

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

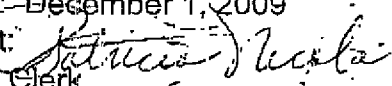
OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL, : No. 1499 Disciplinary Docket No. 3
Petitioner :
 :
 :
v. : No. 88 DB 2009
 :
 :
PETER JAMES STAUNTON, : Attorney Registration No. 81646
Respondent : (Philadelphia)

ORDER

PER CURIAM:

AND NOW, this 1st day of December, 2009, there having been filed with this Court by Peter James Staunton his verified Statement of Resignation dated September 30, 2009, stating that he desires to resign from the Bar of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in accordance with the provisions of Rule 215, Pa.R.D.E., it is

ORDERED that the resignation of Peter James Staunton is accepted; he is disbarred on consent from the Bar of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and he shall comply with the provisions of Rule 217, Pa.R.D.E. Respondent shall pay costs, if any, to the Disciplinary Board pursuant to Rule 208(g), Pa.R.D.E.

A True Copy Patricia Nicola:
As of December 1, 2009
Attest: 
Chief Clerk
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

**BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL | : | No. 1499 Disciplinary Docket No. 3 |
| Petitioner | : | |
| | : | No. 88 DB 2009 |
| v. | : | |
| | : | Attorney Registration No. 81646 |
| PETER JAMES STAUNTON | : | |
| Respondent | : | (Philadelphia) |

RESIGNATION BY RESPONDENT

Pursuant to Rule 215
of the Pennsylvania Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement

Re: Office of Disciplinary Counsel
v. PETER JAMES STAUNTON
No. 1499 Disciplinary Docket No. 3
No. 88 DB 2009
Attorney Registration No. 81646
(Philadelphia)

RECORD OF PRIOR DISCIPLINE

None

BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF
THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL, :

Petitioner :

: File Nos. C1-08-1101
: C1-08-1112; C1-08-1125;
: C1-09-43; C1-09-91;
: C1-09-155; C1-09-279;
: C1-09-309; C1-09-334
: C1-09-355; C1-09-665;
: C1-09-716; C1-09-748;
: C1-09-771

v.

: Atty. Regis. No. 81646

PETER JAMES STAUNTON,

Respondent : (Philadelphia)

RESIGNATION
UNDER Pa.R.D.E. 215

Peter James Staunton, Esquire, hereby tenders his unconditional resignation from the practice of law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in conformity with Pa.R.D.E. 215 ("Enforcement Rules") and further states as follows:

1. He is an attorney admitted in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, having been admitted to the bar on or about June 1, 1998. His attorney registration number is 81646.

2. He desires to submit his resignation as a member of said bar.

3. His resignation is freely and voluntarily rendered; he is not being subjected to coercion or duress; and he is fully aware of the implications of submitting this resignation.

4. He is aware that there are presently pending investigations into allegations that he has been guilty of misconduct in six matters, the nature of which allegations have been made known to him by service of five letters request for statement of Respondent's position (Form DB-7), dated March 27, 2009, April 23, 2009, May 4, 2009, May 18, 2009, and July 7, 2009, true and correct copies of which are attached hereto, made a part hereof and marked, collectively, "Exhibit A."

5. He is aware of eight additional complaints filed against him from present or former clients of Respondent, which are currently being investigated by ODC, which are as follows:

- a. C1-08-1125, wherein Sha-Dee C. Stenson alleges that Respondent failed to communicate with her in regard to her settlement in one matter, failed to pursue her personal injury claim in another matter, and failed to forward her files to her; ODC's investigation of Respondent's IOLTA account records shows, *inter alia*, that on May 30, 2008, Respondent deposited a \$9,000 check from the City of Philadelphia on behalf of Ms. Stenson and thereafter made no distribution of those funds

to or on behalf of Ms. Stenson from the IOLTA account;

- b. C1-09-279, wherein Jerry A. Kessler alleges that Respondent failed to communicate with him in regard to the status of his slip-and-fall personal injury matter;
- c. C1-09-309, wherein Kevin Keith Robinson alleges that in an automobile accident matter, Respondent failed to disburse to Mr. Robinson his share of the settlement funds and failed to communicate with Mr. Robinson in relation to the status of his matter; ODC's investigation of Respondent's IOLTA account records shows that on September 25, 2008, Respondent received a \$7,500 check from Fireman's Fund Insurance Company on behalf of Mr. Robinson, with no distribution to or on behalf of Mr. Robinson from the IOLTA account;
- d. C1-09-334, wherein Billy Maikner alleges that Respondent withheld a greater amount of funds from his settlement to pay a DPW lien than was owed to DPW, and failed to disperse the balance of the withheld funds to Mr. Maikner;
- e. C1-09-665, wherein Dominic T. DeNaro alleges

that Respondent failed to communicate with him in regard to the status of his matter, failed to advise him that his matter settled, and failed to distribute his share of the settlement funds;

f. Cl-09-716, wherein Jessica Lynn DeLange alleges that in November 2008, Respondent settled her personal injury matter and thereafter Respondent failed to distribute her share of the settlement funds;

g. Cl-09-748, wherein Francis L. Jackson alleges that in April 2009 he signed a settlement release in his motor vehicle accident matter and thereafter Respondent failed to communicate with him and failed to distribute to him his share of the settlement funds; and

h. Cl-09-771, wherein Nicole Y. James alleges that after she signed the settlement release in April 2008, Respondent received the settlement check but failed to distribute her portion of the settlement funds to her; failed to communicate with her in regard to the status of her motor vehicle accident matter; and failed to keep a scheduled appointment

with her in April 2009.

6. He acknowledges that the material facts upon which the allegations of complaint contained in "Exhibit A" and the above-mentioned complaints are based are true.

7. He submits the within resignation because he knows that he could not successfully defend himself against the allegations of professional misconduct set forth in the attached exhibit.

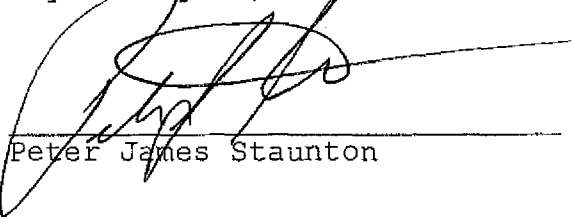
8. He submits the within resignation because he knows that he could not successfully defend himself against the allegations of professional misconduct set forth in paragraph 5, *supra*.

