

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

► Contact the Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel at 512-453-5535, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals at 512-475-1578 or txboda.org, or the State Commission on Judicial Conduct at 512-463-5533.

JUDICIAL ACTIONS

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

On November 12, 2019, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct issued an order of suspension without pay to **Alexandra Smoots-Thomas**, judge of the 164th Civil District Court, Houston, Harris County.

On November 12, 2019, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct issued a public warning to **Michael McSpadden**, former judge of the 209th Criminal District Court, Houston, Harris County.

On November 12, 2019, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct issued a public warning to **Dianne Hensley**, justice of the peace Precinct 1, Place 1, Waco, McLennan County.

RESIGNATION

On November 12, 2019, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **James P. Brady** [#02847400], 73, of Houston. At the time of Brady's resignation, he had two pending grievances. In both matters, Brady neglected the legal matters entrusted to him, frequently failed to carry out completely the obligations he owed to his client, and failed to hold funds belonging to his clients that were in his possession in connection with the representation separate from his own property. Also, upon termination of representation, Brady failed to refund advance payments of fees that had not been earned and failed to timely furnish to the Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel a response or other information as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure. In one of those two

matters, Brady also failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the legal matter and to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information and failed to explain a legal matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit his client to make informed decisions regarding the representation.

Brady violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.01(b)(2), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.14(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8).

SUSPENSIONS

On October 17, 2019, **Steven Wayne Brooks** [#00793397], 52, of Dallas, received a two-year fully probated suspension effective October 15, 2019. An evidentiary panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that in May 2018 Brooks was retained by the complainant to handle a family law matter. Brooks failed to keep the client's fee in a separate trust account. Upon termination of representation, Brooks failed to refund advance payments of fees that had not been earned.

Brooks violated Rules 1.14(a) and 1.15(d). He was ordered to pay \$766.25 in restitution and \$747 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On November 7, 2019, **Kenavon Tramayne Carter** [#24044913], 46, of Austin, accepted a 12-month fully probated suspension effective December 1, 2019. An investigatory panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that Carter failed to timely return an unearned fee in a criminal matter. Carter also failed to provide the Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel with a response to the grievance as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Carter violated Rules 1.14(b) and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$450.62 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On November 4, 2019, **William Kauper Cheadle** [#04162950], 62, of Houston, received a 30-month fully probated suspension. An evidentiary

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panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that, while representing one client, Cheadle frequently failed to carry out completely the obligations he owed to his client, failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the legal matter and to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information, and failed to explain a legal matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit his client to make informed decisions regarding the representation. While representing another client, Cheadle failed to explain a legal matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit his client to make informed decisions regarding the representation and failed to hold funds belonging in whole or in part to his client that was in his possession in connection with the representation separate from his own property. Also, upon termination of representation, Cheadle failed to refund advance payments of fees that had not been earned and he engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.

Cheadle violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.14(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(3). He was ordered to pay \$1,500 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On November 26, 2019, **Beauregard Driller Fiegel** [#24086782], 34, of San Antonio, accepted a three-year fully probated suspension effective January 1, 2020. An evidentiary panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that Fiegel neglected a client's matter, failed to keep a client reasonably informed, and failed to respond to the grievance.

Fiegel violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$500 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On September 26, 2019, **Arturo A. Guzman** [#08654525], 55, of San Marcos, received a one-year fully probated suspension effective October 1, 2019. An evidentiary panel of the District 15 Grievance Committee found that Guzman neglected a client's matter, failed to keep a client reasonably informed, failed to keep a client's funds in a trust or escrow

account, failed to respond to lawful demands for information from a disciplinary authority, failed to deliver a client's funds, and upon termination, failed to refund unearned fees and engaged in conduct involving misrepresentation.

