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SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY**

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June 24, 2019

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, R.R.R. & REGULAR MAIL

Kevin J. Begley, Esq.
96 Main Street
Matawan, New Jersey 07747-2630

Re: In the Matter of Kevin J. Begley
Docket No. DRB 19-088
District Docket No. VIII-2015-0035E
LETTER OF ADMONITION

Dear Mr. Begley:

The Disciplinary Review Board has reviewed your conduct in the above matter and has concluded that it was improper. Following a review of the record, the Board determined to impose an admonition for your violations of RPC 1.1(a) (gross neglect); RPC 1.3 (lack of diligence); RPC 1.4(b) (failure to communicate); and RPC 8.4(c) (conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation).

Specifically, on January 28, 2012, grievant Lenny August retained you, on an hourly-fee basis, to pursue an action against his insurance carrier for its failure to provide insurance coverage for the collapse and repair of the roof of his residence. Mr. August paid an initial retainer fee of \$5,000.

You filed a complaint on behalf of Mr. August, but, on February 4, 2013, the court entered an order dismissing the complaint without prejudice for failure to provide discovery. Despite the dismissal, you and opposing counsel continued to conduct discovery, including a deposition of Mr. August on September 5, 2013. You failed to seek reinstatement of the complaint, based on your misunderstanding that, because the deposition took place, the complaint had been reinstated. Thus, you engaged in gross neglect and lack of diligence. Further, after November 28, 2013, you failed to communicate with Mr. August regarding the status of the litigation, and you failed to provide him with any communication about the

status of the retainer and billings. Your failure to inform Mr. August of the complaint's dismissal constituted a misrepresentation by silence.

In imposing only an admonition, the Board considered that you mishandled one client matter, caused little to no harm to the client, refunded the full \$5,000 fee, and have no history of discipline in twenty-two years as a licensed attorney in New Jersey. Additionally, you presented evidence of challenging personal circumstances and have shown a nexus between those circumstances and some of your misconduct. You also have been very cooperative with disciplinary authorities.

Your conduct has adversely reflected not only on you as an attorney but also on all members of the bar. Accordingly, the Board has directed the issuance of this admonition to you. R. 1:20-15(f)(4).

A permanent record of this occurrence has been filed with the Clerk of the Supreme Court and the Board's office. Should you become the subject of any further discipline, this admonition will be taken into consideration.

The Board also has directed that the costs of the disciplinary proceedings be assessed against you. An invoice of costs will be forwarded to you under separate cover.

Very truly yours,



Ellen A. Brodsky
Chief Counsel

EAB/trj

c: Chief Justice Stuart Rabner
Associate Justices
Heather Joy Baker, Clerk
Supreme Court of New Jersey
Bruce W. Clark, Chair
Disciplinary Review Board (e-mail)
Gail G. Haney, Deputy Clerk
Supreme Court of New Jersey (w/ethics history)
Charles Centinaro, Director
Office of Attorney Ethics (interoffice mail and e-mail)
Isabel McGinty, Statewide Ethics Coordinator
Office of Attorney Ethics (e-mail)
Howard Duff, Chair
District VIII Ethics Committee (e-mail)
Barry J. Muller, Secretary
District VIII Ethics Committee (regular mail and e-mail)
Leonard G. August, Grievant (regular mail)