

NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

BEFORE
THE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE
OF
THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR
23G0520, 23G1265, 24G0274

IN THE MATTER OF)	
)	REPRIMAND
ALTON R. WILLIAMS,)	
ATTORNEY AT LAW)	

On April 24, 2025 the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar met and considered the grievances filed against you by J.F., Q.A., and V.B. The grievances were assigned to a Subcommittee, which thoroughly reviewed the results of the State Bar staff’s investigation of this matter.

Pursuant to 27 N.C. Admin. Code 1B.0113(a), the Grievance Subcommittee conducted a preliminary hearing. After considering the information available to it, including your responses to the letters 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.”

Having found probable cause exists in your matters, the Grievance Committee next considered what level of discipline is most appropriate in your matters based upon all the facts, the nature of the misconduct, the actual or potential injury caused, and any aggravating or mitigating factors. After further discussion and deliberation, the Grievance Committee determined the conduct before it merited discipline at the level of reprimand.

A reprimand is a written form of discipline issued where an attorney is determined to have 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 protection of the public does not require a censure.

As Chair of the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar, it is my duty to issue this reprimand, which is based on the following conduct:

J.P. retained you to represent her in a criminal matter and paid you a flat fee. You represented J.P. for over three years. Before her charges were disposed of, J.P. terminated your representation and asked for a partial refund of the fee. You declined to issue a refund. J.P. filed a fee dispute petition with the State Bar. The fee dispute facilitator served you with the Letter of Notice of the fee dispute petition and asked you to respond. You did not submit a response. By not responding to the fee dispute petition, you failed to participate in good faith in the fee dispute resolution process in violation of Rule 1.5(f)(2) of the North Carolina Rules of Professional Conduct.

Q.A. retained your legal services relating to a criminal matter and paid you a flat fee. Q.A. became dissatisfied with your legal services and asked for a full refund. You did not respond and Q.A. filed a fee dispute petition with the State Bar. The fee dispute facilitator served you with the Letter of Notice of the fee dispute petition and asked you to respond. You did not

submit a response. By not responding to the fee dispute petition, you failed to participate in good faith in the fee dispute resolution process in violation of Rule 1.5(f)(2) of the North Carolina Rules of Professional Conduct.

V.B. retained you to represent him in a criminal matter. While you were representing V.B., you were diagnosed with a serious illness, and you missed one of V.B.'s court dates. The court issued a failure to appear and a warrant for V.B.'s arrest. Before you could move to strike the failure to appear, V.B. was arrested. By failing to appear in court on behalf of V.B., you failed to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in violation of Rule 1.3 of the North Carolina Rules of Professional Conduct.

Accordingly, you are hereby reprimanded by the North Carolina State Bar for your professional misconduct consisting of the cited violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct. 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.

If you accept this reprimand, it will be maintained as a record in the judgment book of the North Carolina State Bar and a copy will be sent to the complainant. Please review carefully the details set forth in the formal Notice of Reprimand attached.

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 reprimand by the Grievance Committee, an administrative fee in the amount of \$350.00 is hereby taxed to you.

Done and ordered, this the 20th day of May, 2025.


Charles Gordon Brown, Chair
Grievance Committee

CGB/jms