

A North Carolina lawyer who sponsors another lawyer for *pro hac vice* admission to a North Carolina tribunal is obligated to understand the qualifications for such admission and to ensure that the lawyer he is sponsoring is eligible under North Carolina law for such admission. You reported to the State Bar that you relied upon Journey, who is not licensed in North Carolina, to ascertain the legal requirements for *pro hac vice* admission and signed the documentation she prepared without familiarizing yourself with the applicable law. You reported to the State Bar that you therefore did not realize when the motions for her *pro hac vice* admission were filed that she was not eligible and did not realize when those motions were filed that the express statements that Journey was an “out-of-state attorney” and that “the provisions of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 84-4.1 have been met” were false. Nonetheless, you learned that they were false no later than August 7, 2020. By August 7, 2020, you were aware that Journey had been admitted *pro hac vice* in two cases in Wake County Superior Court. You did not promptly correct the false statements to the court and did not notify the court of Journey’s ineligibility for *pro hac vice* admission. The court discovered these facts independently and, on August 25, 2020, issued two orders for Journey to show cause why her *pro hac vice* admission should not be revoked. At the hearing on those motions, Journey acknowledged her ineligibility, apologized to the court for her error, and consented to revocation of her *pro hac vice* admission.


By holding Journey out on your website as able to provide legal services in this state and by employing Journey to provide legal services in North Carolina, you aided another in the unauthorized practice of law, in violation of Rule 5.5(f), and made false or misleading statements about your law firm’s services, in violation of Rule 7.1(a). By sponsoring Journey’s *pro hac vice* admission, you asserted an issue in a legal proceeding for which there was no basis in law or fact, in violation of Rule 3.1. By failing promptly to notify the Wake County Superior Court that the motions for *pro hac vice* admission contained false statements and by failing promptly to notify the court that Journey was ineligible for *pro hac vice* admission that had already been granted, you failed to correct false statements of material fact or law previously made to the court, in violation of Rule 3.3(a)(1), and engaged in conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice, in violation of Rule 8.4(d).

When determining that a Censure was appropriate in this matter, the Committee considered your refusal to acknowledge the wrongful nature of your conduct, your demonstrated lack of remorse, and your lack of efforts to rectify the consequences of your misconduct. The Committee also acknowledged your lack of prior discipline.

You are hereby censured by the North Carolina State Bar for your violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct. The Grievance Committee trusts that you will ponder this censure, recognize the error that you have made, and that you will never again allow yourself to depart from adherence to the high ethical standards of the legal profession. This censure should serve as a strong reminder and inducement for you to weigh carefully in the future your responsibility to the public, your clients, your fellow attorneys and the courts, to the end that you demean yourself as a respected member of the legal profession whose conduct may be relied upon without question.

In accordance with the policy adopted July 23, 2010 by the Council of the North Carolina State Bar regarding the taxing of administrative fees and investigative costs to any attorney issued a censure by the Grievance Committee, an administrative fee in the amount of \$350.00 is hereby taxed to you.

Done and ordered, this 1st day of March, 2022.



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