



DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

General questions regarding attorney discipline should be directed to the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, toll-free (877)953-5535 or (512)453-5535. The Board of Disciplinary Appeals may be reached at (512)475-1578. Information and copies of actual orders are available at www.txboda.org. The State Commission on Judicial Conduct may be contacted toll-free, (877)228-5750 or (512)463-5533. Please note that persons disciplined by the Commission on Judicial Conduct are not necessarily licensed attorneys.

DISBARMENTS

On Dec. 27, 2006, **Karen Hope Hester** [#24032417], 40, of El Paso was disbarred. An evidentiary panel of the District 17-A Grievance Committee found Hester was retained in a probate matter. Hester filed the will for probate but took no further action. After leaving Texas, Hester ceased all communication with the client and abandoned the representation. Hester failed to respond to the grievance.

Hester violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2), 1.03(a) and (b), and 8.04(a)(8).

She was ordered to pay \$1,225 in restitution and \$2,775 in attorney's fees and costs.

On Nov. 13, 2006, **Beth Fielding Siever**, [#18345500], 56, of Austin, was disbarred. An evidentiary panel of the District 9-A Grievance Committee found that Siever, in two cases, neglected legal matters entrusted to her, failed to keep clients reasonably informed about the status of their matters, failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information, knowingly failed to respond to a lawful demand for information from a disciplinary authority, engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation, violated a disciplinary judgment, and failed to timely furnish responses to the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's office or a district grievance committee as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Siever violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 8.01(b), and 8.04(a)(3), (a)(7), and (a)(8). She was ordered to pay \$1,150 in attorney's fees and costs.

Angel violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2), 1.03(a), and 8.04(a)(8).

On Dec. 12, 2006, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation of **Charles A. Rich** [#24029795], 35, of Dallas. At the time of Rich's resignation, there were eight matters pending against him alleging failure to return unearned fees, conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation, failure to safeguard funds belonging to third parties, commission of a criminal act reflecting on the lawyer's honesty and trustworthiness, neglect, failure to respond to reasonable requests for information from clients, failure to explain matters to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the client to make an informed decision, and failure to comply with grievance committee subpoenas.

Rich violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2), 1.03(a) and (b), 1.14(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(2), (a)(3), and (a)(8).

On Dec. 12, 2006, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **Joe Robert Love, Jr.** [#00791139], 40, of Dallas. At the time of Love's resignation, there were eight pending evidentiary matters. In the first matter, Love disbursed his client's funds to himself and to various entities and individuals without the client's consent. In four of the matters, Love withheld funds from his clients' personal injury settlements pursuant to letters of protection but failed to remit the funds to the providers. In two other matters, Love settled the clients' personal injury claims without their knowledge or permission, and endorsed their names to the settlement checks and failed to disburse any of the settlement funds to the clients or medical providers. Further, Love failed to

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RESIGNATIONS

On Dec. 12, 2006, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **Steven M. Angel** [#01257200], 56, of Oklahoma City, Okla. At the time of Angel's resignation, there was one pending evidentiary matter. The complainant employed Angel to represent her in a discrimination suit against her former employer. Thereafter, Angel failed to perform any meaningful legal services. The complainant lost her case. Angel was to appeal the decision, but failed to do so. Angel failed to return the complainant's telephone calls or reply to her written communication. Angel failed to respond to the grievance.



provide the clients with settlement statements. In the final matter, Love neglected his client's criminal matter by failing to perform any significant legal work and by his failure to keep the client informed about the status of the case, including a scheduled court date, which resulted in an arrest warrant being issued against his client. Love failed to respond to three of the grievances.

Love violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.02(a)(2) and (b), 1.03(a), 1.14(b) and (c), and 8.04(a)(2), (a)(3), and (a)(8).

On Dec. 12, 2006, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **William E. May** [#13271600], 56, of Corpus Christi. By order dated Sept. 26, 2006, the District 11-A Evidentiary Panel found that in one matter, May was hired for a property seizure forfeiture case in 2004 and failed to reasonably communicate with the client, failed to advise the client of her trial date, failed to attend the trial, failed to timely take any action to set aside the default judgment, misrepresented the status of the case to the client, and failed to timely file a response to the grievance. A hearing on the sanction to be imposed against May for his misconduct was pending at the time that May submitted his resignation.

In a second matter, May was hired to defend a client accused of solicitation of murder. May failed to properly investigate the matter, failed to formulate a defense, and failed to present any witnesses at trial. May repeatedly assured his client the criminal charges would be dropped and her case would be dismissed, creating an unjustified expectation about the results the attorney could achieve. May utilized his client's bank account rather than a trust account to deposit and withdraw funds from other clients and failed to timely respond to the grievance.

In a third matter, May was paid \$5,000 to challenge his client's parole revocation. May failed to keep his client reasonably informed, failed to respond to requests for information, neglected the legal matter entrusted to him, and failed to timely respond to the grievance.

