

NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

BEFORE THE
GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR
09G0168

IN THE MATTER OF)

Randolph Hill,)
Attorney At Law)

REPRIMAND)
)

On October 22, 2009 the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar met and considered the grievance filed against you by Mr. Knowles.

Pursuant to Section .0113(a) of the Discipline and Disability Rules of the North Carolina State Bar, the Grievance Committee conducted a preliminary hearing. After considering the information available to it, including your response to the letter of notice, the Grievance Committee found probable cause. Probable cause is defined in the rules as "reasonable cause to believe that a member of the North Carolina State Bar is guilty of misconduct justifying disciplinary action."

The rules provide that after a finding of probable cause, the Grievance Committee may determine that the filing of a complaint and a hearing before the Disciplinary Hearing Commission are not required, and the Grievance Committee may issue various levels of discipline depending upon the misconduct, the actual or potential injury caused, and any aggravating or mitigating factors. The Grievance Committee may issue an admonition, a reprimand, or a censure to the respondent attorney.

A reprimand is a written form of discipline more serious than an admonition issued in cases in which an attorney has violated one or more provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct and has caused harm or potential harm to a client, the administration of justice, the profession, or a member of the public, but the misconduct does not require a censure.

The Grievance Committee was of the opinion that a censure is not required in this case and issues this reprimand to you. As chairman of the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar, it is now my duty to issue this reprimand.

Mr. Knowles retained you to review his criminal file and determine whether he had grounds to pursue a Motion for Appropriate Relief. Mr. Knowles paid you \$3,500. Thereafter, you did not communicate with Mr. Knowles in violation of Rule 1.4(a). You did not handle Mr. Knowles' matter in violation of Rule 1.3. Mr. Knowles discharged you and requested a refund of the attorney fee. You did not respond and did not refund the fee. Because you failed to perform

the legal services for which you were retained, you collected an excessive fee in violation of Rule 1.5(a). Mr. Knowles filed a fee dispute petition in order to resolve the fee dispute. You failed to respond the fee dispute in violation of Rule 1.5(f). Because you failed to participate in the fee dispute process as required by the rules, a grievance file was opened. You received notice of the grievance, but failed to provide a written response in violation of Rule 8.1(b).

You are hereby reprimanded by the North Carolina State Bar for your professional misconduct. The Grievance Committee trusts that you will heed this reprimand, that it will be remembered by you, that it will be beneficial to you, and that you will never again allow yourself to depart from adherence to the high ethical standards of the legal profession.

In accordance with the policy adopted January 24, 2008 by the Council of the North Carolina State Bar regarding the taxing of the administrative and investigative costs to any attorney issued a reprimand by the Grievance Committee, the costs of this action in the amount of \$100.00 are hereby taxed to you.

Done and ordered, this the 30th day of November, 2009



James R. Fox, Chair
Grievance Committee

JRF/lr