



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA BEFORE THE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE OF THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR 21G0834

WAKE COUNTY

IN RE:

CHRISTOPHER C. PEACE,
ATTORNEY

CONSENT ORDER
TRANSFERRING ATTORNEY
TO DISABILITY
INACTIVE STATUS

This matter is before the undersigned Chairperson of the North Carolina State Bar’s Grievance Committee pursuant to 27 N.C. Admin. Code 1B §.0122(b), with Carmen Hoyme Bannon representing the North Carolina State Bar and Respondent Christopher C. Peace appearing *pro se*. Based upon facts received from the above-named Respondent and with the consent of Respondent and the State Bar Office of Counsel, the undersigned makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The North Carolina State Bar is a body duly organized under the laws of North Carolina and is the proper party to consent to this proceeding under the authority granted it in Chapter 84 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, and the Rules and Regulations of the North Carolina State Bar promulgated thereunder.
2. Respondent, Christopher C. Peace, was admitted to the North Carolina State Bar in March 2012, and is, and was at all times referred to herein, an attorney at law licensed to practice in North Carolina, subject to the laws of the State of North Carolina, the Rules and Regulations of the North Carolina State Bar and the Rules of Professional Conduct.
3. Peace has been engaged in the practice of law in the State of North Carolina and has maintained a law office in Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.
4. The State Bar opened grievance file no. 21G0834 to investigate whether Peace is disabled as that term is defined in 27 N.C. Admin. Code, Chapter 1B § .0103(19).
5. Peace requested to be transferred to disability inactive status.
6. Peace has practiced exclusively in child welfare law for the last several years. He was recently diagnosed for the first time with bipolar disorder, and is currently on leave from work for his current employer, Dempsey Law PLLC.

7. Peace reports that his bipolar disorder makes it difficult to keep regular sleep and waking hours or to concentrate. He reports difficulty regulating his emotions and intrusive thoughts while attempting to fulfill his responsibilities to clients, and admits that he cannot readily perform the duties of an attorney under the stresses that his area of practice routinely presents. Peace has struggled to communicate with counsel and judges in the expected manner, due to panic and mania, and these difficulties have been noted by participants in these cases.

8. Peace provided the State Bar with medical records reflecting his diagnosis and treatment.

9. Peace's medical condition currently impairs his ability to focus, handle his clients' affairs, and otherwise manage his professional responsibilities.

10. Peace currently suffers from a medical condition (bipolar disorder) that significantly impairs his professional judgment, performance or competence as an attorney.

11. Peace consents to being transferred to disability inactive status.

12. Peace acknowledges and agrees by signing this consent order that—should the State Bar receive any allegations of professional misconduct by Peace while he is on disability inactive status—the State Bar may preserve evidence of the alleged misconduct, including by the taking of depositions. Peace consents that no further orders shall be required for the State Bar to take such depositions or undertake any other investigation. Peace and the State Bar hereby stipulate by the signing of this consent order that such depositions may be taken by telephone, pursuant to Rule 30 of the North Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 1A-1, Rule 30.

BASED UPON the foregoing Findings of Fact, and with the consent of Respondent and the Office of Counsel, the undersigned makes the following:

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Pursuant to 27 N.C. Admin. Code 1B §.0122(b), the proper parties have consented to attorney Christopher C. Peace being transferred to disability inactive status.

2. Peace is disabled within the meaning of 27 N.C. Admin. Code 1B §.0103(19).

THEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED:

1. Christopher C. Peace is transferred to disability inactive status.

2. Peace shall refrain from practicing law in North Carolina unless and until returned to active status pursuant to 27 N.C. Admin. Code 1B §.0129(e). Peace shall be eligible to petition for reinstatement to active status six months from the date of this order.

3. Within 15 days of the effective date of this Order Peace shall provide the State Bar with an address and telephone number at which clients seeking return of files can communicate with Peace and obtain such files.

4. Peace shall promptly return client files to clients upon request, within 15 days of receipt of such request. Peace will be deemed to have received any such request 3 days after the date such request is sent to Peace if the request is sent to the address Peace provided the State Bar pursuant to the preceding paragraph.

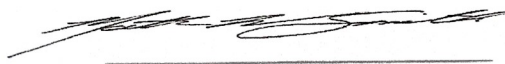
5. Any failure by Peace to return a requested client file that has not been remedied by the date on which Peace files any petition for reinstatement shall be taken into consideration in determining whether Peace has met his burden of proving by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that he is no longer disabled and is fit to resume the practice of law.

6. Peace shall cooperate with any trustee appointed by the court to wind down his practice, including providing client ledgers, contact information, and bank records that will aid the trustee in the disbursement of funds in Peace's trust account.

7. The North Carolina State Bar, pursuant to 27 N.C. Admin. Code 1B § .0122(e)(2), may preserve evidence of any alleged professional misconduct of Peace, including by the taking of depositions. No further orders shall be necessary to take such depositions. Such depositions may be taken by telephone without any further orders.

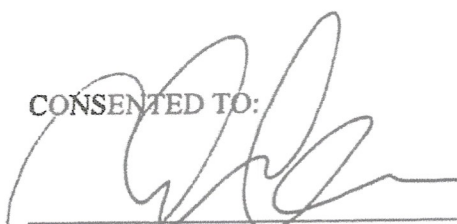
8. Investigation or action on any Petition for Resolution of Disputed Fee or Grievance pending as of the date of this order or received after the date of this order is hereby abated unless and until Peace is reinstated to active status. Should Peace be reinstated to active status, investigation or action on any abated Petition for Resolution of Disputed Fee or Grievance shall resume.

This the 22nd day of November, 2021.

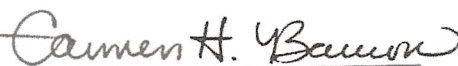


Matthew W. Smith, Chair
Grievance Committee
North Carolina State Bar

CONSENTED TO:



Christopher C. Peace, Respondent
Member, North Carolina State Bar



Carmen Hoyme Bannon
Deputy Counsel
The North Carolina State Bar