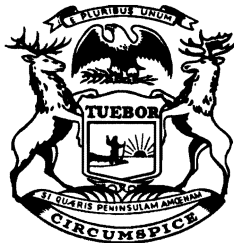


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NOTICE OF SUSPENSION AND RESTITUTION

Case No. 16-136-GA

Notice Issued: May 19, 2017

Matthew John Stephens, P 74424, Okemos, Michigan, by the Attorney Discipline Board Ingham County Hearing Panel #6.

Suspension - 180 Days, Effective May 19, 2017.¹

Based on respondent's default, the hearing panel found that respondent committed professional misconduct by neglecting a client's misdemeanor matter; neglecting another client's civil claim; failing to appear on behalf of three separate clients at two hearings and one status conference; and by failing to answer a request for investigation.

The panel found that respondent neglected legal matters entrusted to him, in violation of MRPC 1.1(c); failed to seek the lawful objectives of his clients through reasonably available means permitted by law and the rules of professional conduct, in violation of MRPC 1.2(a); failed to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing his clients, in violation of MRPC 1.3; failed to communicate with his clients regarding the status of their legal matters, in violation of MRPC 1.4(a); failed to explain a matter to the extent necessary to permit the clients to make informed decisions regarding the representation, in violation of MRPC 1.4(b); failed to hold property of a client in connection with a representation separate from his own property, in violation of MRPC 1.15(d); failed to deposit unearned fees paid in advance in a client trust account, in violation of MRPC 1.15(g); failed to return unearned attorney fees and other funds paid in advance to clients upon termination of the representation, in violation of MRPC 1.16(d); knowingly disobeyed an obligation under the rules of a tribunal, in violation of MRPC 3.4(c); and failed to answer a request for investigation, in violation of MCR 9.104(7) and MCR 9.113(A) and (B). Respondent was also found to have violated MRPC 8.4(a) and (b) and MCR 9.104(1)-(4).

The panel ordered that respondent's license to practice law be suspended for a period of 180 days. The panel also ordered restitution totaling \$2,800.00. Costs were assessed in the amount of \$1,782.66.

Mark A. Armitage
Executive Director

¹ Respondent has been continuously suspended from the practice of law in Michigan since January 26, 2017. Please see Notice of Interim Suspension Pursuant to MCR 9.115(H)(1), issued January 26, 2017.