

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION  
(By Consent)

Case Nos. 96-261-GA; 97-2-FA

Paul S. Schaefer, P-29748, Paw Paw, Michigan, by Attorney Discipline Board Kalamazoo County Hearing Panel #1.

- 1) Suspension - 180 Days;
- 2) Effective February 1, 1998.

Respondent, acting in his capacity as an associate with a law firm, was retained to represent a client in an employment matter. The client entrusted respondent with four checks totalling \$1,238.81 as payment for legal services. Respondent entered a plea of no contest to allegations that he failed to promptly advise his law firm of his receipt of the funds; failed to promptly forward the proceeds of the first two checks to his law firm; and failed to account for the funds.

Respondent, in his capacity as an associate with the firm, was appointed by Van Buren County to represent indigent criminal defendants. In accordance with the county's billing procedures, respondent submitted 12 invoices for payment for legal services rendered, totalling \$1,609. Respondent was terminated from the firm shortly thereafter. Respondent then notified the county that he was no longer associated with the firm and directed the county to make out all future checks to him personally and forward the checks to him at his residence. The county then issued a check to respondent in the amount of \$1,609 as payment for legal services rendered. Respondent entered a plea of no contest to allegations that he failed to promptly provide the county's check to his former law firm; failed to deposit and maintain any disputed funds in a trust account pending the resolution of the dispute; failed to promptly forward the county's funds to his former firm; and failed to account for the funds.

Respondent entered a plea of no contest to charges that his conduct violated MCR 9.104(1)-(4); and Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct 1.15(a) and (b) and 8.4(a)-(c).

The parties stipulated that respondent be suspended from the practice of law for a period of 180 days. Costs were assessed in the amount of \$500.12.

