

## **FINAL NOTICE OF SUSPENSION**

Case No. 05-66-GA

**Notice Issued: April 10, 2006**

James H. Richards, P 35176, Jenison, Michigan, by the Attorney Discipline Board modifying Kent County Hearing Panel #3's order of suspension.

1. Suspension - 180 Days
2. Effective November 14, 2005

The respondent appeared at the hearing but was found to be in default for his failure to file an answer to the formal complaint. Based on that default, the panel found that respondent, in a divorce matter, failed to take reasonable steps to protect a client's interests; failed to surrender papers and property to which the client is entitled upon termination of representation; knowingly failed to respond to a lawful demand for information from a disciplinary authority; and failed to answer a request for investigation.

Respondent's conduct was in violation of MCR 9.104(A)(1)-(4), (7); MCR 9.113(A); MCR 9.113(B)(2); and Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct 1.16(d); 8.2(a)(2); and 8.4(a) and (c). The hearing panel ordered that respondent's license be suspended for 90 days.

The Grievance Administrator filed a timely conditional petition for review which was heard before the Attorney Discipline Board on February 16, 2006. Respondent did not appear at the review hearing and the Board modified the hearing panel's order of suspension by increasing the period of suspension from 90 days to 180 days. Costs were assessed in the amount of \$2,376.11.