

JOHNSTON COUNTY  
NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE GENERAL COURTS OF JUSTICE  
SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION  
09 CRS 1749-1760

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

FILED )

v.

DATE 1-25-10

TIME 10:30 AM

WILL R. CROCKER

ORDER OF DISBARMENT

J. LEE HATCH

(JOHNSTON COUNTY) C.S.C.

BY

Pam N. Rye  
DEPUTY CLERK

Based upon the Affidavit of Surrender of Law License submitted to the court by J. Lee Hatch, the court makes the following:

### FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Jonathon Lee Hatch was licensed to practice law in North Carolina on August 26, 1994.
2. Hatch operated a law office in Johnston County, North Carolina.
3. On this date, Hatch entered pleas of guilty to ten (10) counts of felony obstruction of justice, ten (10) counts of altering an official case record, and one (1) count of conspiracy to commit felony obstruction of justice.
4. Hatch is in fact guilty of the criminal offenses to which he pled guilty.

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the court makes the following:

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. By committing ten (10) counts of felony obstruction of justice, ten (10) counts of altering an official case record, and one (1) count of conspiracy to commit felony obstruction of justice, Hatch violated Rules 8.4(b) and (c) of the North Carolina Rules of Professional Conduct.
2. Hatch's misconduct constitutes grounds for discipline pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. Section 84-28(b)(2).
3. Hatch's misconduct has caused significant actual harm to the legal profession and to the public's perception of the justice system.
4. The court finds that lesser alternatives, including public censure, reprimand, admonition or suspension of Hatch's law license would not be sufficient discipline because of the gravity of the actual and potential harm to the public, the administration of justice, and the legal profession caused by Hatch's conduct.
5. The court has considered lesser sanctions and determined that any discipline short of disbarment would not adequately protect the public for the following reasons:
  - a. Hatch's misconduct involves moral turpitude and violations of the public trust.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy as the same appears in the original file in the court records.

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Pam N. Rye  
DEPUTY CLERK

b. Hatch's misconduct involves misrepresentations and deceit. Misconduct involving misrepresentations and deceit are among the most serious that an attorney can commit.

c. Hatch's criminal offenses reflect adversely on his honesty, trustworthiness or fitness as a lawyer.

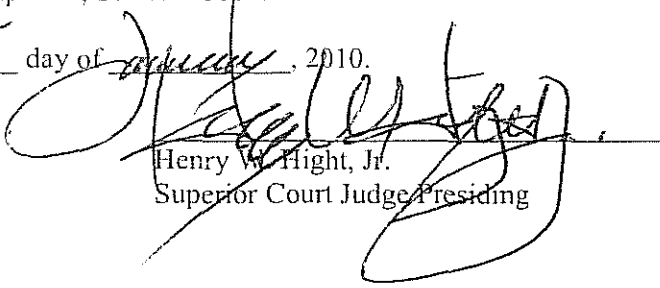
d. Entry of an order imposing less serious discipline would fail to acknowledge the seriousness of the offenses and would send the wrong message to attorneys and to the public regarding the conduct expected of members of the Bar of this State.

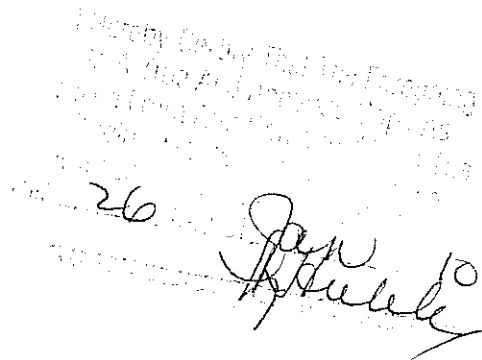
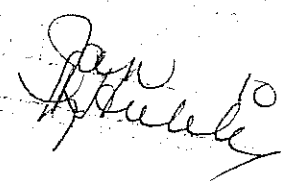
e. Protection of the public and of the legal profession require that Hatch not be permitted to resume the practice of law until he demonstrates the following: that he has reformed; that he understands his obligations to his clients, the public, and the legal profession; and that permitting him to practice law will not be detrimental to the public or the integrity and standing of the legal profession or the administration of justice. Disbarred lawyers are required to make such a showing before they may resume practicing law.

IT IS NOW, THEREFORE, **ORDERED**:

1. Jonathon Lee Hatch is DISBARRED from the practice of law in North Carolina.
2. This Order of Disbarment is effective immediately upon entry.
3. Jonathon Lee Hatch shall comply with the provisions of Subchapter B, Section .0124 of the Rules and Regulations of the North Carolina State Bar and shall surrender his license and permanent membership card to the Secretary of the North Carolina State Bar along with the affidavit required by Subchapter B, Section .0124.

Done and Ordered this 25 day of January, 2010.

  
Henry W. Hight, Jr.  
Superior Court Judge Presiding

  
26 Jan 2010  


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J. LEE HATCH WILL R. CROCKER DEEDAVIT OF SURRENDER  
OF LAW LICENSE

JOHNSTON COUNTY C.S.C.

BY Pam N. Royals  
DEPUTY CLERK

Jonathon Lee Hatch, being first duly sworn, deposes and says as follows:

1. I desire to resign and hereby tender my license to practice law in North Carolina.
2. My resignation is freely and voluntarily rendered. It is not the result of coercion or duress. I am fully aware of the implication of submitting my resignation.
3. I have today entered a plea of guilty to ten (10) counts of felony obstruction of justice, ten (10) counts of altering an official case record, and one (1) count of conspiracy to commit felony obstruction of justice. I am in fact guilty of these charges.
4. I know that if disciplinary charges were predicated upon these criminal offenses, I could not successfully defend against them.
5. I consent to be disbarred from the practice of law in North Carolina.

This the 25<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2010.

Jonathon Lee Hatch

I, Joyce B. Ellis, Notary Public of the County of Wayne, State of North Carolina, certify that Jonathon Lee Hatch personally appeared before me this day, was sworn, attested that the foregoing Affidavit is true and accurate of his own personal knowledge, and executed the foregoing Affidavit.

This the 25<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2010.

Joyce B. Ellis  
Notary Public

JOYCE B ELLIS  
NOTARY PUBLIC

I Hereby Certify That The Foregoing  
Is A True And Accurate Copy As  
Taken From And Compared With The

My Commission Expires: 7-11-12  
Original On Record In This Office.

Witness My Hand And Official Seal.

This 25<sup>th</sup> Day Of January, 2010  
Will R. Crocker, Clerk Superior Court  
Pam N. Royals Asst  
Deputy