

back

DISCIPLINARY REVIEW BOARD

OF THE

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

LEE M. HYMERLING, ESQ., CHAIR
JAMES R. ZAZZALI, ESQ., VICE-CHAIR
HON. WARREN BRODY
MICHAEL R. COLE, ESQ.
RUTH JEAN LOLLA
MARY J. MAUDSLEY, ESQ.
ROCKY L. PETERSON, ESQ.
BARBARA F. SCHWARTZ
WILLIAM H. THOMPSON, D.D.S.



RICHARD J. HUGHES JUSTICE COMPLEX
CN 962
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0962
(609) 292-1011

ROBYN M. HILL
CHIEF COUNSEL

ISABEL FRANK
DEPUTY CHIEF COUNSEL

LILLIAN LEWIN
DONA S. SEROTA-TESCHNER
COLIN T. TAMS
ELLEN A. BRODSKY
ASSISTANT COUNSEL

April 27, 1998

Certified Mail - R.R.R. and Regular Mail

Ronald Thompson, Esq.
213 S. Harrison Street
East Orange, New Jersey 07018

Re: In the Matter of Ronald Thompson
Docket No. DRB 97-507
LETTER OF ADMONITION

Dear Mr. Thompson:

The Disciplinary Review Board has reviewed your conduct in the above matter and has concluded that it was improper. Specifically, in 1987 you were retained by Yvonne Friend to represent her in connection with burns that she had suffered while working at a Burger King in Roselle Park. Although you filed a worker's compensation petition in that same year, you named a wrong defendant, as a result of which an amended petition had to be filed in 1989. Subsequently, the matter was dismissed. On December 24, 1991, you made a motion to vacate the dismissal. Thereafter, a second wrong defendant was pursued until June 1993, when another amended petition had to be filed. Once more the matter was discontinued, as a result of which you had to move to vacate the discontinuance. That motion was granted on August 3, 1993. After the service of the amended petition, however, you were notified by the defendant that there were no records to prove that your client had been an employee. Although on September 21, 1993 you wrote to your client advising her of the defendant's position, you sent that letter to the wrong address. Thereafter, you made no attempt to contact the client until May 21, 1996, when you advised her by letter that you had filed a motion to be relieved as counsel. Although this communication was sent to your client at two different addresses by certified mail, both were returned as unclaimed. On June 4, 1996, the Division of Workers' Compensation relieved you as counsel and entered an order of discontinuance. Your conduct in this matter constituted lack of diligence, in violation of RPC 1.3. In addition, between 1987 and 1993 you failed to return your client's telephone calls and to advise her of the status of her matter, in violation of RPC 1.4(a).

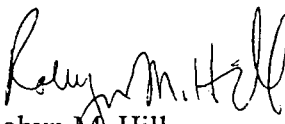
I/M/O Ronald Thompson
DRB No. 97-507

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).

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.
Blair Zwillman, Chair
District VB Ethics Committee
Charles B. Clancy, III, Secretary
District VB Ethics Committee
Yvonne Friend, Grievant