/11/2020-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
12/15/2020-12/14/2021: PROBATED

On December 11, 2020, **Pape Malick Indiss Djiba** [#24087430], 34, of Austin, accepted a one-year fully probated suspension, effective December 15, 2020. An investigatory panel of the District 8 Grievance Committee found that in September 2017, Complainant hired Djiba to represent her in a personal injury case arising from a vehicle car accident, in which Complainant was a passenger. Initially, Djiba represented both Complainant and the driver against a third-party motorist involved in the accident and the driver's insurance company. In October 1, 2019, Djiba terminated his representation of Complainant and gifted Complainant \$45.00 to seek new counsel. On November 25, 2019, Complainant hired a new attorney who attempted to contact Djiba, to no avail. During the course of Djiba's representation of Complainant, Djiba knowingly failed to respond to a No-Evidence Motion for Summary Judgment filed by the third-party motorist. Djiba also failed to notify Complainant or Complainant's new attorney that a summary judgment hearing was set for December 5, 2019. On December 5, 2019, Djiba settled the driver's claim against the third-party motorist for \$2,900.00. Djiba also settled Complainant's claim for \$100.00, lacking Complainant's consent and having previously terminated their client-attorney relationship. On February 3, 2020, Djiba sent a demand letter, purportedly on Complainant's behalf, to the driver's insurance company without Complainant's consent and a waiver of conflict of interest from the driver.

The Grievance Committee found that Djiba violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.02(a), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.06(b)(1), 1.06(b)(2), 1.06(e), and 1.08(d) of the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, Article X, Section 9, State Bar Rules.

Howen, Stephen Dale: #10117800
02/24/2021-Agreed Public Reprimand

On February 24, 2021, **Stephen Dale Howen** [#10117800], 60, of Waco, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 8 Grievance Committee found that on August 15, 2018, Complainant paid Howen a \$500.00 fee to file a long-term care claim with the Veterans Affairs on behalf of Complainant's in-laws. During his representation of Complainant's in-laws, Howen neglected the matter by failing to file a long-term care claim and keeping Complainant informed of the matter, despite Complainant's requests. Howen also failed to file a response to Complainant's complaint.

Howen violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), and 8.04(a)(8) of the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, Article X, Section 9, State Bar Rules. Howen was ordered to pay \$500.00 in restitution.

DISTRICT 9:

Arkuss, Brett Newton: #24071949
12/11/2020-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/01/2021-06/30/2021: PROBATED

On December 11, 2020, **Brett Newton Arkuss** [#24071949], 40, of Providence, Rhode Island, accepted a six-month fully probated suspension, effective January 1, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that from October 28, 2013, through February 6, 2015, Arkuss was an Associate at Adler, Pollack & Sheehan, P.C. in Providence, Rhode Island. On October 31, 2016, Arkuss was hired as a contract attorney at Hinckley, Allen and Snyder, a law firm in Providence, Rhode Island. Arkuss continued in that position until February 17, 2017, at which time he became a Corporate Associate for the firm. In March of 2019, Arkuss left Hinckley, Allen and Snyder and accepted a position as Senior Counsel at Duffy and Sweeney, Ltd., located in Providence Rhode Island. At all three Rhode Island law firms, Arkuss engaged in the practice of law without being a licensed attorney in the state of Rhode Island. Specifically, Arkuss was not authorized to practice law in Rhode Island when he drafted and negotiated purchase and sale agreements, merger agreements, and engaged in a general corporate law practice at the law firms described above.

Arkuss violated Rule 5.05(a). Arkuss was ordered to pay \$687.50 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Diaz, Tony: #05805350
12/18/2020-Agreed Public Reprimand

On December 18, 2020, **Tony Diaz** [#05805350], 63, of Austin, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that while representing a client in an immigration matter, Diaz neglected the matter and failed to explain the matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit his client to make informed decisions.

Diaz violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), and 1.03(b).

