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## NOTICE OF SUSPENSION AND RESTITUTION WITH CONDITIONS (By Consent)

Case No. 19-35-GA

Notice Issued: December 12, 2019

Daniel Patrick Brent, P 79240, Hazel Park, Michigan, by the Attorney Discipline Board Tri-County Hearing Panel #51.

Suspension - Three Years, Effective July 3, 2019<sup>1</sup>

The respondent and the Grievance Administrator filed a stipulation for a consent order of discipline, in accordance with MCR 9.115(F)(5), which was approved by the Attorney Grievance Commission and accepted by the hearing panel. Based on respondent's default, admissions and the stipulation of the parties, the panel found that respondent committed professional misconduct when overdrafts occurred on respondent's IOLTA account in June 2018 and August 2018 and respondent failed to answer the Grievance Administrator's requests for investigation regarding the overdrafts. The panel also found that respondent abandoned the representation of three separate client matters, stopped communicating with those clients, made knowing misrepresentations of the facts or circumstances surrounding the request for investigation filed by one of the clients, and failed to respond to two requests for investigation filed by the two separate former clients.

Specifically, the panel found that respondent neglected legal matters entrusted to him, in violation of MRPC 1.1(c); failed to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing clients, in violation of MRPC 1.3; failed to keep his clients reasonably informed about the status of their matters and comply promptly with reasonable requests for information or to explain the matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit his clients to make informed decisions regarding the representation, in violation of MRPC 1.4(a) and (b); collected clearly excessive fees in light of the facts and circumstances of the representations, in violation of MRPC 1.5; failed to provide the Grievance Administrator with a full and fair explanation of the cause of the overdrafts and how they were corrected, in violation of MRPC 1.15A(f); upon termination of representation, failed to take reasonable steps to protect his clients' interests, such as giving reasonable notice to the clients, allowing time for employment of other counsel, surrendering papers and property to which the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Respondent's license to practice law in Michigan was suspended on an interim basis, effective July 3, 2019, and until further order of the hearing panel or the Attorney Discipline Board pursuant to an interim order of suspension and restitution entered by the hearing panel on June 27, 2019.

December 12, 2019 Page 2

clients were entitled, and refunding any advance payments of fees that had not been earned, in violation of MRPC 1.16(d); knowingly failing to respond to lawful demands for information from a disciplinary authority, in violation of MRPC 8.1(a)(2); failed to answer requests for investigation in conformity with MCR 9.113(A) and (B)(2), in violation of MCR 9.104(7) and MRPC 8.1(a)(2); made knowing misrepresentations of the facts or circumstances surrounding the request for investigation, as proscribed by MCR 9.104(6); and made misrepresentations in his answer to the request for investigation, as proscribed by MCR 9.113(A). Respondent was also found to have violated MRPC 8.4(a)-(c); and MCR 9.104(1)-(4).

In accordance with the stipulation of the parties, the panel ordered that respondent's license to practice law in Michigan be suspended for a period of three years, retroactive to July 3, 2019, (the date of respondent's interim suspension from the practice of law), that he be required to pay restitution in the total amount of \$5,870.00, and attend two management and record keeping seminars offered by the State Bar of Michigan prior to filing a petition for reinstatement. Costs were assessed in the amount of \$1,186.45.

Wendy A. Weeley