9. He is fully aware that the submission of this Resignation Statement is irrevocable and that he can only apply for reinstatement to the practice of law pursuant to the provisions of Enforcement Rule 218(b).

10. He acknowledges that he is fully aware of his right to consult and employ counsel to represent him in the instant proceeding. He has retained, consulted with and acted upon the advice of counsel in connection with his decision to execute the within resignation.

It is understood that the statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S., Section 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

Signed this 30th day of ~~August~~ ^{September}, 2009.



A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter James Staunton', is written over a horizontal line.

Peter James Staunton

WITNESS:  _____

THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD
OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA



Paul J. Killion
Chief Disciplinary Counsel
Paul J. Burgoyne
Deputy Chief Disciplinary Counsel

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OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL

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1635 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 560-6296
Fax (215) 560-4528
www.padisciplinaryboard.org

March 27, 2009

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
The Curtis Center
601 Walnut Street
Suite 470 W
Philadelphia, PA 19106

RE: Complaint of Demetrios Pappas
File No. C1-09-91
DB-7 Request for Statement of Respondent's Position

Dear Mr. Staunton:

Please be advised that this office has received and is currently considering a complaint against you from Demetrios Pappas, 115 Harvest Lane, Broomall, PA 19008. It is important for you to understand that issuance of this letter means that the complaint against you has survived this office's initial screening process and that, based upon the information currently available to us, it appears that your alleged conduct may have violated the Rules of Professional Conduct.

It is also important for you to understand that it is the obligation of our office to develop all information relevant to a complaint, including that information which may justify or exonerate the alleged actions of the respondent-attorney or mitigate the seriousness of any violations that may have occurred. Your statement of position, if you choose to file one, may result in a decision to dismiss this complaint against you. However, since this complaint has survived our initial screening process, you may wish to retain or consult with counsel before submitting a statement of your position.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

March 27, 2009

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The alleged facts presently under consideration are as follows:

1. In or around 2005 or 2006, you were assigned by Joseph Armenti, Esquire, whose law firm you were employed by at that time, to represent Demetrios Pappas for injuries he sustained in a motor vehicle accident in May 2004.

a. You subsequently left Mr. Armenti's firm, took Mr. Pappas's file with you, and continued to represent Mr. Pappas in this matter.

2. On or about April 19, 2006, you filed a civil claim on behalf of Mr. Pappas in Delaware County, case captioned **Pappas v. O'Leary**, No. 06-004515.

3. On or about January 16, 2008, you settled the case on behalf of Mr. Pappas in the amount of \$10,000.

4. Thereafter, you told Mr. Pappas that you, *inter alia*;

a. thought about the settlement and that taking into consideration Mr. Pappas's medicals bills, \$10,000 was not sufficient for settlement;

b. would attempt to obtain a greater settlement; and

c. would contact Mr. Pappas.

5. Thereafter, you failed to contact Mr. Pappas in regard to the settlement.

6. On or about January 15, 2008, you forwarded to Daniel Doyle, Esquire, attorney for the defendant, Jeffrey O'Leary and Allstate Insurance Company ("Allstate"), a General Release purportedly executed by Mr. Pappas.

7. You signed and/or caused Mr. Pappas's name to be signed on the General Release.

8. Mr. Pappas never gave you power of attorney to endorse the General Release on his behalf.

9. You caused the General Release to be notarized even though Mr. Pappas was not present at the time of the notarization.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

March 27, 2009

Page 3

10. On or about January 16, 2008, you received from Allstate check, number 134198341 in the amount of \$10,000 and made payable to "Demetrios N. Pappas and his Attorney Peter J. Staunton, Esquire."

11. You endorsed the settlement check and signed and/or caused Mr. Pappas's name to be signed on the check.

12. Mr. Pappas never gave you power of attorney to endorse the settlement check on his behalf.

13. On or about January 25, 2008, you deposited the settlement check into your IOLTA account at Citizens Bank, account number 62006956567.

14. You failed to inform Mr. Pappas that you received the settlement check.

15. You failed to promptly forward to Mr. Pappas his portion of the settlement.

16. Throughout 2008, Mr. Pappas contacted you via telephone in order to obtain a status of his matter.

17. In response, you misrepresented to Mr. Pappas that, *inter alia*:

- a. you were trying to settle the case; and
- b. you were trying to obtain a larger settlement.

18. In April 2008, Mr. Pappas telephoned you in order to obtain a status of his matter.

19. At that time you misrepresented to Mr. Pappas that his matter was still pending.

20. In November 2008, you requested that Mr. Pappas meet with you in your office to discuss his case.

21. You failed to appear for the meeting.

22. On or about January 7, 2009, Penelope Cilluffo, Esquire, contacted you by telephone on behalf of Mr. Pappas, at which time:

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

March 27, 2009

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- a. Ms. Cilluffo inquired as to whether Mr. Pappas's case had settled;
- b. you stated "not yet";
- c. Ms. Cilluffo confronted you by telling you that she knew the case had settled; and
- d. you represented that you had "just remembered" that the case had settled.

23. The statements you made in ¶20(b) and (d), *supra*, were false and you knew them to be false when you made them.

24. By letter dated January 9, 2009, to Mr. Pappas, you *inter alia*, requested that Mr. Pappas contact you to schedule an appointment to finalize settlement distribution.

25. By letter dated February 16, 2009, to you, Kevin T. Coyne, Esquire, *inter alia*:

- a. advised you that he had been retained by Mr. Pappas to investigate the circumstances surrounding the settlement and distribution of funds in regard to the **Pappas v. O'Leary** matter;
- b. requested that you forward Mr. Pappas's entire file; and
- c. requested that you contacted him immediately to facilitate compliance with his request.

26. You failed to respond to Mr. Coyne's letter.

If the above allegations are true, we are concerned that you may have violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct: RPC 1.3; RPC 1.4(a)(3); RPC 1.4(a)(4); RPC 1.4(b); (Former) RPC 1.15(b); RPC 1.15(d); RPC 1.15(e); and RPC 8.4(c).