Thering, Daniel Robert: #24042023
01/28/2021-Agreed Partially Probated Suspension
01/15/2023-09/14/2024: SUSPENSION
09/15/2024-05/14/2026: PROBATED

On January 28, 2021, **Daniel Robert Thering** [#24042023], 44, of Austin, agreed to a 40-month partially probated suspension, effective January 15, 2023, with the first 20 months actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that in March 2018, Thering substituted into a lawsuit involving a real estate dispute as attorney of record for Complainant. On January 14, 2019, the trial court awarded Complainant damages and attorney's fees, to be paid from the earnest money being held by the title company relative to the underlying real estate transaction. In February 2019, the title company wired the earnest money to Thering's non-IOLTA to satisfy the judgment. In April 2019, when Complainant inquired about the funds, Thering indicated that he could not deliver the funds to Complainant. Thering failed to safeguard the funds, failed to promptly notify Complainant upon Thering's receipt of the funds, and failed to promptly deliver the funds to Complainant. Upon conclusion of the contingent fee matter, Thering failed to provide Complainant a written statement reflecting the remittance of settlement funds to Complainant and the method of the determination. Further, Thering failed to communicate with Complainant and, Thering failed to respond to the grievance.

Thering violated Rules 1.03(a), 1.04(d), 1.14(a), 1.14(b), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$500.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Thering, Daniel Robert: #24042023
01/15/2021-Agreed Active Suspension
03/15/2021-03/14/2024: SUSPENSION

On January 15, 2021, **Daniel Robert Thering** [#24042023], 43, of Austin, agreed to a 48-month active suspension, effective March 15, 2020. The District 9 Grievance Committee found that Complainants hired Thering on March 3, 2016 for representation in a medical malpractice lawsuit against a doctor for injuries that Complainant sustained during a medical procedure on January 30, 2016. On March 19, 2016, Thering filed Plaintiff's Original Petition and, on March 20, 2016, Thering requested issuance of citation for service on the doctor. Thereafter, Thering neglected the legal matter and failed to have the doctor served with the lawsuit. Further, Thering accepted employment in a legal matter, which he should have known, was beyond his competence because Thering failed to obtain the necessary medical records and expert reports to prosecute a medical malpractice claim. The Complainant made numerous requests for a status of the case but Thering failed to communicate with them and failed to keep them reasonably informed as to the status of the matter. Further, even though Thering was provided notice of the Complainant's grievance, Thering failed to respond to the grievance.

Thering violated Rules 1.01(a), 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$500.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Thering, Daniel Robert: #24042023
01/08/2021-Agreed Public Reprimand

On January 8, 2021, **Daniel Robert Thering** [#24042023], 42, of Austin, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that in April 2017, Complainant hired Thering to represent her in a personal injury and workers' compensation claim, resulting from a March 2017 vehicular accident that Complainant was involved in while working. In July 2018, Complainant endorsed a \$50,001.00 settlement check at Thering's request. After which, Thering ceased to provide Complainant any meaningful updates on her case. The panel found that Thering neglected the legal matter entrusted to him by failing to promptly settle Complainant's case. In addition, the panel found Thering failed to adequately communicate with Complainant and deliver to Complainant her portion of the settlement funds. Further, the panel found that Thering failed to notify Complainant that his license to practice law had been suspended, during his representation of Complainant, as required by 13.01 of the Texas Rule of Disciplinary Conduct.

Thering violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.14(b), and 8.04(a)(10) of the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, Article X, Section 9, State Bar Rules.

DISTRICT 10:

San Antonio Attorney
12/04/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 4.02(a)
Improper communication with one represented by counsel.

Portley, Kirby Jerome: #24085865
02/25/2021-Agreed Public Reprimand

On February 25, 2021, **Kirby Jerome Portley** [#24085865], 37, of Austin, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 10 Grievance Committee found that Portley neglected a client's matter and failed to communicate with a client.

Portley violated Rules 1.03(a)&(b) and was ordered to pay \$350.00 in restitution and \$500.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

San Antonio Attorney
01/15/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.11(a)
A lawyer shall not represent anyone in connection with a matter in which the lawyer has passed upon the merits or otherwise participated personally and substantially as an adjudicatory official or law clerk to an adjudicatory official, unless all parties to the proceeding consent after disclosure.

