

NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

BEFORE THE  
GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR  
20G0257 & 21G0216

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IN THE MATTER OF )  
 )  
JOHN C. SNYDER, III, ) CENSURE  
ATTORNEY AT LAW )

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On October 6, 2021, the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar met and considered the grievances filed against you by S. Y. and D. T. The grievances were assigned to a Subcommittee, which thoroughly reviewed the results of the State Bar staff's investigation of these matters.

Pursuant to section .0113(a) of the Discipline and Disability Rules of the North Carolina State Bar, the Grievance Subcommittee conducted a preliminary hearing. After considering the information available to it, including your response to the letter of notice, the Grievance Subcommittee 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.

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

The Grievance Committee believes that a hearing before the Disciplinary Hearing Commission is not required in this case and issues this censure to you. As chairman of the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar, it is now my duty to issue this censure.

S.Y. retained you to work on estate planning, to prepare and file four Powers of Attorney, and to review a contract for her parents' continuing care facility. After a first meeting in January 2020, S.Y. forwarded to you the executed and notarized POAs. Subsequently, when she tried to follow up with you to determine if they had been filed, you failed to answer either her multiple phone calls or her letter dated March 19. When you spoke with S.Y. after she threatened to report you to the Better Business Bureau, you explained that you had just learned that the court required original POAs, which you had not collected from her. This caused further delay in the filings. You did nothing of substance to review the parents' facility contract.

D.T. retained you in March 2017 to work on a claim against a school district. He paid you \$23,500 in attorney fees but this was a clearly excessive fee for the amount of work you performed and the results obtained. You failed to respond to the opposing counsel's discovery requests. You also failed to inform D.T. that your license was suspended. Subsequently, you did not participate in the Bar's Fee Dispute Resolution Program.

You failed to respond to the Bar's requests for information in either of these files.

Your conduct violated Rules 1.3; 1.4(a)(2), (3), and (4); 1.5(a), (f)(2); 8.1(b); and 8.4(c), (d).

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 the 9th day of November, 2021.



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

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