

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION WITH CONDITIONS

Case No. 96-97-GA

Thomas B. Richardson, P-34969, Detroit, Michigan, by the Attorney Discipline Board affirming Tri-County Hearing Panel #1.

- 1) Suspension - Thirty (30) Days;
- 2) Effective October 25, 1997.1.

Respondent was retained to represent the complainant in his capacity as personal representative of his deceased son's estate, and received a check for \$11,734 representing the proceeds of a wrongful death action brought by the estate. The panel found, by a preponderance of the evidence, that respondent neglected the matter; paid himself attorney fees from the estate without prior court approval; and charged excessive fees for legal services of a minor nature.

Respondent's conduct was specifically found to be in violation of MCR 9.104(1)-(4); and Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct 1.15(a)-(c); 1.16(d); 3.4(c); and 8.4(a). Respondent's conduct was also alleged to be in violation of Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct 1.1(a)-(c); 1.2(a); 1.3; 1.4(a); 1.5(a); and 8.4(b) and (c).

The panel ordered that respondent be suspended from the practice of law for thirty days, subject to conditions including the completion of a law office management seminar; practicing under the supervision of a mentor for one year following his reinstatement; and either passing the ethics section of the multi-state bar examination or auditing a law school course in professional responsibility.

The Grievance Administrator filed a petition for review seeking increased discipline. In an order and opinion issued January 27, 1998, the Attorney Discipline Board affirmed the panel's Order of Suspension With Conditions. Costs were assessed in the amount of \$980.00.

1. Respondent was automatically reinstated to the practice of law effective November 25, 1997.

