

# DISCIPLINARY REVIEW BOARD

OF THE

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

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September 22, 2016

Jean Watson E. Francois  
146 Ferry Street  
Suite B169  
Newark, New Jersey 07105

Re: In the Matter of Jean Watson E. Francois  
Docket No. 16-209  
District Docket No. XII-2014-0008E  
**LETTER OF ADMONITION**

Dear Mr. Francois:

The Disciplinary Review Board has reviewed the motion for discipline by consent (reprimand or such lesser discipline as the Board deems warranted), filed by the District XII Ethics Committee in the above matter, pursuant to R. 1:20-10. Following a review of the record, the Board determined to grant the motion and to impose an admonition.

Specifically, Bahir Toles retained you to represent him in municipal court for a traffic violation. You did not provide a writing setting forth the basis or rate of your \$200 fee. Thereafter, in August 2013, you negotiated a plea agreement in that matter under which Mr. Toles pleaded guilty to unsafe driving. Another unspecified traffic violation was dismissed. Mr. Toles became dissatisfied with the plea agreement when he subsequently received a notice from the Motor Vehicle Commission, assessing four points against his license

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as a result of his having pleaded guilty to another charge of unsafe driving within the preceding five years. At the time of the plea, Mr. Toles had not recalled the specific earlier violation.

Thereafter, Mr. Toles believed that you would act to vacate the guilty plea, but did not understand that you required an additional fee to do so. You took no action to re-open the matter and did not inform Mr. Toles that you would take no further action on his behalf.

The Board, thus, found that your conduct violated RPC 1.5(b) and RPC 1.4(b). Although you stipulated to having violated RPC 1.2(a), RPC 1.3, and RPC 1.16(d), the Board dismissed those charges as unsupported by the facts recited in the stipulation.

In mitigation, the Board considered that you have had no other discipline since your 2009 admission to the bar; that Mr. Toles had not recalled his specific prior conviction for unsafe driving, which led to the problems in this matter; and that you fully cooperated by entering into a stipulation of facts.

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. 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/sl

See attached

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c: Chief Justice Stuart Rabner  
Associate Justices  
Bonnie C. Frost, 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  
Isabel McGinty, Statewide Ethics Coordinator  
Office of Attorney Ethics  
Michael Margello, Chair  
District XII Ethics Committee  
Glen J. Vida, Vice-Chair  
District XII Ethics Committee  
Michael F. Brandman, Secretary  
District XII Ethics Committee  
Robert J. Logan, Presenter  
District XII Ethics Committee  
Bahir Toles, Grievant