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November 21, 2001

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

Oliver W. Cato

CONFIDENTIAL - REDACTED

Re: In the Matter of Oliver W. Cato
Docket No. DRB 00-223
LETTER OF ADMONITION

Dear Mr. Cato:

The Disciplinary Review Board has reviewed your conduct in the above matter and has concluded that it was improper. With the approval of the Supreme Court, the Board has concluded that an admonition is the appropriate discipline for your misconduct. Specifically, in 1995 your wife, Shirley Waters-Cato, Esq., was retained by Cornelius Smith for representation in a personal injury matter. In or about January 1997 you agreed to assist your wife in the matter by filing a complaint in Smith's behalf. Thereafter, you took no further action, allowing the matter to be dismissed for lack of prosecution in November 1997. Further, you failed to communicate the status of the matter to your client during your entire involvement in the case. Lastly, you admitted that, when filing the complaint, you did so using your wife's office address on the pleadings, because you did not maintain a bona fide office for the practice of law in New Jersey. Your conduct was unethical and in violation of RPC 1.1(a), RPC 1.3, RPC 1.4(a), RPC 5.5 and R. 1:21-1.

In imposing only an admonition, we considered your ultimate cooperation with disciplinary authorities and the absence of any prior ethics infractions in your twenty-year career at the bar.

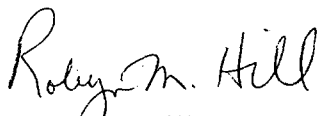
I/M/O Oliver W. Cato
DRB 00-223

Your conduct adversely reflected not only upon you as an attorney, but also upon all members of the bar. Accordingly, the Court 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 Court 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
- Rocky Peterson, Chair, Disciplinary Review Board
- David E. Johnson, Jr., Director, Office of Attorney Ethics.
- Kevin Jespersen, Chair, District VB Ethics Committee
- Michael Haratz, Secretary, District VB Ethics Committee
- Cornelius Smith, Grievant