DISTRICT 11:

**San Antonio Attorney
01/11/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand**

Rule 7.07(b)

Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this Rule, a lawyer shall file with the Advertising Review Committee of the State Bar of Texas, no later than the first dissemination of an advertisement in the public media, a copy of each of the lawyer's advertisements in the public media.

**San Antonio Attorney
12/11/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand**

Rule 3.05(b)

A lawyer shall not except as otherwise permitted by law and not prohibited by applicable rules of practice or procedure, communicate or cause another to communicate ex parte with a tribunal for the purpose of influencing that entity or person concerning a pending matter other than: (1) in the course of official proceedings in the cause; (2) in writing if he promptly delivers a copy of the writing to opposing counsel or the adverse party if he is not represented by a lawyer; (3) orally upon adequate notice to opposing counsel or to the adverse party if he is not represented by a lawyer.

**San Antonio Attorney
02/10/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand**

Rule 1.14(b)

Failed upon receiving funds or other property in which a client or third person has an interest, to promptly notify the client or third person and render a full accounting upon request.

**Teeter, Gregory Allen: #24033264
01/08/2021-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/21/2021-11/30/2024: PROBATED**

On January 8, 2021, **Gregory Allen Teeter** [#24033264], 51, of Corpus Christi, agreed to a 47-month fully probated suspension, effective January 21, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 11 Grievance Committee found that Teeter failed to explain a matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit a client to make informed decisions, failed to hold funds in trust, failed to promptly notify and deliver funds to the client and to the health care provider, failed to render candid advice to the client and represented a client where the representation reasonably appeared to be or became adversely limited by the interests of Respondent and/or Respondent's law firm.

Teeter violated Rules 1.14(a)&(b), 1.06(b)(2), 1.03(b), and 2.01.

Teeter, Gregory Allen: #24033264
01/08/2021-Active Suspension
05/01/2022-08/31/2022: SUSPENSION

On January 8, 2021, **Gregory Allen Teeter** [#24033264], 51, of Corpus Christi, agreed to a four-month active suspension, effective May 1, 2022. An investigatory panel of the District 11 Grievance Committee found that Teeter violated the terms of a prior disciplinary judgment.

Teeter violated Rule 8.04(a)(7).

DISTRICT 12:

Luna, Joe Luis: #12688900
01/15/2021-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/15/2021-07/14/2021: PROBATED

On January 15, 2021, **Jose Luis Luna** [#12688900], 62, of Crystal City, accepted a six-month fully probated suspension, effective January 15, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 12 Grievance Committee found that Luna neglected a client's matters, failed to keep client reasonably informed, failed to have a written statement in a contingent fee arrangement, represented clients when the representation reasonably appeared to be or became adversely limited by his duties to third persons or by his own interests, failed to make statements or disclaimers required under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct in the same language as the original solicitation communication and engaged in conduct involving a serious crime.

Luna violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a)&(b), 1.04(d), 1.06(b)(2), 7.02(d), and 8.04(a)(2), and agreed to pay \$1,750.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Luna, Joe Luis: #12688900
01/15/2021-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/15/2021-04/14/2021: PROBATED

On January 15, 2021, **Jose Luis Luna** [#12688900], 62, of Crystal City, accepted a three-month fully probated suspension, effective January 15, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 12 Grievance Committee found that Luna represented clients when the representation reasonably appeared to be or become adversely limited by his duties to third persons or by his own interests and engaged in conduct involving a serious crime.

Luna violated Rules 1.06(b)(2), and 8.04(a)(2), and agreed to pay \$1,250.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

San Antonio Attorney
12/15/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.01(b)(1)

In representing a client, a lawyer shall not neglect a legal matter entrusted to the lawyer.

Rule 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.

Rule 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.

Rule 1.15(b)(1)

Except as required by paragraph (a), a lawyer shall not withdraw from representing a client unless: withdrawal can be accomplished without material adverse effect on the interests of the client.

San Antonio Attorney

12/16/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 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.

San Antonio Attorney

02/24/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 1.08(g)

A lawyer shall not make an agreement prospectively limiting the lawyer's liability to a client for malpractice unless permitted by law and the client is independently represented in making the agreement, or settle a claim for such liability with an unrepresented client or former client without first advising that person in writing that independent representation is appropriate in connection therewith.