The Office of Disciplinary Counsel will make no recommendation for the disposition of this complaint until you have been afforded an opportunity to state your position with respect thereto within ten (10) days of the date of this letter. While you are not required to respond to this letter, it is quite possible that your reply may provide this office with in-

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

March 27, 2009

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formation leading to a favorable resolution. Should you need more time during which to submit your position, do not hesitate to request a reasonable extension.

Regardless of whether you submit a substantive response, please provide, within the ten-day response period, the following records: for account number 6206956567 and any other account into which funds with respect to the foregoing matter were deposited, provide periodic statements of account, deposit records, cancelled checks, client ledgers, and check stubs, for all transactions on the account, for the period December 1, 2007 to the present.

Please be assured that we are not prejudging the alleged facts and charges nor are we an advocate on behalf of the complainant. Rather, we are conducting an impartial and unbiased investigation with regard to this complaint. In that regard, we will attempt to verify the statements in your answer just as we do with the statements made to us by the complainant. For this reason, and because a lawyer can be subject to discipline for making a materially false statement or deliberately failing to disclose a material fact in connection with a disciplinary matter, you should be careful to be accurate in your factual statements. Additionally, as previously stated, you may wish to consult with counsel before replying to the allegations.

In any reply which you may make, please chronologically and specifically state your account of the events and include copies of any particularly pertinent documents to which you refer. Generally, it is most helpful if your response deals item-by-item with the allegations contained in the numbered paragraphs in this letter, as well as with the cited Rules.

Please be advised that §85.13 of the Disciplinary Board Rules requires that any response to this letter:

...that contains an averment of fact not appearing of record or a denial of fact shall include or be accompanied by a verified statement signed by the respondent-attorney that the averment or denial is true based upon knowledge or information and belief. The respondent-attorney need not aver the source of the information or expectation of ability to prove the averment or denial. The verified

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
March 27, 2009
Page 6

statement may be based upon personal knowledge as to a part and upon information and belief as to the remainder.

If we do not hear from you within twenty (20) days, we may assume that you do not desire to submit your position with respect to this complaint and can proceed to make our recommendation for an appropriate disposition on the basis of the information and material contained in our file. However, we would certainly prefer to have the benefit of your position before making our recommendation.

Keep in mind that we may provide the complainant with a copy of your statement of position or a summary of it for the express purpose of obtaining a replication, unless you request that the content of your answer, either in total or in part, not be revealed and state reasons therefore which represent good cause. If we do provide the complainant with a copy or summary of your position, we will remind the complainant of the confidentiality of our inquiry.

If you have any questions, you or your counsel should not hesitate to contact this office. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation and assistance in this important matter. We look forward to receiving your response.

Very truly yours,

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL



Gloria Randall Ammons
Disciplinary Counsel

GRA/red
HAND DELIVER

THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD
OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA



Paul J. Killion
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April 23, 2009

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
c/o Ellen C. Brotman, Esquire
123 S. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19109

RE: Complaint of Maria Vera
File No. C1-08-1101
Complaint of Cindy S. Little
File No. C1-08-1112
DB-7 Request for Statement of Respondent's Position

Dear Mr. Staunton:

Please be advised that this office has received and is currently considering complaint filed against you from Maria Vera, 7822 Summerdale Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19111 and Cindy S. Little, 1935 Brown Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130. It is important for you to understand that issuance of this letter means that the complaints against you have survived this office's initial screening process and that, based upon the information currently available to us, it appears that your alleged conduct may have violated the Rules of Professional Conduct.

It is also important for you to understand that it is the obligation of our office to develop all information relevant to a complaint, including that information which may justify or exonerate the alleged actions of the respondent-attorney or mitigate the seriousness of any violations that may have occurred. Your statement of position, if you choose to file one, may result in a decision to dismiss this complaint against you. How-

ever, since this complaint has survived our initial screening process, you may wish to retain or consult with counsel before submitting a statement of your position.

The alleged facts presently under consideration are as follows:

The Vera Matter: C1-08-1101

1. In or around May 2005, Maria Vera and Salvatore Flores retained Angela Roca, Esquire, to represent them in a personal injury matter for injuries they sustained in a motor vehicle accident.

2. In or around May 2006, Ms. Vera and Mr. Flores were referred by Ms. Roca to you to represent them in this matter after Ms. Roca informed them that she could no longer represent them because she was seeking a judgeship.

3. Ms. Vera and Mr. Flores retained you to represent them.

4. You have not previously represented Ms. Vera.

5. You failed to provide Ms. Vera and Mr. Flores with a written fee agreement explaining the basis or rate of the fee within a reasonable time after commencement of representation.

6. On or about May 21, 2007, you filed a complaint to commence a civil action on behalf of Ms. Vera in the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, case captioned **Flores, et al. v. Farrell**, May Term 2007, No. 01926.

7. By letter dated August 19, 2008, to Ms. Vera, you, *inter alia*, advised Ms. Vera that:

- a. her arbitration case had been scheduled for September 24, 2008; and
- b. she should be in your office no later than 10:00 a.m. to prepare for the hearing.

8. On September 24, 2008, Ms. Vera arrived at your office at approximately 8:30 a.m. in order to prepare for the arbitration hearing.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

April 23, 2009

Page 3

a. Mr. Flores went directly to the arbitration center.

9. Sometime during the morning, you, *inter alia*:

a. telephoned Mr. Flores and told him to come to your office because you needed to speak with him;

b. after making several telephone calls, informed Ms. Vera and Mr. Flores that their case settled for \$15,000;

c. informed Ms. Vera and Mr. Flores that they were not required to appear at the arbitration hearing; and

d. told Ms. Vera and Mr. Flores to go home and that you would telephone them later.

10. The statements you made in ¶9(b) and (c), *supra*, were false and you knew them to be false when you made them because you had not negotiated a settlement.

11. On September 24, 2008, an award was entered in favor of the defendant because Ms. Vera and Mr. Flores failed to appear at the hearing.

12. You failed to inform Ms. Vera and Mr. Flores that an award was entered in favor of the defendant because she failed to appear at the hearing.

