

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION WITH CONDITIONS

Case Nos. 96-199-GA; 96-218-FA

Robert L. Coopes, P-12213, Southfield, Michigan, by Attorney Discipline Board Tri-County Hearing Panel #67.

- 1) Suspension - 180 Days;
- 2) Effective January 14, 1997.

Respondent was retained by the complainant to probate an estate and filed a petition for commencement of proceedings in Wayne County Probate Court. The complainant was named personal representative. The panel found, by default and respondent's admissions, that respondent failed to notify the estate's creditors that probate proceedings had been commenced; failed to ascertain the nature of the claims made against the estate; failed to timely satisfy or negotiate creditors' legitimate claims or to contest questionable claims; failed to appear at scheduled court hearings; failed to take steps to sell, disburse and/or liquidate the decedent's assets; failed to file timely accountings; hired two accountants on the estate's behalf to perform the same services; failed to protect the estate's interest in civil litigation; failed to adequately communicate with the complainant; failed to assist in the administration of the estate; failed to attend three court hearings where he had been ordered to appear to explain reasons for his delay and inaction; failed to release the file to the successor personal representative in a timely fashion; failed to answer the Request for Investigation; and failed to answer the Formal Complaints. Respondent's conduct was found to be in violation of MCR 9.103(C); MCR 9.104(1)-(4) and (7); MCR 9.113(A) and (B)(2); and Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct 1.1; 1.3; 1.4; 1.15(a)-(c); 1.16; 3.2; 8.1(b); and 8.4(a)-(c). The panel ordered that respondent be suspended from the practice of law for 180 days with conditions relevant to the established misconduct. Costs were assessed in the amount of \$303.75.

Respondent filed a petition for review and motion for stay of discipline. The motion for stay was denied, and the suspension is deemed to be effective January 14, 1997. Respondent thereafter withdrew his petition for review.