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ASSISTANT COUNSEL

July 22, 2015

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

Sebastian Onyi Ibezim, Jr.
c/o Juliana E. Blackburn, Esq.
936 Broad Street, 2nd Floor
Newark, New Jersey 07102

Re: **In the Matter of Sebastian Onyi Ibezim, Jr.**
Docket No. DRB 15-161
District Docket No. VA-2011-0030E
LETTER OF ADMONITION

Dear Mr. Ibezim:

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.

Specifically, when representing Alice Morris in a claim for injuries sustained in a July 2007 automobile accident, you failed to inform her about critical events in the case, including problems serving defendants, the dismissal of the complaint, and two unsuccessful attempts to reinstate it. You succeeded on your third attempt. Ms. Morris learned of the dismissal of her case only after she contacted the court on her own. Your failure to keep your client informed about her case rendered her unable to make informed decisions about the representation. The Board, thus, found that you violated RPC 1.4(b) and RPC 1.4(c).

With regard to the allegation that you failed to set forth in writing the basis or rate of your legal fee, Ms. Morris

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testified that you neither represented her prior to this matter nor discussed with her the issue of your fee. You elected not to testify at the ethics hearing, relying instead on the contents of your file, which contained no written fee agreement. For these reasons, the Board found a violation of RPC 1.5(b).

The Board dismissed the remaining charges (RPC 1.1(a) and RPC 8.4(c)) for lack of clear and convincing evidence.

In imposing only an admonition, the Board considered that, although you received an admonition in March 2014 for recordkeeping violations, that matter came to light long after the misconduct in this matter took place. Moreover, because the misconduct in the prior matter concerned different RPC violations than those at issue here, it cannot be said that you failed to learn from prior mistakes.

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,



Ellen A. Brodsky
Chief Counsel

EAB/paa

c: See attached list

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c: Chief Justice Stuart Rabner
Associate Justices
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Disciplinary Review Board
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Supreme Court of New Jersey
Gail G. Haney, Deputy Clerk
Supreme Court of New Jersey (w/ethics history)
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