13. After repeated telephone calls from Ms. Vera, you informed Ms. Vera's daughter that, *inter alia*:

a. you came to an agreement with the defense attorney;

b. you were waiting for the check from the defense attorney; and

c. the defense attorney's supervisor would have to approve the check before it could be forwarded to you.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

April 23, 2009

Page 4

14. The statements you made in ¶13(a), (b) and (c), *supra*, were false and you knew them to be false when you made them because no agreement had been reached and you were not waiting for a check.

If the above allegations are true, we are concerned that you may have violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct: RPC 1.3; RPC 1.4(a)(3); RPC 1.4(b); RPC 1.5(b); and RPC 8.4(c).

The Little Matter: C1-08-1112

15. On or about May 9, 2005, you were retained by Cindy Little to represent her and her son, Emmanuel Young, a minor, in a personal injury matter for injuries they sustained in a Septa accident which occurred on November 28, 2004.

- a. You also represented Ms. Little's nephew, Thomas Young, for injuries he suffered in the same accident.

16. On or about November 28, 2006, you filed a complaint to commence a civil action on behalf of Ms. Little, Emmanuel and Thomas in the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, case captioned **Young, et al. v. Septa**, November Term 2006, No. 2637.

17. In or around July 2007, you settled the case on behalf of Ms. Little, Emmanuel and Thomas.

18. You failed to obtain court approval to settle Emmanuel's claims prior to agreeing to the settlement of those claims.

19. On or about September 18, 2007, you received checks from SEPTA made payable to:

- a. "Cindy Little & Peter Staunton, Esquire" in the amount of \$7,500; and
- b. "Thomas Young & Peter Staunton, Esquire" in the amount of \$3,500.

20. On September 18, 2007, you filed a praecipe to settle, discontinue and end.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

April 23, 2009

Page 5

21. On or about September 26, 2007, you deposited both checks into your Citizens Bank IOLTA account number 6206956567.

22. You failed to promptly forward to Ms. Little her portion of the settlement.

23. On or about October 9, 2007, you filed a motion for approval and distribution of minor's compromise.

24. By Order dated October 11, 2007, the court, *inter alia*;

- a. authorized a settlement on behalf of Emmanuel in the amount of \$3,500;
- b. ordered that you, not the parents, execute all documentation necessary to deposit the funds into a financial institution in the name of Emmanuel only, the balance of which may be paid upon majority; and
- c. ordered that within 60 days from the date of the Order, you file an affidavit providing proof of the establishment of an account and containing a specific averment by you that the funds were deposited as directed.

25. On or about November 8, 2007, you received a check from SEPTA made payable to "Emmanuel Little & Peter Staunton, Esquire" in the amount of \$3,500.

26. Contrary to the Court's Order, on or about November 16, 2007, you deposited Emmanuel's funds into your IOLTA account instead of depositing the funds into an account in the name of Emmanuel only.

27. You improperly commingled Emmanuel's funds with funds in your IOLTA account, thereby causing the loss of accumulated interest to Emmanuel.

28. Thereafter, you failed to file an affidavit with the court in regard to Emmanuel's account.

29. By check number 1595, dated April 25, 2008, made payable to Ms. Little, you forwarded \$500 to Ms. Little with a notation of "partial settlement" in the memo section.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

April 23, 2009

Page 6

30. By check number 1596, dated April 29, 2008, made payable to Ms. Little, you forwarded \$1,187.32 to Ms. Little.

31. In or around May 2008, you forwarded to Ms. Little the balance of her settlement in the amount of \$500.

32. In or around November 2008, Donna M. Snyder, Disciplinary Counsel, telephoned you in regard to Ms. Little's complaint, at which time you informed Ms. Snyder that:

- a. you were waiting for Ms. Little to come into the office so that you could go to the bank with her to open an account for Emmanuel;
- b. this was your usual course of business;
- c. you would agree to open a bank account for Emmanuel; and
- d. you would forward the bank account information to Ms. Little once that account was opened.

33. You failed to contact Ms. Little in regard to Emmanuel's account.

34. Throughout the representation, Ms. Little requested information from you in regard to Emmanuel's funds.

35. You failed to provide the information.

If the above allegations are true, we are concerned that you may have violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct: RPC 1.3; RPC 1.4(a)(3); RPC 1.4(a)(4); RPC 1.4(b); Former 1.15(a); Former RPC 1.15(b); RPC 1.15(b); RPC 1.15(d); RPC 1.15(e); RPC 1.15(k); RPC 8.4(c) and 8.4(d).

The Office of Disciplinary Counsel will make no recommendation for the disposition of this complaint until you have been afforded an opportunity to state your position with respect thereto within twenty (20) days of the date of this letter. While you are not required to respond to this letter, it is quite possible that your reply may provide this office with information leading to a favorable resolution. Should you need more time during which to submit your position, do not hesitate to request a reasonable extension.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

April 23, 2009

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Regardless of whether you submit a substantive response, please provide the following records: All periodic statements of account, deposit and disbursement records, account ledgers, cancelled checks, check registers, and check stubs, for all transactions on account number 6206956567 and any other account into which funds with respect to the Cindy Little and Emmanuel Young matter were deposited for the period March 1, 2007 to the present. In addition, provide individual client ledgers for Ms. Little and Mr. Young, and Ms. Vera's entire file.

Please be assured that we are not prejudging the alleged facts and charges nor are we an advocate on behalf of the complainant. Rather, we are conducting an impartial and unbiased investigation with regard to this complaint. In that regard, we will attempt to verify the statements in your answer just as we do with the statements made to us by the complainant. For this reason, and because a lawyer can be subject to discipline for making a materially false statement or deliberately failing to disclose a material fact in connection with a disciplinary matter, you should be careful to be accurate in your factual statements. Additionally, as previously stated, you may wish to consult with counsel before replying to the allegations.

In any reply which you may make, please chronologically and specifically state your account of the events and include copies of any particularly pertinent documents to which you refer. Generally, it is most helpful if your response deals item-by-item with the allegations contained in the numbered paragraphs in this letter, as well as with the cited Rules.

Please be advised that §85.13 of the Disciplinary Board Rules requires that any response to this letter:

...that contains an averment of fact not appearing of record or a denial of fact shall include or be accompanied by a verified statement signed by the respondent-attorney that the averment or denial is true based upon knowledge or information and belief. The respondent-attorney need not aver the source of the information or expectation of ability to prove the averment or denial. The verified statement may be based upon personal

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
April 23, 2009
Page 8

knowledge as to a part and upon information
and belief as to the remainder.

