

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

OFFICE OF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL	:	No. 63 DB 2016
Petitioner	:	
	:	
v.	:	Attorney Registration No. 47643
	:	
ROBERT LEONARD STAUFFER	:	
Respondent	:	(Montgomery County)

PUBLIC REPRIMAND

Robert Leonard Stauffer, you stand before the Disciplinary Board, your professional peers and members of the public for the imposition of a Public Reprimand. It is an unpleasant task to publicly reprimand one who has been granted the privilege of membership in the bar of this Commonwealth. Yet as repugnant as this task may be, it has been deemed necessary that you receive this public discipline.

Mr. Stauffer, you are being reprimanded today in connection with your representation of Mrs. Shelly Strouse in a divorce matter. On April 29, 2015, you caused to be filed in the divorce action an Affidavit of Consent to the entry of a final decree in divorce which Mr. Strouse had signed on March 27, 2015. On that same date, the Court entered an Order Deferring Divorce Decree because the March 27, 2015 Affidavit of Consent by Mr. Strouse had not been filed within 30 days of its execution. You had overlooked your earlier receipt of the Affidavit of Consent and did not see that it was filed in a timely fashion.

On May 1, 2015, your paralegal contacted Mr. Strouse's attorney, Victoria Hollister, Esquire, to request that Ms. Hollister obtain Mr. Strouse's signature and return his signed original at the earliest convenience. On May 4, 2015, you filed another

Affidavit of Consent in the Strouse divorce action which purported to bear Christopher Strouse's signature and was dated April 30, 2015.

The Affidavit of Consent you filed with the Court on May 4, 2015 was a version of the March 27, 2015 Affidavit of Consent which you had altered without having any authority to do so. You used white-out to obscure Mr. Strouse's signature and the date and time-stamp on the March 27, 2015 Affidavit of Consent, and signed Mr. Strouse's name and re-dated the document to April 30, 2015.

After Ms. Hollister raised concerns about the Affidavit of Consent in a letter to your law partners, on May 7, 2015, you filed a Praecipe to Withdraw the Affidavit of Consent you had filed on May 4, 2015. On May 11, 2015, Ms. Hollister filed an Affidavit of Consent that Mr. Strouse signed on that date.

We note the following mitigating circumstances:

- a. Before the misconduct was reported to Office of Disciplinary Counsel, you acknowledged your misconduct to your law firm and to opposing counsel and took prompt action to remediate the misconduct;
- b. You expressed genuine remorse for your misconduct and you understand that discipline is necessary;
- c. You have practiced nearly thirty years as an attorney and have no record of discipline.

Your conduct in this matter has violated the following Rules of Professional Conduct:

1. RPC 1.3 – A lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness when representing a client.
2. RPC 3.4(b) – A lawyer shall not falsify evidence.
3. RPC 8.4(c) – It is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation.

Mr. Stauffer, your conduct in this matter is now fully public. This Public Reprimand is a matter of public record.

As you stand before the Board today, we remind you that you have a continuing obligation to abide by the Rules of Professional Conduct and Rules of Disciplinary Enforcement. This Public Reprimand is proof that Pennsylvania lawyers will not be permitted to engage in conduct that falls below professional standards. Be mindful that any future dereliction will subject you to disciplinary action.

This Public Reprimand shall be posted on the Disciplinary Board's website at www.padisciplinaryboard.org.



Designated Member
The Disciplinary Board of the
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

Administered by a designated panel of three Members of The Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 11, 2016.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The undersigned, Respondent in the above proceeding, herewith acknowledges that the above Public Reprimand was administered in his presence and in the presence of the designated panel of The Disciplinary Board at 1601 Market Street, Suite 3320, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 11, 2016.

Robert L Stauffer Esq #47643
Robert Leonard Stauffer