In a fourth matter, May was hired to appeal a criminal conviction and received a partial payment of his fee. May did not take any action to pursue the appeal and failed to refund the unearned fee upon request.

May violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a) and (b), 1.14(a) and (c), 1.15(d), 5.03(a) and (b)(1), 7.02(a)(3), and 8.04(a)(3), and (a)(8).

SUSPENSIONS

On Dec. 8, 2006, **Cornelius A. Long** [#00793182], 58, of Houston, received a two-year, partially probated suspension effective Jan. 1, 2007, with the first year actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 4-E Grievance Committee found that the complainant hired Long for representation in a criminal matter. The complainant paid Long \$1,500 for the representation. Long failed to appear at a scheduled hearing in the matter, failed to respond to further communications from the complainant, failed to return unearned fees, and failed to respond to the grievance.

Long violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2), 1.03(a) and (b), 1.15(d), and 8.01(b). He was ordered to pay \$1,500 in restitution, \$600 in attorney's fees, and \$519 in costs. Long has appealed the decision.

On Jan. 23, 2007, **Matthew Alan Sharp** [#24004403], 32, of Montgomery, Ala., received a one-year, fully probated suspension, effective Jan. 12, 2007. The District 6-A Grievance Committee found that on May 24, 2004, the complainant employed Sharp to represent her in a post-divorce action. Sharp prepared an original petition for breach of settlement agreement; however, he failed to file it. In addition, Sharp failed to respond to the complainant's proper requests for information about the matter and failed to keep the complainant informed about the status of the matter.

In a second matter, on Oct. 13, 2004, the complainant employed Sharp to defend a civil lawsuit. A non-jury trial

was scheduled for June 21, 2005. Prior to the trial date, Sharp failed to respond to the complainant's numerous requests for information about the matter. The complainant was not able to contact Sharp and had to employ new counsel that day for trial. In addition, Sharp was requested to respond in writing to the complaint within 30 days of receipt of the notice but failed to do so and asserted no grounds for such failure.

Sharp violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$600 in restitution and \$240.98 in costs.

On Jan. 17, 2007, **Dwight Edward Denman** [#00790578], 51, of North Richland Hills, received a five-year, partially probated suspension effective Feb. 1, 2007, with the first three years actively

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served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 7-A Grievance Committee found that, in one matter, a husband and his wife hired Denman on Feb. 19, 2004 to file a Chapter 13 bankruptcy. It was agreed that the filing was urgently needed, as the mortgage company had given notice of foreclosure. Denman failed to promptly file the bankruptcy petition, and, on March 2, 2004, the property was sold to the mortgage company in a foreclosure sale. Thereafter, Denman failed to appear at three scheduled creditors meetings, failed to keep his clients advised as to the status of the case, and failed to explain matters so that they could make informed decisions regarding the representation. On Oct. 4, 2004, an order of dismissal was entered in the bankruptcy case citing his

client's failure to attend a scheduled creditors meeting. In January 2005, the clients were evicted pursuant to a judgment for possession granted in favor of the mortgage company.

In the second matter, a client hired Denman to represent him in an Internal Revenue Service tax liability matter and a possible bankruptcy. Thereafter, Denman failed to respond to the client's calls and requests for information about his case and failed to appear for scheduled meetings at his office. The client then asked for a statement of charges against the retainer, but Denman failed to respond to his request.

Denman violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2), 1.03(a) and (b), and 1.15(d). He was ordered to pay \$5,563.75 in attorney's fees and \$202.03 in costs.

On Feb. 6, 2007, **John David Herrick** [#24000478], 37, of San Antonio, agreed to a five-and-a-half-year, partially probated suspension effective Feb. 1, 2007, with the first 17 months actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 10-A Grievance Committee found that Herrick unreasonably increased the costs and burdens of a breach of contract lawsuit and unreasonably delayed resolution of the matter by failing to pick up his certified mail, failing to provide opposing counsel with his current business address, failing to reduce verbal agreements to writing, failing to pay the fee required to transfer venue, and filing an untimely motion for continuance with misrepresentations of the factual grounds. Herrick further misrepresented that a motion to set had been filed and the case had been set for non-jury trial at a time when the motion had not been filed. Herrick engaged in the practice of law while under administrative suspension and failed to timely furnish a response to the grievance.

In a divorce matter, Herrick neglected a divorce case by failing to draft the divorce decree and QDRO and misrepresented to his client that the documents had been prepared and forwarded to

opposing counsel when they had not. Herrick failed to keep his client reasonably informed and failed to promptly comply with her reasonable requests for information.

Herrick violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2), 1.03(a), 3.02, 4.01(a), and 8.04(a)(1), (a)(3), (a)(8), and (a)(11). He was ordered to pay \$1,000 in attorney's fees and expenses.

