

REINSTATEMENT

KENNITRA M. FOOTE [#24029552], of Houston, has filed a petition in the 412th District Court of Brazoria County for reinstatement as a member of the State Bar of Texas.

RESIGNATIONS

On August 27, 2021, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **WILLIE R. JOSEPH JR.** [#24106671], of Dallas. At the time of Joseph's resignation, there were three pending matters against him alleging professional misconduct. In the first matter, on February 21, 2020, Joseph pleaded guilty to the charge of battery of a dating partner—intentionally inflicting serious bodily injury (Louisiana Revised Statute 14:34.9M). Joseph was sentenced to five years hard labor and committed to the Louisiana Department of Corrections. In the second matter, the complainant hired Joseph for representation in a family law matter on or about January 18, 2019.

Joseph failed to communicate with the complainant. Joseph neglected the legal matter by failing to timely file a motion/petition for enforcement, failing to timely set a hearing, failing to obtain citation, failing to submit an amendment to the standing orders, canceling the hearing set on the motion for enforcement, failing to timely withdraw as counsel, and failing to protect the complainant's interests. In the third matter, the complainant hired Joseph to represent her in a divorce matter on October 21, 2019. During Joseph's representation of the complainant, Joseph failed to abide by the complainant's decisions concerning objectives and general methods of representation. Joseph agreed to and accepted terms of temporary orders without the complainant's consent or approval. Joseph failed to keep the complainant reasonably informed about the status of her legal matter, failed to respond to reasonable requests for

information, and made misrepresentations to the complainant. Joseph neglected the complainant's legal matter by, including but not limited to, failing to correct the temporary orders. Joseph was ordered to pay the complainant \$500 in restitution.

Joseph violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.01(b)(2), 1.02(a)(1), 1.02(a)(2), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.15(b)(1), 8.04(a)(2), and 8.04(a)(3).

On August 27, 2021, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **GIGI JORDAN STEINER** [#19134900], of Dallas. At the time of Steiner's resignation, there was one pending matter against her alleging professional misconduct. In the first matter, in January 2013, the complainant arranged for the formation of a limited liability corporation, or LLC, regarding an investment in an apartment complex and served as the manager. While acting as manager, Steiner stole approximately \$50,000 from the LLC. Steiner filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and the bankruptcy court issued findings of fact and conclusions of law and found that Steiner did knowingly and fraudulently, in or in connection with her bankruptcy case, make a false oath or account, as contemplated by Section 727(a)(4) of the Bankruptcy Code by: (1) falsely claiming in her bankruptcy schedules and statements of financial affairs that she is a member and 100% owner of the LLC and falsely claiming the LLC had no value; (2) falsely testifying at the 341 meeting that she contributed money to the LLC; and (3) concealing her theft, embezzlement, and conversion of LLC's money by failing to report the funds she obtained in her statement of financial affairs. The bankruptcy court ordered Steiner to pay the LLC \$201,000. On April 12, 2019, Steiner pleaded nolo contendere to a third-degree felony of theft of property \$20,000 - \$100,000, and Steiner received deferred adjudication and was ordered to pay \$50,702.25 in restitution.

Steiner violated Rules 8.04(a)(2) and 8.04(a)(3).

SUSPENSIONS

On August 24, 2021, **ANDRE DeGARZA**

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[#24059332], of LaGrange, accepted a one-year fully probated suspension effective September 1, 2021. An evidentiary panel of the District 5 Grievance Committee found that DeGarza willfully, in connection to an adjudicatory proceeding, manifested bias or prejudice based on race.

DeGarza violated Rule 5.08(a).

On July 9, 2021, **DAVID SHANE GRANTHAM** [#24087614], of Richardson, received a 24-month partially probated suspension effective August 1, 2021, with the first six months actively served and the remainder probated. The 191st District Court of Dallas County found that Grantham committed professional misconduct by violating Rules 1.05(b)(1)(ii) [A lawyer shall not knowingly reveal confidential information of a client or a former client to anyone else, other than the client, the client's representatives, or the members, associates, or employees of the lawyer's law firm], 1.05(b)(3) [A lawyer shall not knowingly use confidential information of a former client to the disadvantage of the former client after the representation is concluded unless the former client consents after consultation or the confidential information has become generally known], 3.02 [In the course of litigation, a lawyer shall not take a position that unreasonably increases the costs or other burdens of the case or that unreasonably delays resolution of the matter], 3.04(d) [A lawyer shall not knowingly disobey, or advise the client to disobey, an obligation under the standing rules of or a ruling by a tribunal except for an open refusal based either on an assertion that no valid obligation exists or on the client's willingness to accept any sanctions arising from such disobedience], 4.04(a) [In representing a client, a lawyer shall not use 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 rights of such a person], and 4.04(b)(1) [A lawyer shall not present, participate in presenting, or threaten to present criminal or disciplinary charges solely to gain an advantage in a civil matter].