Guzman violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.14(a), 1.14(b), 1.15(d), 8.01(b), and 8.04(a)(3). He was ordered to pay \$753.37 in restitution and \$7,140.57 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On November 19, 2019, **Barata Roy Hollis** [#24057584], 48, of Frisco, received a 12-month fully probated suspension effective December 1, 2019. An investigatory panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that Hollis neglected several legal matters entrusted to her by a client. Hollis failed to keep the client reasonably informed about the status of the legal matters, failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information from the client, and failed to explain

the legal matters to the extent reasonably necessary to permit her client to make informed decisions regarding the representation. Hollis misrepresented the status and/or details of several legal matters to her client.

Hollis violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), and 8.04(a)(3). She was ordered to pay \$675 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On October 24, 2019, **Jonathan Paul Mason** [#24089842], 42, of San Antonio, accepted a 12-month fully probated suspension effective November 15, 2019. An evidentiary panel of the District 10 Grievance Committee found that Mason failed to hold a client's funds in a trust account, failed to deliver a client's funds, and failed to take reasonable remedial actions to mitigate the consequences of another lawyer's misconduct.

Mason violated Rules 1.14(a), 1.14(b), 5.01(a), and 5.01(b).

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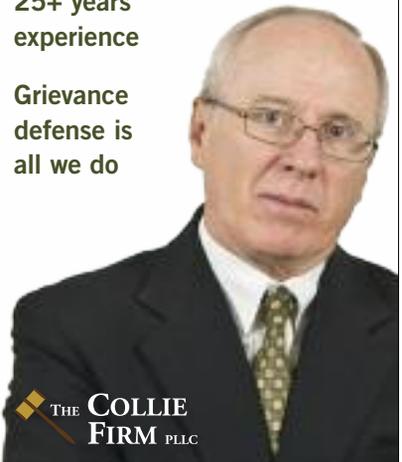
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DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

On November 18, 2019, **Breccia M. McDermed** [#24052206], 43, of Waco, accepted a two-year fully probated suspension effective December 1, 2019. An investigatory panel of the District 8 Grievance Committee found that while representing a client in a divorce matter, McDermed failed to timely provide documents to, and communicate with, her client. The panel also found that after McDermed was subsequently terminated by the client, McDermed failed to return the client's file and billed for services after she was terminated. Additionally, in her response to the complainant's grievance, McDermed provided the Office of Chief Disciplinary Counsel with an email purportedly sent to her client with a copy of a pleading in his case. The email was dated December 12, 2019. McDermed submitted her response to the grievance on April 17, 2019, eight months prior to the date of the email.

McDermed violated Rules 1.03(a), 1.15(a)(3), 1.15(d), 8.01(a), and 8.04(a)(3).

On October 29, 2019, **John David Milks** [#24045106], 41, of Irving, received a three-month fully probated suspension effective November 1, 2019. An investigatory panel of the District 7 Grievance Committee found that the complainant hired Milks to appeal a civil suit from a Justice of the Peace Court. During the representation, Milks neglected the legal matter and failed to explain the appeal process to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the complainant to make informed decisions regarding the representation.

Milks violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and 1.03(b). He was ordered to pay \$1,500 in restitution and \$500 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On November 2, 2019, **Jami Kay Shrader Nance** [#24069057], 42, of El Paso, accepted a one-year fully pro-

bated suspension effective November 15, 2019. An evidentiary panel of the District 10 Grievance Committee found that Nance failed to hold a client's funds in a trust account, failed to deliver client's funds, and failed to take reasonable remedial actions to mitigate the consequences of another lawyer's misconduct.

Nance violated Rules 1.14(a), 1.14(b), 5.01(a), and 5.01(b).

On October 28, 2019, **Shanon Keith Stanfield** [#24056738], 36, of Austin, accepted a three-month fully probated suspension effective November 1, 2019. An evidentiary panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that while representing a client in a civil litigation matter, Stanfield failed to communicate with his client and failed to provide his client with any updates concerning the matter.

Stanfield violated Rule 1.03(a). He was ordered to pay \$587.50 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On August 16, 2019, **Brigida Rodriguez** [#24046743], 64, of Dallas, received a 24-month partially probated suspension, with the first nine months actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that Rodriguez frequently failed to carry out completely the obligations she owed to her client, failed to keep her client reasonably informed about the status of her case, and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information from her client. Rodriguez failed to respond to the grievance.