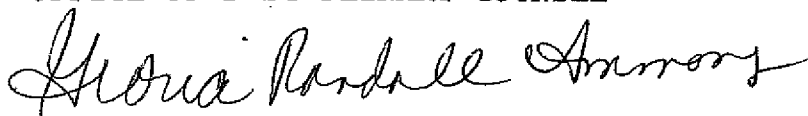
If we do not hear from you within twenty (20) days, we may assume that you do not desire to submit your position with respect to this complaint and can proceed to make our recommendation for an appropriate disposition on the basis of the information and material contained in our file. However, we would certainly prefer to have the benefit of your position before making our recommendation.

Keep in mind that we may provide the complainant with a copy of your statement of position or a summary of it for the express purpose of obtaining a replication, unless you request that the content of your answer, either in total or in part, not be revealed and state reasons therefore which represent good cause. If we do provide the complainant with a copy or summary of your position, we will remind the complainant of the confidentiality of our inquiry.

If you have any questions, you or your counsel should not hesitate to contact this office. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation and assistance in this important matter. We look forward to receiving your response.

Very truly yours,

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL



Gloria Randall Ammons
Disciplinary Counsel

GRA/red
CERTIFIED MAIL/
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD
OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Paul J. Killion
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Deputy Chief Disciplinary Counsel



OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL

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Philadelphia, PA 19103
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www.padi disciplinaryboard.org

May 4, 2009

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
c/o Ellen C. Brotman, Esquire
123 S. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19109

RE: Complaint of Marguerite V. Heil
File No. C1-09-155
DB-7 Request for Statement of Respondent's Position

Dear Mr. Staunton:

Please be advised that this office has received and is currently considering a complaint against you from Marguerite V. Heil, 3428 Braddock Street, Philadelphia, PA 19134. It is important for you to understand that issuance of this letter means that the complaint against you has survived this office's initial screening process and that, based upon the information currently available to us, it appears that your alleged conduct may have violated the Rules of Professional Conduct.

It is also important for you to understand that it is the obligation of our office to develop all information relevant to a complaint, including that information which may justify or exonerate the alleged actions of the respondent-attorney or mitigate the seriousness of any violations that may have occurred. Your statement of position, if you choose to file one, may result in a decision to dismiss this complaint against you. However, since this complaint has survived our initial screening process, you may wish to retain or consult with counsel before submitting a statement of your position.

The alleged facts presently under consideration are as follows:

1. In or around January 2007, Marguerite V. Heil retained you to represent her in a personal injury matter for injuries she sustained in a Septa accident which occurred on January 10, 2007.
2. In or around May 2008, you settled Ms. Heil's matter.
3. On May 27, 2008, Ms. Heil executed a General Release agreement.
 - a. At that time, you told Ms. Heil that it would take approximately 90 days to receive the funds from SEPTA.
4. On or about July 11, 2008, you received a check from SEPTA made payable to "Marguerite Heil & Peter Staunton, Esq." in the amount of \$3,500.
5. On or about July 22, 2008, you deposited the check into your Citizens Bank IOLTA account number 6206956567.
6. You failed to promptly forward to Ms. Heil her portion of the settlement.
7. Between August 2008 and September 2008, Ms. Heil telephoned you on numerous occasions to obtain an update on the status of your receipt of the settlement funds.
8. You failed to return Ms. Heil's telephone calls.
9. On or about September 30, 2008, after Ms. Heil contacted you, you met with her at your office, at which time you informed Ms. Heil, *inter alia*:
 - a. that the funds should have been released by Septa by September 27, 2008; and
 - b. that you would look into it.
10. The statements you made in ¶9(a) and (b), *supra*, were false and you knew them to be false when you made them because you had already received the funds.

11. In or around October 2008, you met with Ms. Heil again, at which time you informed her, *inter alia*:

- a. that you should receive the funds on the following Monday; and
- b. that if you did not receive the funds by then, you would go to SEPTA yourself and pick it up.

12. The statements you made in ¶11(a) and (b), *supra*, were false and you knew them to be false when you made them because you had already received the funds.

13. In early November 2008, you made an appointment to meet with Ms. Heil at her school, which was located at 7th and Market Streets.

14. You failed to keep the appointment.

15. After you failed to appear, Ms. Heil telephoned your office and spoke with you, at which time you, *inter alia*:

- a. apologized to her;
- b. told her that you had forgotten about the appointment; and
- c. told her that you would telephone her to set up another appointment.

16. You failed to telephone Ms. Heil.

17. Between November 2008 and January 9, 2009, Ms. Heil telephoned you at both your office telephone and cell phone and left you numerous messages.

18. You failed to return any of Ms. Heil's telephone calls.

19. On January 9, 2009, Ms. Heil appeared at your office unannounced, at which time you, *inter alia*:

- a. told her that you were in receipt of her settlement funds;

- b. explained that you did not have your checkbook because you were not expecting her;
- c. told her that you would not be able to give her funds at that time;
- d. apologized to Ms. Heil; and
- e. scheduled an appointment for January 13, 2009 in order for Ms. Heil to pick up her check.

20. On January 13, 2009, at your direction, your secretary telephoned Ms. Heil, told Ms. Heil that you were in a meeting and rescheduled the appointment for January 14, 2009.

21. On January 14, 2009, you failed to appear for the scheduled appointment.

- a. Ms. Heil waited outside your office, which was locked.

22. Between January 14 and January 21, 2009, Ms. Heil made numerous telephone calls to you.

23. You failed to return her telephone calls.

24. On January 21, 2009, Ms. Heil again appeared at your office unannounced, at which time:

- a. Ms. Heil begged you for her funds; and
- b. you promised to give Ms. Heil her portion of the settlement by January 26, 2009.

25. On or about January 26, 2009, your secretary, at your direction, telephoned Ms. Heil and rescheduled the appointment for January 27, 2009.

26. You failed to appear for the January 27, 2009 appointment.

- a. Ms. Heil waited outside your office, which was locked.