On Feb. 2, 2007, **William Britton Hall** [#24025406], 42, of Conroe, received a three-year, partially probated suspension effective Nov. 1, 2006, with the first 12 months actively served and the remainder probated. The District 3-B Grievance Committee found that in four separate complaints, Hall neglected a legal matter entrusted to him, failed to carry out completely the obligations owed his clients, failed to keep his clients reasonably informed about the status of the matter, failed to explain matters to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the clients to make informed decisions regarding the representation, failed to hold funds and other property belonging in whole or in part to clients or third persons in a lawyer's possession separate from the lawyer's own property, failed to promptly notify clients or third persons upon receiving funds or other property in which the clients or third persons had an interest, failed to hold funds and other property in which both the lawyer and another person's claim interests separate until there is an accounting and severance of their interests, and failed to take steps to reasonably protect a client's interests upon termination of representation.

Hall violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2), 1.03(a) and (b), 1.14(a), (b), and (c), and 1.15(d). Hall was ordered to pay \$1,710 in attorney's fees and \$659.15 in costs.

REPRIMANDS

On Nov. 27, 2006, **Roberta Clement** [#00790470], 42, of Houston, accepted a public reprimand. The 129th District Court of Harris County found that in three separate matters, Clement failed to

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keep her clients reasonably informed about the status of their cases and failed to comply with reasonable requests for information from her clients. Clement also failed to explain the matters to the extent reasonably necessary to permit her clients to make informed decisions regarding the representations. Clement engaged in the practice of law while administratively suspended.

Clement violated rules 1.03(a) and (b) and 8.04(a)(11). She agreed to pay \$2,500 in restitution and \$1,500 in attorney's fees.

On Dec. 27, 2006, **Aaron Ramirez** [#24027644], 35, of Dallas, agreed to a public reprimand. The District 1-A Grievance Committee found that on Dec. 16, 2004, Ramirez advised a client that the law firm where he was employed required a retainer in the amount of \$5,000 for him to continue his work on a family law matter. Ramirez also advised his client that the law firm required a retention agreement, which the client executed.

Ramirez's supervising partner had no knowledge that he was working on the family law matter. Furthermore, law firm management did not require that Ramirez obtain a signed retention agreement and was not aware that he had requested or obtained a retainer of \$5,000 from the client. Ramirez received a check for \$5,000 from his client and deposited it in his personal bank account.

Ramirez violated Rules 1.14(a) and 8.04(a)(3). He was ordered to pay \$1,457.50 in attorney's fees.

On Feb. 15, 2007, **Raymond R. Epps** [#06638000], 69, of Houston, accepted a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 4-A Grievance Committee found that the complainant employed Epps to represent him in a child custody matter. On Nov. 24, 2003, a hearing was set in the case. Prior to the hearing, Epps received a message from the complainant

stating that an agreement had been reached concerning the case. Epps failed to attend the hearing, failed to confirm the agreement with either the complainant or opposing counsel, and failed to take any other action to protect his client's rights. The hearing went forward without Epps in attendance. As a result of the hearing, the complainant was ordered to pay \$2,700 in attorney's fees and costs.

Epps violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2), 1.03(a) and (b), and 1.15(d). He agreed to pay \$3,021.78 in restitution and \$1,935.52 in attorney's fees and costs.

On Feb. 7, 2007, **Jon Randall Alworth** [#01133070], 47, of Brownsville, accepted a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 12-B Grievance Committee found that in a wrongful death case, Alworth neglected the legal matter, failed to keep his client reasonably informed, failed to respond to her reasonable requests for information, and failed to inform the client he had relocated his law office.

In a second case, Alworth neglected the legal matter, failed to keep his client reasonably informed, failed to respond to reasonable requests for information, and failed to inform the client that he had relocated his law office.

Alworth violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and 1.03(a). He was ordered to pay \$2,500 in attorney's fees and expenses.

On Feb. 2, 2007, **Rogelio C. Rodriguez** [#24033652], 31, of El Paso, accepted a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 17-A Grievance Committee found that Rodriguez neglected an immigration case and failed to communicate with his client.

Rodriguez violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and 1.03(a). He was ordered to pay \$700 in attorney's fees and expenses.

On Nov. 7, 2006, **Charles Louis Roberts** [#17000100], 60, of El Paso, received a public reprimand. An eviden-

tiary panel of the District 17-A Grievance Committee found Roberts was hired to file a post conviction and neglected the representation by failing to file the writ in a timely matter.

Roberts violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and was ordered to pay \$3,650 in fees and expenses.

On Dec. 18, 2006, **Marc Stephen Ledet** [#24002459], 36, of San Antonio, received a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 10-B Grievance Committee found that upon termination and upon request, Ledet failed to timely return his client's files.

Ledet violated Rule 1.15(d). He was ordered to pay \$1,450 in attorney's fees and costs. ❖

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