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NOTICE OF SUSPENSION AND RESTITUTION WITH CONDITION

Case No. 21-42-GA

Notice Issued: December 8, 2021

Ronald G. Pierce, P 77198, Hastings, Michigan, by the Attorney Discipline Board Kent County Hearing Panel #4

Suspension - 180 Days, Effective December 2, 2021¹

After proceedings conducted pursuant to MCR 9.115, the panel found, by default, that respondent committed professional misconduct as charged in a five-count Formal Complaint filed against respondent that alleged that he committed professional misconduct in his representation of four separate clients in their criminal defense matters; failed to timely answer two requests for investigation and completely failed to answer another request for investigation.

Based on respondent's default, and the evidence presented at the hearing, the panel found that, with respect to Counts One through Four, respondent neglected his clients, in violation of MRPC 1.1(c); failed to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing his clients, in violation of MRPC 1.3; failed to keep his clients reasonably informed about the status of their matter and failed to comply promptly with reasonable requests for information, in violation of MRPC 1.4(a); and failed to take reasonable steps to protect his clients' interests upon termination of representation, including a failure to refund any advance payment of fees that had not been earned, in violation of MRPC 1.16(d).

With respect to Count Five, the panel found that respondent knowingly failed to respond to a lawful demand for information from a disciplinary authority, in violation of MRPC 8.1(a)(2); failed to answer a request for investigation in conformity with MCR 9.113(A)-(B)(2), in violation of MCR 9.104(7) and MRPC 8.1(a)(2); and engaged in conduct that violated the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct, in violation of MRPC 8.4(a) and MCR 9.104(4).

As charged in the entire complaint, the panel found that respondent engaged in conduct that was prejudicial to the proper administration of justice, in violation of MCR 9.104(1); engaged in conduct that exposed the legal profession or the courts to obloquy, contempt, censure, or reproach, in violation of MCR 9.104(2); and engaged in conduct that was contrary to justice, ethics, honesty, or good morals, in violation of MCR 9.104(3).

The panel ordered that respondent's license to practice law be suspended for a period of 180 days, that he pay restitution in the total amount of \$27,335.00, and that he be subject to a condition relevant to the established misconduct. Costs were assessed in the amount of \$2,048.87.

¹ Respondent has been continuously suspended from the practice of law in Michigan since August 26, 2021. See Notice of Interim Suspension Pursuant to MCR 9.115(H)(1), dated August 26, 2021.