Rodriguez violated Rule 1.01(b)(2), 1.03(a), and 8.04(a)(8). She was ordered to pay \$1,780 in attorneys' fees and \$645 in direct expenses.

On October 31, 2019, **Greggory Allen Teeter** [#24033264], 50, of Corpus Christi, agreed to a five-year partially probated suspension effective November 1, 2019, with the first 30 months actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 11 Grievance

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Committee found that Teeter neglected a client's matter, failed to keep clients reasonably informed, failed to return a client's file, failed to hold funds in trust and separate from his own property, failed to promptly notify and deliver funds to parties entitled to receive funds, failed to abide by a client's decisions, and failed to respond to four grievances.

Teeter violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.02(a)(2), 1.03(a), 1.14(a), 1.14(b), 1.14(c), 1.15(d), 8.04(a)(3), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$4,000 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On October 16, 2019, **Curtis Lilly** [#24030063], 47, of Fort Worth, received a nine-month fully probated suspension effective October 15, 2019. An evidentiary panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that in representing the complainant, Lilly neglected the legal matter entrusted to him by failing to appear at numerous court hearings. Lilly knowingly disobeyed an obligation under a ruling by a tribunal by failing to appear at an October 27, 2017, hearing for which Lilly had been ordered to appear by the presiding judge. On November 2, 2017, Lilly filed a motion to recuse the presiding judge in the complainant's legal matter in which Lilly knowingly made several false statements of material fact to the tribunal. Lilly engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.

Lilly violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 3.03(a)(1), 3.04(d), and 8.04(a)(3). He was ordered to pay \$1,192.50 in attorneys' fees and \$474 in direct expenses.

PUBLIC REPRIMANDS

On November 7, 2019, **Kenavon Tramayne Carter** [#24044913], 46, of Austin, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that while representing a client in a criminal matter, Carter failed to explain the matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit his client to make informed decisions. Carter also failed to provide the Office of

Chief Disciplinary Counsel with a response to the grievance as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Carter violated Rules 1.03(b) and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$653.52 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On November 4, 2019, **Jeffery Charles King** [#24038039], 43, of Dallas, entered into an agreed judgment of public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that in December 2014, the complainant hired King to file an administrative appeal on his behalf. In representing the complainant, King neglected the legal matter entrusted to him by failing to file the administrative appeal.

King violated Rule 1.01(b)(1).

PRIVATE REPRIMANDS

Listed here is a breakdown of Texas

Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct violations for seven 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)—In representing a client, a lawyer shall not neglect a legal matter entrusted to the lawyer (1).

1.02(a)(1)—for failing to abide by a client's decisions concerning the objectives and general methods of representation (1).

1.03(a)—for failing to keep a client reasonably informed about the status of a matter and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information (3).

1.03(b)—for failing to explain a matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the client to make informed decisions regarding representation (1).

1.04(c)—When the lawyer has not regularly represented the client, the basis or rate of the fee shall be

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State Bar of Texas
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Member, 1993-1996

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communicated to the client, preferably in writing, before or within a reasonable time after commencing the representation (1).

1.06(b)(2)—In other situations and except to the extent permitted by paragraph (c), a lawyer shall not represent a person if the representation of that person reasonably appears to be or become adversely limited by the lawyer’s or law firm’s responsibilities to another client or to a third person or by the lawyer’s or law firm’s own

interests (1).

1.08(h)—A lawyer shall not acquire a proprietary interest in the cause of action or subject matter of litigation the lawyer is conducting for a client, except that the lawyer may acquire a lien granted by law to secure the lawyer’s fee or expenses, and contract in a civil case with a client for a contingent fee that is permissible under Rule 1.04 (1).

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 (3).

1.14(b)—for failing, 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 (1).

1.15(d)—for failing, upon termination of representation, to reasonably protect a client’s interests, give notice to the client to seek other counsel, surrender papers and property belonging to the client, or refund any advance payments of fees that have not been earned (2).

8.04(a)(8)—for failing 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 (1). **TBJ**



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