Grantham was ordered to pay \$10,982.95 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On May 18, 2021, **CARL DONALD HUGHES JR.** [#10209000], of Dallas, received a 36-month partially probated suspension effective June 1, 2021, with the first 18 months actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that on or about January 5, 2017, the complainant hired Hughes to file a civil action involving a real estate matter. Hughes failed to keep the complainant reasonably informed about the status of her case and failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information. Hughes failed to explain the legal matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the complainant to make informed decisions regarding the representation. Upon termination of representation, Hughes failed to

surrender papers and property to which the complainant was entitled. Upon termination of representation, Hughes also failed to refund advance payments of fees that had not been earned. Hughes also failed to respond to the grievance.

Hughes violated Rules 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$13,000 in restitution and \$1,734 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses. Hughes has filed an appeal.

On August 20, 2021, **JANA LEWIS-PEREZ** [#24077463], of Pearland, accepted an 18-month partially probated suspension effective September 16, 2021, with the first three months actively served and the remainder probated. An investigatory panel of the District 5 Grievance Committee found that Lewis-Perez neglected a legal matter entrusted to her and failed to keep her client reasonably informed about the status of her legal matter and promptly comply with reasonable requests for

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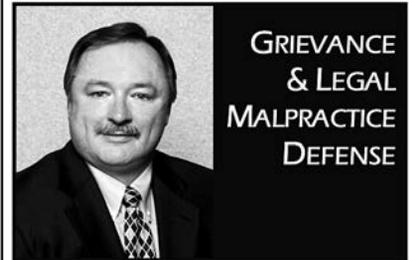
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information about the case. Upon termination of representation, Lewis-Perez failed to refund any advance payments of fees that had not been earned. Lastly, Lewis-Perez failed to timely respond to the grievance without asserting a privilege or other legal ground for her failure to do so.

Lewis-Perez violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). She was ordered to pay \$500 in restitution and \$1,000 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On August 27, 2021, **JOHN VICTOR MASTRIANI** [#13184375], of Houston, accepted a 36-month partially probated suspension effective August 26, 2021, with the first 12 months actively suspended. An evidentiary panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Mastriani neglected a legal matter and failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the case.

Mastriani violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and 1.03(a). He was ordered to pay

\$1,300 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

On August 29, 2021, **JOHN VICTOR MASTRIANI** [#13184375], of Houston, accepted a 36-month partially probated suspension effective August 26, 2021, with the first 12 months actively suspended. An evidentiary panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Mastriani neglected a legal matter, failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of the case, and further failed to refund advance payments of fees that had not been earned.

Mastriani violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), and 1.15(d). He was ordered to pay \$500 in restitution and \$750 in attorneys' fees and direct expenses.

PUBLIC REPRIMAND

On August 12, 2021, **G. DANNY MENA** [#13929900], of El Paso, accepted a public reprimand. An investigatory panel of the District 17 Grievance Committee found

that Mena neglected client matters, failed to keep a client reasonably informed, failed to promptly render a full account regarding a client's funds, and failed to take steps to reasonably protect his client's interests.

Mena violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.03(b), 1.14(b), and 1.15(d). 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 eight 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)—for neglecting a legal matter entrusted to the lawyer (2).

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 (1).

1.03(a)—for failing to keep a client

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reasonably informed about the status of a matter and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information (3).

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 (2).

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 (2).

3.03(a)(1)—A lawyer shall not knowingly make a false statement of

material fact or law to a tribunal (1).

7.03(a)—The following definitions apply to this Rule: (1) "Regulated telephone, social media, or other electronic contact" means telephone, social media, or electronic communication initiated by a lawyer, or by a person acting on behalf of a lawyer, that involves communication in a live or electronically interactive manner; (2) A lawyer "solicits" employment by making a "solicitation communication," as that

term is defined in Rule 7.01(b)(2).

Respondent filed a notice of appeal on July 2, 2021 (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 (1). **TBJ**

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