Rule 8.04(a)(8)

Failed to timely furnish to a district grievance committee a response or other information as required unless he or she timely asserts a privilege or other legal ground for failure to do so.

Levy, Glenn Deutsch: #12264925
01/05/2021-Agreed Public Reprimand

On January 5, 2021, **Glenn Deutsch Levy** [#12264925], 56, of San Antonio, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 10 Grievance Committee found that Levy neglected client's matters and failed to keep clients reasonably informed.

Levy violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), and 1.03(a)&(b) and agreed to pay \$1,200.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Molina, Juan R.: #14256550
01/08/2021-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
02/07/2021-02/06/2024: PROBATED

On January 8, 2021, **Juan R. Molina** [#14256550], 58, of Weslaco, accepted a three-year fully probated suspension, effective February 7, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 12 Grievance Committee found that Molina failed to communicate with a client, failed to hold client's funds in a trust account separate from his own property, failed to provide accounting of client's funds, and failed to timely disburse funds.

Molina violated Rules 1.03(a), and 1.14(a)&(b), and agreed to pay \$1,300.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Saenz, David: #17514700
01/29/2021-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
02/01/2021-01/31/2023: PROBATED

On January 29, 2021, **David Saenz** [#17514700], 70, of McAllen, agreed to a 24-month fully probated suspension, effective February 1, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 12 Grievance Committee found that Saenz failed to communicate with a client and permitted the conduct of a non-lawyer to violate disciplinary rules.

Saenz violated Rules 1.03(a), and 5.03(b)(1). He was ordered to pay \$1,500.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

DISTRICT 14:

Dallas Attorney
02/12/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 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.

Hall, Michael Isaac: #24057881
12/07/2020-Agreed Public Reprimand

On December 7, 2020, **Michael Isaac Hall** [#24057881], 42, of Sweetwater, agreed to a public reprimand. The District 14 Grievance Committee found that in 2015, Hall was representing Complainant's mother and other relatives as Plaintiffs in a lawsuit. After Complainant's mother's death in July 2017, Complainant and her brother became successors-in-interest. In representing Plaintiffs, Hall neglected the legal matter entrusted to him and frequently failed to carry out completely the obligations Hall owed to Plaintiffs. Hall failed to keep Plaintiffs reasonably informed about the status of the case, and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. As a result of Hall's neglect and frequent failure to carry out his obligations, Complainant's case was dismissed with prejudice in October 2019. Hall failed to inform Plaintiffs of the dismissal.

Hall violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.01(b)(2), and 1.03(a). He was ordered to pay attorneys' fees and direct expenses in the sum of \$500.00.

Hatchett, Byron William: #00785948
12/29/2020-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/15/2021-07/14/2021: PROBATED

On December 29, 2020, **Byron William Hatchett** [#00785948], 65, of Taylor, agreed to a six-month fully probated suspension, effective January 15, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 14 Grievance Committee found that on or about October 12, 2018, Hatchett was appointed to represent Complainant in a criminal case. In representing Complainant, Hatchett neglected the legal matter entrusted to him by failing to complete any work on the case. Hatchett failed to keep Complainant reasonably informed about the status of his case and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information from Complainant.

Hatchett violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), and 1.03(a). He was ordered to pay \$250.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

Hoffman, Sarah Gwynne: #24075146
01/21/2021-Default Fully Probated Suspension
02/01/2021-01/31/2023: PROBATED

On January 21, 2021, **Sarah Gwynne Hoffman** [#24075146], 37, of Denton County, received a two-year fully probated suspension, effective February 1, 2021 and ending on January 31, 2023. An evidentiary panel of the District 14 Grievance Committee found that in representing a client in the formation of a professional limited liability company and in representing clients in an estate matter, beginning September 14, 2017 and June 7, 2017, respectively, Hoffman neglected the clients' legal matters, failed to keep the clients reasonably informed about the status of their cases, and failed to provide a client with a refund unearned fees. Hoffman also failed to timely submit a response to the grievance.

