

NORTH CAROLINA

WAKE COUNTY

BEFORE THE
GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR
23G0640

IN THE MATTER OF

TAYLOR ALEXANDER BEAMON,
ATTORNEY AT LAW

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REPRIMAND

On July 18, 2024 the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar met and considered the grievance filed against you by I. N. The grievance was assigned to a Subcommittee, which thoroughly reviewed the results of the State Bar staff's investigation of this matter.

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 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.

Complainant retained you to set aside the entry of a default judgment of approximately \$15,000 that was entered against her, her business partner, and their company. After you drafted and filed a motion to set aside the entry of default judgment, you contacted opposing counsel to attempt to negotiate a settlement of the amount of the default judgment. After settlement negotiations failed, you did not take any action to move the case forward or communicate with your client about setting their motion for hearing until your client contacted you expressing concerns about their representation approximately six months later. As such, there is clear, cogent,

and convincing evidence that you failed to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing your clients in violation of Rule 1.3 of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

In agreeing to represent Complainant, her business partner, and their company in setting aside the entry of a default judgment, you accepted representation for a matter that you did not have the required legal knowledge, preparation, and skill to provide. After filing the motion to set aside the entry of default, you did not serve opposing counsel with a copy of the motion as required by Rule 5(a) of the Rules of Civil Procedure and you did not include a certificate of service with the motion as required by Rule 5(b)(1) of the Rules of Civil Procedure. You used criminal forms to file civil case documents and failed to serve opposing counsel with copies of these documents as required by Rule 5(a) of the Rules of Civil Procedure. Lastly, you did not act with the required knowledge, preparation, and skill to negotiate a settlement of the default judgment on behalf of your client as evidenced by your request to opposing counsel to present your clients with an opening offer, and when opposing counsel refused to do so, you responded with a non-monetary settlement offer that was rejected. Thus, there is clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that you accepted representation for a legal matter that you were not competent to handle in violation of Rule 1.1 of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

In responding to the letter of notice, you did not provide a complete response to the State Bar's lawful request for information and documents. You also did not respond to the State Bar's lawful supplemental request for information sent to you by electronic mail and by certified mail, return receipt requested. A deputy counsel from the State Bar contacted you by telephone and spoke with you about the importance of responding to the State Bar's requests for information in this disciplinary matter. Following this call, the deputy counsel sent you a follow-up email containing the State Bar's lawful supplemental request for information, and you did not provide the State Bar with any of the requested information or documents. Thus, there is clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that you violated Rule 8.1(b) of the Rules of Professional Conduct.

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 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 19th day of August, 2024.


Kevin G. Williams, Chair
Grievance Committee

KGW/ab