27. By letter dated January 27, 2008, Ms. Heil, *inter alia*:

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

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- a. summarized her repeated attempts to communicate with you by telephone and office visits in regard to her settlement;
- b. stated that you deliberately mistreated and betrayed her;
- c. requested that within 10 days you forward to her the settlement funds as well as documentation from Septa verifying the settlement amount;
- d. requested her records from a second Septa accident; and
- e. stated that she was filing a complaint against you with the Disciplinary Board.

28. On or about February 7, 2009, Ms. Heil appeared at your office at your request, at which time your male assistant, at your direction, *inter alia*:

- a. gave Ms. Heil a check in the amount of \$1,213.93, which represented her portion of the settlement;
- b. provided a hand-written statement of distribution; and
- c. provided copies of the Septa settlement check, a list of costs and subrogation claims listing.

29. To date, you failed to provide Ms. Heil with documentation regarding her second Septa matter.

If the above allegations are true, we are concerned that you may have violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct: RPC 1.3; RPC 1.4(a)(3); RPC 1.4(a)(4); RPC 1.4(b); Former 1.15(a); Former RPC 1.15(b); RPC 1.15(b); RPC 1.15(d); RPC 1.15(e); and RPC 8.4(c)

The Office of Disciplinary Counsel will make no recommendation for the disposition of this complaint until you have been afforded an opportunity to state your position with respect thereto within twenty (20) days of the date of this letter. While you are not required to respond to this letter, it is quite possible that your reply may provide this office with information leading to a favorable resolution. Should you need

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
May 4, 2009
Page 6

more time during which to submit your position, do not hesitate to request a reasonable extension.

Regardless of whether you submit a substantive response, please provide the following records: All periodic statements of account, deposit records, cancelled checks, and check stubs, for all transactions for account number 6206956567 and any other account into which funds with respect to the Marguerite V. Heil were deposited for the period May 1, 2008 to the present; the individual client ledgers for Ms. Heil for the same time period; and Ms. Heil's entire file.

Please be assured that we are not prejudging the alleged facts and charges nor are we an advocate on behalf of the complainant. Rather, we are conducting an impartial and unbiased investigation with regard to this complaint. In that regard, we will attempt to verify the statements in your answer just as we do with the statements made to us by the complainant. For this reason, and because a lawyer can be subject to discipline for making a materially false statement or deliberately failing to disclose a material fact in connection with a disciplinary matter, you should be careful to be accurate in your factual statements. Additionally, as previously stated, you may wish to consult with counsel before replying to the allegations.

In any reply which you may make, please chronologically and specifically state your account of the events and include copies of any particularly pertinent documents to which you refer. Generally, it is most helpful if your response deals item-by-item with the allegations contained in the numbered paragraphs in this letter, as well as with the cited Rules.

Please be advised that §85.13 of the Disciplinary Board Rules requires that any response to this letter:

...that contains an averment of fact not appearing of record or a denial of fact shall include or be accompanied by a verified statement signed by the respondent-attorney that the averment or denial is true based upon knowledge or information and belief. The respondent-attorney need not aver the source of the information or expectation of ability to prove the averment or denial. The verified statement may be based upon personal

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
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Page 7

knowledge as to a part and upon information
and belief as to the remainder.

If we do not hear from you within twenty (20) days, we may assume that you do not desire to submit your position with respect to this complaint and can proceed to make our recommendation for an appropriate disposition on the basis of the information and material contained in our file. However, we would certainly prefer to have the benefit of your position before making our recommendation.

Keep in mind that we may provide the complainant with a copy of your statement of position or a summary of it for the express purpose of obtaining a replication, unless you request that the content of your answer, either in total or in part, not be revealed and state reasons therefore which represent good cause. If we do provide the complainant with a copy or summary of your position, we will remind the complainant of the confidentiality of our inquiry.

If you have any questions, you or your counsel should not hesitate to contact this office. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation and assistance in this important matter. We look forward to receiving your response.

Very truly yours,

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL



Gloria Randall Ammons
Disciplinary Counsel

GRA/red
CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD
OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Paul J. Killion
Chief Disciplinary Counsel

Paul J. Burgoyne
Deputy Chief Disciplinary Counsel



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May 18, 2009

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
c/o Ellen C. Brotman
Montgomery, McCracken, Walker & Rhoads, LLP
123 South Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19109

RE: Complaint of Jessica L. Strawbridge
File No. C1-09-43
DB-7 Request for Statement of Respondent's Position

Dear Mr. Staunton:

Please be advised that this office has received and is currently considering a complaint against you from Jessica L. Strawbridge, TPL Program Investigator, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Public Welfare, P.O. Box 8486, Harrisburg, PA 17105. It is important for you to understand that issuance of this letter means that the complaint against you has survived this office's initial screening process and that, based upon the information currently available to us, it appears that your alleged conduct may have violated the Rules of Professional Conduct.

It is also important for you to understand that it is the obligation of our office to develop all information relevant to a complaint, including that information which may justify or exonerate the alleged actions of the respondent-attorney or mitigate the seriousness of any violations that may have occurred. Your statement of position, if you choose to file one, may result in a decision to dismiss this complaint against you. However, since this complaint has survived our initial screening

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
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Page 2

process, you may wish to retain or consult with counsel before submitting a statement of your position.

The alleged facts presently under consideration are as follows:

1. On or about August 8, 2006, Felix Manzano, Jr., sustained injuries in a motor vehicle accident.

2. On or about January 18, 2007, you filed a civil claim on behalf of Mr. Manzano in Philadelphia County, case captioned *Manzano, Jr. v. Poehler*, January Term 2007, No. 02155.

3. By letter dated January 31, 2007, you forwarded to the Department of Public Welfare ("DPW") a completed Medical Services Questionnaire and police report in regard to Mr. Manzano.

4. By letter dated February 27, 2007, Jessica L. Strawbridge of DPW, *inter alia*:

- a. put you on notice of the DPW subrogation lien;
- b. informed you of your responsibilities in regard to payment of the lien;
- c. requested information from you in regard to Mr. Manzano's accident; and
- d. requested that when you transmit funds to DPW, you provide DPW with a copy of the final distribution sheet.

