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# DISCIPLINARY REVIEW BOARD

## OF THE SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY



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June 11, 2009

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

Raymond L. Hamlin, Esq.  
c/o Terry Ridley, Esq.  
Hunt, Hamlin & Ridley  
60 Park Place  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

RE: In the Matter of Raymond L. Hamlin  
Docket No. DRB 09-051  
District Docket No. VC-05-021E  
**LETTER OF ADMONITION**

Dear Mr. Ridley:

The Disciplinary Review Board has reviewed your conduct in the above matter and has concluded that it was improper. After a careful review of the record, a seven-member majority of the Board determined to impose a strong admonition. Members Wissinger and Zmirich dissented, voting to bring the matter on for oral argument to determine if more severe discipline was required. R. 1:20-15(f)(4).

Specifically, on November 22, 2000, you were retained by Ollie Davis to represent her in connection with a federal lawsuit. Ms. Davis agreed to pay you a one-third fee, contingent on the outcome of the matter. Despite the fact that you had not represented Ms. Davies before, you did not reduce to writing the terms of your fee agreement with her, as required by RPC 1.5(b).

When Ms. Davis rejected a \$150,000 settlement offer made by one of the defendants, the New Jersey Highway Authority, you attempted to have her sign an agreement providing for the payment of a fee even without a recovery. In particular, your letter to Ms. Davis about the settlement stated that she would be obligated to pay your expected \$50,000 fee even in the absence of a settlement.

I/M/O Raymond L. Hamlin

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In October 2003, the court granted the Highway Authority's motion for summary judgment. You again advised Ms. Davis that she would be obligated to pay a \$50,000 fee, despite the dismissal of her complaint.

Your conduct in attempting to collect a \$50,000 fee, notwithstanding that there was no recovery, violated RPC 1.5(a), which requires that a fee be reasonable.

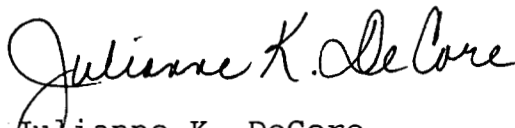
In imposing only an admonition, the Board noted that no disciplinary infractions have been sustained against you since your admission to the New Jersey bar in 1991.

Your conduct has 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).

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 invoice of costs will be forwarded under separate cover.

Very truly yours,



Julianne K. DeCore  
Chief Counsel

JKD/tk

c: Chief Justice Stuart Rabner  
Associate Justices  
Louis Pashman, Chair, Disciplinary Review Board  
Mark Neary, Clerk, Supreme Court of New Jersey  
Gail G. Haney, Deputy Clerk, Supreme Court of New Jersey  
(w/ethics history)  
Charles Centinaro, Director, Office of Attorney Ethics  
Arthur S. Horn, Chair, District VC Ethics Committee  
Seth Ptasiwicz, Secretary, District VC Ethics Committee  
Ollie M. Davis, grievant