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# DISCIPLINARY REVIEW BOARD

OF THE

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

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ASSISTANT COUNSEL

September 27, 2000

Paul A. Dykstra, Esq.  
249 Boulevard  
Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey 07604

Re: In the Matter of Paul A. Dykstra  
Docket No. DRB 00-182

Dear Mr. Dykstra:

The Disciplinary Review Board has reviewed the motion for discipline by consent filed by the District XI Ethics Committee. After a review of the record, the Board determined to grant the motion and to impose an admonition. Specifically, in late 1996 you were retained by Joan and Paul Benkovic to represent them in connection with a personal injury claim. Following an arbitration in April 1998, at which the Benkovics did not appear, you informed them of the amount of the award. Mrs. Benkovic then told you that she did not want to accept the award, but wanted the case to continue. Although you told Mrs. Benkovic that she had to pay \$200 to appeal the arbitration award, that fee was never paid. Consequently, the arbitration award was never appealed. An order of dismissal was entered on August 11, 1998.

In March 1999, you were suspended for three months in an unrelated matter. You did not notify the Benkovics of your suspension, reasoning that the case had already been dismissed and that, therefore, there was no pending matter, as contemplated under R.1:20-20(b)(1). You did not, however, clearly communicate to the Benkovics that the arbitration award had never been appealed and that the case had been dismissed in 1998. Your conduct in this regard violated R.1:20-20. You also violated RPC 1.4(a) when you failed to respond to Mrs. Benkovic's several attempts to contact you to inquire about the status of the case.

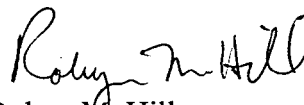
Your conduct adversely reflected not only upon you as an attorney, but also upon all members of the bar. Accordingly, the Board has directed the issuance of this admonition to you. R. 1:20-15 (f) (4).

I/M/O Paul F. Dykstra  
DRB 00-182

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, it will be taken into consideration.

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

Very truly yours,

  
Robyn M. Hill

RMH:ms

- c. Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz
- Associate Justices
- Stephen W. Townsend, Clerk
- Supreme Court of New Jersey
- Lee M. Hymerling, Chair
- Disciplinary Review Board
- David E. Johnson, Jr., Director
- Office of Attorney Ethics
- Thomas DeVita, Chair
- District XI Ethics Committee
- Robert Stober, Secretary
- District XI Ethics Committee