5. By letter dated March 12, 2007, to Ms. Strawbridge, you, *inter alia*:

- a. acknowledged receipt of the February 27, 2007 letter;
- b. provided the requested information; and
- c. requested a detailed listing of all bills, payments, etc., which formed the basis of the subrogation lien.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
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Page 3

6. By letter dated April 3, 2007, Ms. Strawbridge, *inter alia*, provided you with DPW's statement of claim in regard to the subrogation lien.

7. On or about April 18, 2007, you settled the case on behalf of Mr. Manzano in the amount of \$15,000.

8. On or about April 18, 2007, Hartford Insurance Company established a checking account on behalf of Mr. Manzano and forwarded to you a Safe Haven checkbook in the name of Mr. Manzano in the amount of \$15,000.

9. By facsimile dated May 2, 2007 to Ms. Strawbridge, you attached a proposed settlement sheet and inquired as to an amount that would be acceptable to DPW in settlement of DPW's lien.

10. By letter dated May 4, 2007, Ms. Strawbridge informed you that DPW's lien was \$12,073.30 but that DPW would agree to accept 45% of Mr. Manzano's net settlement, which amounted to \$4,135.38.

11. By letters dated September 6, 2007, September 29, 2007, November 14, 2007 and December 6, 2007, Ms. Strawbridge requested a status on the matter.

12. You failed to respond to Ms. Strawbridge's letters.

13. On January 29, 2008, Ms. Strawbridge telephoned you and left a detailed message on your voicemail.

14. On February 4, 2008, you telephoned Ms. Strawbridge and left a message wherein you stated that the story was confusing and that you were unable to make contact with Mr. Manzano.

15. On February 5, 2008, you left another telephone message for Ms. Strawbridge.

16. On February 5, 2008, Ms. Strawbridge returned your telephone call and left a voice mail message providing you with Mr. Manzano's current address and telephone number.

17. On February 12, 2008, you deposited into your Citizens Bank IOLTA account number 6206956567 check number 322 dated February 12, 2008, which was drawn on Mr. Manzano's Safe Haven

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
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Page 4

Account and made payable to you in the amount of \$4,000 with the notation "DPW Lien."

- a. You transferred most if not all of Mr. Manzano's funds to checking account number 6206956559.

18. Thereafter, you failed to forward the funds to DPW.

19. By February 22, 2008, the end-of-the-day balance in the IOLTA account was only \$882.21.

20. You converted DPW's funds for your own personal use.

21. On May 21, 2008, Ms. Strawbridge telephoned you to obtain a status on the matter.

22. You failed to return Ms. Strawbridge's telephone call.

23. By certified letter dated July 9, 2008, Ms. Strawbridge, *inter alia*:

- a. informed you that she had spoken with Mr. Manzano's mother who indicated that the matter had settled; and
- b. stated that she expected reimbursement of DPW's lien with 15 days of the receipt of her letter or she would refer the matter to the Disciplinary Board.

24. On or about July 17, 2008, you received Ms. Strawbridge's letter.

25. You failed to forward the funds to DPW.

26. On August 4, 2008, you telephoned Ms. Strawbridge and left a voice mail message wherein you stated that, *inter alia*:

- a. you would attempt to obtain a Power of Attorney for Mr. Manzano; and
- b. you would obtain the court's permission in order to sign the settlement check so that DPW's claim could be paid.

27. The statements you made in ¶21(a) and (b), *supra*, were false and you knew them to be false when you made them because Mr. Manzano had reached the age of majority and you no longer needed the court's approval.

28. By certified letter dated November 29, 2008, which was signed for by your agent, Steve Slocum on December 3, 2008, Ms. Strawbridge again requested a status of the matter.

29. You failed to respond to Ms. Strawbridge's letter.

30. As of this date, you failed to forward the funds to DPW to satisfy its lien.

If the above allegations are true, we are concerned that you may have violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct: (Former) 1.15(a); (Former) RPC 1.15(b); RPC 1.15(d); RPC 1.15(e); and RPC 8.4(c).

The Office of Disciplinary Counsel will make no recommendation for the disposition of this complaint until you have been afforded an opportunity to state your position with respect thereto within twenty days (20) days of the date of this letter. While you are not required to respond to this letter, it is quite possible that your reply may provide this office with information leading to a favorable resolution. Should you need more time during which to submit your position, do not hesitate to request a reasonable extension.

Regardless of whether you submit a substantive response, please provide, within the twenty-day response period, the following records: for account number 6206956567 and any other account into which funds with respect to the foregoing matter were deposited, provide periodic statements of account, deposit records, cancelled checks, client ledgers, and check stubs, for all transactions on the account, for the period January 1, 2007 to the present. Provide all of the same records for the same time period for checking account number 6206956559.

Please be assured that we are not prejudging the alleged facts and charges nor are we an advocate on behalf of the complainant. Rather, we are conducting an impartial and unbiased investigation with regard to this complaint. In that regard, we will attempt to verify the statements in your answer just as we do with the statements made to us by the complainant. For this reason, and because a lawyer can be subject to discipline for

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
May 18, 2009
Page 6

making a materially false statement or deliberately failing to disclose a material fact in connection with a disciplinary matter, you should be careful to be accurate in your factual statements. Additionally, as previously stated, you may wish to consult with counsel before replying to the allegations.

In any reply which you may make, please chronologically and specifically state your account of the events and include copies of any particularly pertinent documents to which you refer. Generally, it is most helpful if your response deals item-by-item with the allegations contained in the numbered paragraphs in this letter, as well as with the cited Rules.

Please be advised that §85.13 of the Disciplinary Board Rules requires that any response to this letter:

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If we do not hear from you within twenty (20) days, we may assume that you do not desire to submit your position with respect to this complaint and can proceed to make our recommendation for an appropriate disposition on the basis of the information and material contained in our file. However, we would certainly prefer to have the benefit of your position before making our recommendation.

Keep in mind that we may provide the complainant with a copy of your statement of position or a summary of it for the express purpose of obtaining a replication, unless you request that the content of your answer, either in total or in part, not be revealed and state reasons therefore which represent good cause. If we do provide the complainant with a copy or summary of your position, we will remind the complainant of the confidentiality of our inquiry.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

May 18, 2009

Page 7

If you have any questions, you or your counsel should not hesitate to contact this office. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation and assistance in this important matter. We look forward to receiving your response.

Very truly yours,

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gloria Randall Ammons".