Hoffman violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8) and was ordered to pay the clients restitution in the amount of \$800.00 and \$1,200.00, respectively, and attorneys' fees and costs of \$1,600.00.

Hoffman, Sarah Gwynne: #24075146
01/22/2021-Default Partially Probated Suspension
02/15/2021-02/14/2022: SUSPENSION
02/15/2022-02/14/2023: PROBATED

On January 22, 2021, **Sarah Gwynne Hoffman** [#24075146], 37, of Denton County, received a two-year partially probated suspension, effective February 15, 2021, with the first year actively suspended and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 14 Grievance Committee found that on November 21, 2017, Hoffman was hired to prepare a Will. Hoffman was paid \$1,200.00 for the legal representation. During the representation, Hoffman neglected the legal matter and failed to keep the client reasonably informed about the status of the case. Upon termination of representation, Hoffman failed to refund unearned fees. Hoffman also failed to timely submit a response to the grievance.

Hoffman violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). Hoffman was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$1,200.00 and attorneys' fees and costs of \$1,300.00.

Hoffman, Sarah Gwynne: #24075146
01/22/2021-Default Partially Probated Suspension
02/15/2021-08/14/2021: SUSPENSION
08/15/2021-02/14/2023: PROBATED

On January 22, 2021, **Sarah Gwynne Hoffman** [#24075146], 37, of Denton County, received a two-year partially probated suspension, effective February 15, 2021, with the first six months actively suspended and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 14 Grievance Committee found that on September 6, 2018, Hoffman was hired to represent a client in a probate matter. Hoffman was paid \$1,700.00 for the legal representation. During the representation, Hoffman neglected the legal matter, failed to keep the client reasonably informed about the status of the case, and failed to explain the probate matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the client to make informed decisions about the representation. Upon termination of representation, Hoffman failed to refund unearned fees. Hoffman also failed to timely submit a response to the grievance.

Hoffman violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). She was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$1,000.00 and attorneys' fees and costs of \$1,500.00.

Hoffman, Sarah Gwynne: #24075146
01/22/2021-Default Partially Probated Suspension
02/15/2021-08/14/2022: SUSPENSION
08/15/2022-02/14/2023: PROBATED

On January 22, 2021, **Sarah Gwynne Hoffman** [#24075146], 37, of Denton County, received a two-year partially probated suspension, effective February 15, 2021, with the first 18 months actively suspended and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 14 Grievance Committee found that in representing two clients in separate probate matters, beginning January 30, 2017 and October 31, 2018 respectively, Hoffman neglected the clients' legal matters, failed to keep the clients reasonably informed about the status of their cases, and failed to provide a client with a refund unearned fees. Hoffman also failed to timely submit a response to the grievance.

Hoffman violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8), and was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$2,000.00 and attorneys' fees and costs of \$2,100.00.

Dallas Attorney
02/10/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand

Rule 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 fee that has 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.

Sanchez-Akers, Renee A: #24028398
12/16/2020-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
12/15/2020-12/14/2021: PROBATED

On December 16, 2020, **Renee Sanchez-Akers** [#24028398], 43, of Weatherford, agreed to a 12-month fully probated suspension, effective December 15, 2020. An investigatory panel of the District 14 Grievance Committee found that in January 2019, Complainant hired Sanchez-Akers to help with an adoption and paid Sanchez-Akers \$3,500.00. In representing Complainant, Sanchez-Akers neglected the legal matter entrusted to her by failing to complete any work in the matter. Sanchez-Akers failed to keep Complainant reasonably informed about the status of the adoption matter and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information from Complainant. Sanchez-Akers failed to explain the matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit Complainant to make informed decisions regarding the representation. Upon request by Complainant, Sanchez-Akers failed to promptly render a full accounting regarding the fee paid to Sanchez-Akers. Upon termination of representation, Sanchez-Akers failed to take steps to the extent reasonably practicable to protect Complainant's interests. Upon termination of representation, Sanchez-Akers failed to refund advance payments of the fee that had not been earned. Sanchez-Akers failed to respond to the grievance.

