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SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

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RICHARD J. HUGHES JUSTICE COMPLEX
P.O. BOX 962
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0962
(609) 815-2920

ELLEN A. BRODSKY
CHIEF COUNSEL
MELISSA URBAN
DEPUTY COUNSEL
BARRY R. PETERSEN, JR.
DEPUTY COUNSEL
TIMOTHY M. ELLIS
LILLIAN LEWIN
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July 19, 2019

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

Deborah Steincolor, Esq.
c/o Debra E. Guston, Esq.
55 Harristown Road, Suite 106
Glen Rock, New Jersey 07452

Re: In the Matter of Deborah Steincolor
Docket No. DRB 19-165
District Docket No. XIV-2017-0718E
LETTER OF ADMONITION

Dear Ms. Steincolor:

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 for your violation of RPC 1.15(a) (negligent misappropriation of client funds), RPC 1.15(d) (recordkeeping), and RPC 5.3(a) and (b) (failure to supervise a nonlawyer assistant).

Specifically, you delegated your recordkeeping responsibilities to your nonlawyer assistant, Kristen Branagan, but failed to properly supervise her. Branagan then wholly failed to comply with R. 1:21-6, including failing to perform trust account reconciliations. In addition, with the assistance of her father, who served as your accountant, Branagan engaged in a prolonged scheme to steal more than \$3,000 in client trust funds and more than \$30,000 of your personal funds. You, thus, violated RPC 1.15(a), RPC 1.15(d), and RPC 5.3(a) and (b).

Upon discovering Branagan's thefts, you immediately terminated her employment, were forthcoming with the Office of Attorney Ethics regarding your ethics violations, and promptly

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replenished the stolen client trust funds. Moreover, you readily admitted your wrongdoing by entering into the present disciplinary stipulation, have been temporarily suspended since November 2016, and have ceased the practice of law.

In imposing only an admonition, the Board allocated substantial weight to your unblemished disciplinary history, your prompt deposit of personal funds to replenish the clients' funds, and your acceptance of responsibility for your misconduct. Moreover, the Board found no aggravating factors.

Your conduct has adversely reflected not only on you as an attorney but also on 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, this admonition will be taken into consideration.

The Board also has directed that the costs of the disciplinary proceedings be assessed against you. An invoice of costs will be forwarded to you under separate cover.

Very truly yours,



Ellen A. Brodsky
Chief Counsel

c: Chief Justice Stuart Rabner
Associate Justices
Heather Joy Baker, Clerk
Supreme Court of New Jersey
Bruce W. Clark, Chair
Disciplinary Review Board (e-mail)
Gail G. Haney, Deputy Clerk
Supreme Court of New Jersey (w/ ethics history)
Charles Centinaro, Director
Office of Attorney Ethics (interoffice mail and e-mail)