Gloria Randall Ammons
Disciplinary Counsel

GRA/red
CERTIFIED MAIL,
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD
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July 7, 2009

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PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
c/o Ellen C. Brotman, Esquire
Montgomery, McCracken, Walker & Rhoads, LLP
123 South Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19109

RE: Complaint of Daniel M. Zullo
File No. C1-09-355
DB-7 Request for Statement of Respondent's Position

Dear Mr. Staunton:

Please be advised that this office has received and is currently considering a complaint against you from Daniel M. Zullo, 1012 Wolf Street, 2nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19148; (215) 755-0581. It is important for you to understand that issuance of this letter means that the complaint against you has survived this office's initial screening process and that, based upon the information currently available to us, it appears that your alleged conduct may have violated the Rules of Professional Conduct.

It is also important for you to understand that it is the obligation of our office to develop all information relevant to a complaint, including that information which may justify or exonerate the alleged actions of the respondent-attorney or mitigate the seriousness of any violations that may have occurred. Your statement of position, if you choose to file one, may result in a decision to dismiss this complaint against you. However, since this complaint has survived our initial screening process, you may wish to retain or consult with counsel before submitting a statement of your position.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
July 7, 2009
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The alleged facts presently under consideration are as follows:

1. On or about November 17, 2005, Daniel M. Zullo was arrested for Robbery, Theft by Unlawful Taking or Disposition, Theft by Receiving Stolen Property, Simple Assault, Recklessly Endangering Another Person and Retail Theft, which resulted from an incident in a Rite Aid store in Philadelphia Pennsylvania.

a. On or about March 30, 2006, all of the charges were withdrawn.

2. On April 20, 2006, you were retained by Mr. Zullo to represent him in a civil claim against Rite Aid in regard to the November 17, 2005 incident.

3. On April 20, 2006, Mr. Zullo signed a fee agreement, which specified your fee would be 1/3 of any settlement.

4. At that time, you informed Mr. Zullo that his case would take approximately 8 to 10 months to complete.

5. From April 20, 2006 through March 2007, Mr. Zullo spoke with you periodically to obtain a status of his matter.

6. By letter dated March 19, 2007, to Mr. Zullo, you, *inter alia*, requested that Mr. Zullo make an appointment to be evaluated by a psychologist, Dr. Barry Kayes.

7. On or about April 3, 2007, Mr. Zullo visited Dr. Kayes for an evaluation.

a. By letter dated April 3, 2007, Mr. Zullo authorized you to pay any outstanding charges to Dr. Kayes for psychological services from his settlement funds.

8. On or about July 1, 2007, you sent Mr. Zullo a form letter informing him of your new office address.

9. Between July 2007 and May 2008, you spoke with Mr. Zullo periodically about his case.

10. In May 2008, Mr. Zullo visited your office to inquire about the status of his matter.

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
July 7, 2009
Page 3

11. At that time, you, *inter alia*, informed him that the case was "winding down" and that it would "go to court."

12. From May 2008 to November 2008, Mr. Zullo telephoned you on numerous occasions to obtain a status of his matter.

13. You failed to return his telephone calls.

14. In November 2008, you returned Mr. Zullo's telephone call at which time you made an appointment with Mr. Zullo to meet with you at your office.

15. At that meeting, you, *inter alia*, informed Mr. Zullo that you might file the civil claim in Baltimore, Maryland, because Rite Aid's central office was located in Baltimore.

16. From November 2008 through February 2009, Mr. Zullo attempted to contact you numerous times via telephone.

17. You failed to return any of Mr. Zullo's telephone calls.

18. By certified letter dated February 26, 2009, which was signed for by Steven Slocum, your assistant, Mr. Zullo requested, *inter alia*, that you contact him in order for him to pick up his file.

19. As of this date, you failed to respond to Mr. Zullo's letter.

20. You failed to take any action to prosecute Mr. Zullo's matter prior to the statute of limitations.

If the above allegations are true, we are concerned that you may have violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct: RPC 1.3; RPC 1.4(a)(3); RPC 1.4(a)(4); RPC 1.4(b); RPC 1.16(d); and RPC 8.4(c)

The Office of Disciplinary Counsel will make no recommendation for the disposition of this complaint until you have been afforded an opportunity to state your position with respect thereto within twenty (20) days of the date of this letter. While you are not required to respond to this letter, it is quite possible that your reply may provide this office with information leading to a favorable resolution. Should you need

Peter James Staunton, Esquire
July 7, 2009
Page 4

more time during which to submit your position, do not hesitate to request a reasonable extension.

Please be assured that we are not prejudging the alleged facts and charges nor are we an advocate on behalf of the complainant. Rather, we are conducting an impartial and unbiased investigation with regard to this complaint. In that regard, we will attempt to verify the statements in your answer just as we do with the statements made to us by the complainant. For this reason, and because a lawyer can be subject to discipline for making a materially false statement or deliberately failing to disclose a material fact in connection with a disciplinary matter, you should be careful to be accurate in your factual statements. Additionally, as previously stated, you may wish to consult with counsel before replying to the allegations.

In any reply which you may make, please chronologically and specifically state your account of the events and include copies of any particularly pertinent documents to which you refer. Generally, it is most helpful if your response deals item-by-item with the allegations contained in the numbered paragraphs in this letter, as well as with the cited Rules.

Please be advised that §85.13 of the Disciplinary Board Rules requires that any response to this letter:

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If we do not hear from you within twenty (20) days, we may assume that you do not desire to submit your position with respect to this complaint and can proceed to make our recommendation for an appropriate disposition on the basis of the information and material contained in our file. However, we would cer-

Peter James Staunton, Esquire

July 7, 2009

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tainly prefer to have the benefit of your position before making our recommendation.

Keep in mind that we may provide the complainant with a copy of your statement of position or a summary of it for the express purpose of obtaining a replication, unless you request that the content of your answer, either in total or in part, not be revealed and state reasons therefore which represent good cause. If we do provide the complainant with a copy or summary of your position, we will remind the complainant of the confidentiality of our inquiry.

If you have any questions, you or your counsel should not hesitate to contact this office. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation and assistance in this important matter. We look forward to receiving your response.

Very truly yours,

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL



Gloria Randall Ammons
Disciplinary Counsel

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