Sanchez-Akers violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.14(b), 1.15(d), 8.01(b), and 8.04(a)(8). She was ordered to pay \$3,500.00 in restitution and \$250.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

DISTRICT 15:

**San Antonio Attorney
12/18/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand**

Rule 4.03

In dealing on behalf of a client with a person who is not represented by counsel, a lawyer shall not state or imply that the lawyer is disinterested. When the lawyer knows or reasonably should know that the unrepresented person misunderstands the lawyer's role in the matter, the lawyer shall make reasonable efforts to correct the misunderstanding.

**San Antonio Attorney
12/28/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand**

Rule 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.

**Schaefer, Stephen Langton: #17720950
12/01/2020-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
12/01/2020-06/01/2021: PROBATED**

On December 1, 2020, **Stephen Langton Schaefer** [#17720950], 65, of Bandera, agreed to a six-month fully probated suspension, effective December 1, 2020. An evidentiary panel of the District 15 Grievance Committee found that Schaefer failed to properly supervise his non-lawyer employees and assisted another in violating the disciplinary rules.

Schaefer violated Rule 5.03(b)(1). He was ordered to pay \$1,000.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

**San Antonio Attorney
02/23/2021-Agreed Private Reprimand**

Rule 1.15(a)

A lawyer shall decline to represent a client or, where representation has commenced, shall withdraw, except as stated in paragraph (c), from the representation of a client, if (1) the representation will result in violation of Rule 3.08, other applicable rules of professional conduct or other law.

Rule 5.05(a)

A lawyer shall not practice law in a jurisdiction where doing so violates the regulation of the legal profession in that jurisdiction.

DISTRICT 17:

**San Antonio Attorney
12/03/2020-Agreed Private Reprimand**

Rule 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.

**Villalobos, Jaime A.: #00785151
12/21/2020-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/01/2021-12/31/2022: PROBATED**

On December 21, 2020, **Jaime A. Villalobos** [#00785151], 54, of El Paso, accepted a two-year fully probated suspension, effective January 1, 2021. An investigatory panel of the District 17 Grievance Committee found that Villalobos neglected a legal matter, failed to reasonably communicate with his client, failed to properly safeguard client's funds in a trust account and failed to comply with a prior disciplinary judgment by committing professional misconduct when he was on probation.

Villalobos violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a)&(b), 1.14(a), and 8.04(a)(3)&(7). He agreed to pay \$1,000.00 in restitution, and \$800.00 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

BOARD OF DISCIPLINARY APPEALS:

**Cortese, Perry: #00790508
02/01/2021-Disbarment**

On February 1, 2021, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed a Judgment of Disbarment against Little River, TX attorney **Perry Cortese**, 57, State Bar of Texas Card No. 00790508. On October 20, 2017, Cortese was convicted of Conspiracy to Commit Mail and Wire Fraud and Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering, Intentional Crimes as defined in the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure, in the case styled, United States of America v. Perry Don Cortese, Cause No. 8:15-cr-320-T-23TGW, in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division. He appealed his convictions. They were affirmed, and are final. Cortese was sentenced to a total of 300 months in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Upon release, Cortese will be on supervised release for a term of 36 months. BODA case no. 59813. Be under supervised release for three years. He was also ordered to pay restitution of \$3,767,196.00. Cortese has appealed his criminal conviction. The Board retains jurisdiction to enter a final judgment when the criminal appeal is final.

Nolte, Shasta Marie: #24071455
01/05/2021-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
01/05/2021-01/04/2023: PROBATED

On January 5, 2021, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed an Agreed Judgment of Probated Suspension for Mesa, Arizona attorney **Shasta Marie Nolte**, 43, State Bar of Texas Card # 24071455. On or about August 4, the State Bar of Arizona entered an Agreement for Discipline by Consent in a matter styled, In the Matter of a Member of the State Bar of Arizona, Shasta Marie Nolte, Bar No. 030368, in Case No. PDJ 2020 9064, and suspended Nolte from the practice of law for 2 years for her violation of Arizona Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 42, specifically ER 1.2 (Scope of Representation and Allocation of Authority between Client and Lawyer), ER 1.3 (Diligence), ER 1.4 (Communication), ER 1.5 (b) (Fees), ER 3.1 (Meritorious Claims and Contensions), ER 5.1 (Law Firms and Associations), and ER 8.4 (d) (Misconduct).

