

NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

BEFORE THE
GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR
17G0410

IN THE MATTER OF)	
)	REPRIMAND
STEVEN B. WRIGHT,)	
ATTORNEY AT LAW)	

On January 17, 2019 the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar met and considered the grievance filed against you by A.S. The grievance was assigned to a Subcommittee, which thoroughly reviewed the results of the State Bar staff's investigation of this matter.

Pursuant to Section .0113(a) of the Discipline and Disability Rules of the North Carolina State Bar, the Grievance Subcommittee conducted a preliminary hearing. After considering the information available to it, including your response to the letter of notice, the Grievance Subcommittee found probable cause. Probable cause is defined in the rules as "reasonable cause to believe that a member of the North Carolina State Bar is guilty of misconduct justifying disciplinary action."

The rules provide that after a finding of probable cause, the Grievance Committee may determine that the filing of a complaint and a hearing before the Disciplinary Hearing Commission are not required, and the Grievance Committee may issue various levels of discipline depending upon the misconduct, the actual or potential injury caused, and any aggravating or mitigating factors. The Grievance Committee may issue an admonition, a reprimand, or a censure to the respondent attorney.

A reprimand is a written form of discipline more serious than an admonition issued in cases in which an attorney has violated one or more provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct and has caused harm or potential harm to a client, the administration of justice, the profession, or a member of the public, but the misconduct does not require a censure.

The Grievance Committee was of the opinion that a censure is not required in this case and issues this reprimand to you. As chairman of the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar, it is now my duty to issue this reprimand.

You were retained to represent A.S. in a misdemeanor case in May 2015. After the initial court date, you notified A.S. that the case had been dismissed. In March 2017, A.S. discovered an outstanding warrant for failing to appear ("FTA") had been issued in the 2015 misdemeanor case. The FTA was discovered as part of a security clearance investigation when A.S. applied to raise his security clearance. A.S. notified you about the FTA and you contacted the clerk and confirmed that the case had not been dismissed. On March 24, 2017, the District Attorney's dismissal of the 2015 misdemeanor case was recorded, and the FTA recalled. A.S. requested documentation of the dismissal, which you agreed to provide; however, you failed to deliver the documentation to A.S.

despite repeated requests and knowing your client had a strict time frame in which he needed the documentation. After you failed to provide documentation of the dismissal, A.S. had to obtain it from the clerk's office. In your response to this grievance, you stated that you told A.S. to get the documentation from the clerk's office, but your last text to A.S. on March 31 states that you would obtain the documentation for A.S. Your failure to perform a service you agreed to provide and your failure to respond to a reasonable request for information from your client violated Rules 1.3 and 1.4(a)(4). Before you were contacted by A.S. in 2017, you had been censured and reprimanded in separate cases for conduct that included neglect. Your continued neglect after receiving discipline for similar conduct aggravates this matter.

You are hereby reprimanded by the North Carolina State Bar for your professional misconduct. The Grievance Committee trusts that you will heed this reprimand, that it will be remembered by you, that it will be beneficial to you, and that you will never again allow yourself to depart from adherence to the high ethical standards of the legal profession.

In accordance with the policy adopted July 23, 2010 by the Council of the North Carolina State Bar regarding the taxing of administrative fees and investigative costs to any attorney issued a reprimand by the Grievance Committee, an administrative fee in the amount of \$350.00 is hereby taxed to you.

Done and ordered, this the 8th day of February, 2019.



A. Todd Brown, Sr., Chair
Grievance Committee

ATB/lb