Odle, Robert Phillip: #00793172
02/22/2021-Agreed Active Suspension
02/23/2021-08/22/2021: SUSPENSION

On February 22, 2021, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed an Agreed Judgment of Suspension and an Agreed Judgment of Probated Suspension against Colorado Springs, CO attorney **Robert Phillip Odle**, 60, State Bar of Texas Card No. 00793172. On November 7, 2018, the Supreme Court, State of Colorado entered an Order Approving Conditional Admission of Misconduct and Imposing Sanctions Under C.R.C.P. 251.22 in a matter styled: Complainant: The People of the State of Colorado, Respondent: Robert Phillip Odle, #18091, Case No. 18PDJ066. Odle was suspended from the practice of law for six months for violations of Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct 1.7(a) (conflict of interest), 8.4(a) (inducement), 1.8(j) (sexual relationship with client), and 1.15A(a) (negligent conversion). On August 19, 2019, the Supreme Court, State of Colorado entered an Order Approving Conditional Admission of Misconduct and Imposing Sanctions Under C.R.C.P. 251.22 in a matter styled: Complainant: The People of the State of Colorado, Respondent: Robert Phillip Odle, #18091, Case No. 19PDJ062. Odle was placed on probation for three years for violations of Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3 (diligence), 1.4(a)(4) (communication), 1.4(b) (communication), and 1.15A(a) (negligent conversion). Odle is suspended from the practice of law for six months, followed by a three-year suspension, fully probated, beginning February 23, 2021.

Odle, Robert Phillip: #00793172
02/22/2021-Agreed Fully Probated Suspension
08/23/2021-08/22/2024: PROBATED

On February 22, 2021, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed an Agreed Judgment of Suspension and an Agreed Judgment of Probated Suspension against Colorado Springs, CO attorney **Robert Phillip Odle**, 60, State Bar of Texas Card No. 00793172. On November 7, 2018, the Supreme Court, State of Colorado entered an Order Approving Conditional Admission of Misconduct and Imposing Sanctions Under C.R.C.P. 251.22 in a matter styled: Complainant: The People of the State of Colorado, Respondent: Robert Phillip Odle, #18091, Case No. 18PDJ066. Odle was suspended from the practice of law for six months for violations of Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct 1.7(a) (conflict of interest), 8.4(a) (inducement), 1.8(j) (sexual relationship with client), and 1.15A(a) (negligent conversion). On August 19, 2019, the Supreme Court, State of Colorado entered an Order Approving Conditional Admission of Misconduct and Imposing Sanctions Under C.R.C.P. 251.22 in a matter styled: Complainant: The People of the State of Colorado, Respondent: Robert Phillip Odle, #18091, Case No. 19PDJ062. Odle was placed on probation for three years for violations of Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3 (diligence), 1.4(a)(4) (communication), 1.4(b) (communication), and 1.15A(a) (negligent conversion). Odle is suspended from the practice of law for six months, followed by a three-year suspension, fully probated, beginning February 23, 2021.

Young, John S.: #22197800
01/05/2021-Resignation in lieu of Discipline

On January 5, 2021, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **John S. Young**, #22197800, 60, of Sweetwater, Texas. At the time of Young's resignation, a Judgment of Conviction by Jury was entered in Cause No. B-17-0081-SB, State of Texas v. John Stacy Young, in the 119th District Court of Tom Green County, Texas, wherein Young was found guilty of Count One - Forgery of a financial instrument, Count Two - Forgery of a financial instrument, Count Three - Theft of property in a value of \$200,000.00 or more and Count Four - Money Laundering in a value of \$100,000.00 or more but less than \$200,000.00.

Young was sentenced on Count One and Count Two to 730 days in the State Jail Division of TDCJ and was ordered to pay a fine in the amount of \$10,000.00. On Count Three and Count Four, Young was sentenced to 11 years in the Institutional Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and was ordered to pay a fine in the amount of \$10,000.00. The sentences were ordered to run concurrent. This conviction would have subjected Young to compulsory discipline.