



SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA
Case No. S08Y1349

Atlanta March 9, 2009

The Honorable Supreme Court met pursuant to adjournment.

The following order was passed:

IN THE MATTER OF GREGORY E. STUHLER

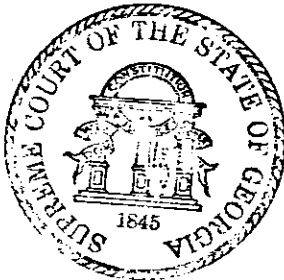
This disciplinary matter is before the Court on the Report of Special Master, J. Wayne Moulton, recommending that the Court accept Gregory E. Stuhler's third petition for voluntary discipline for violations stemming from his failure to supervise a paralegal and his failure to meet with clients before undertaking representation. See In the Matter of Stuhler, S06Y1494, S06Y1495, and S06Y1503 (July 14, 2006) (rejecting voluntary petition); In the Matter of Stuhler S07Y0863 (April 24, 2007) (same). The State Bar and Stuhler filed the petition jointly after the State Bar filed an amended formal complaint that contained much less serious charges than the initial complaints filed.

The voluntary petition admits Stuhler violated Rules 1.2 (a) and 5.3 (c) (2) of Bar Rule 4-102 (d) of the Georgia Rules of Professional Conduct. The maximum sanction for a violation of either rule is disbarment. The petition seeks to have a public reprimand imposed after a one-year period during which Stuhler is required to submit to quarterly evaluations and assessments of his intake and case management procedures by the State Bar's Law Practice Management Program; Stuhler waives confidentiality so that the Office of General Counsel may ensure that he has undergone the required assessments; and Stuhler will attend the State Bar's Ethics School.

The admitted facts show that in three separate instances Stuhler's paralegal met a client at a chiropractor's office at the request of the chiropractor; the client executed a contingency fee agreement; and Stuhler took action on behalf of the client prior to meeting or speaking with the client. In two of the cases, Stuhler promptly withdrew from the representation after being dismissed by the client and in the third, he ultimately spoke with the client and represented the client successfully in a personal injury claim. The State Bar submits that following

discovery, the facts did not warrant the additional charges levied in the earlier formal complaints, and that Stuhler has been cooperative in the proceedings.

After a review of the record, the Court concludes that acceptance of the voluntary petition is appropriate. Therefore, it is hereby ordered that Stuhler receive a public reprimand and attend the next scheduled session of the State Bar's Ethics School. It is further ordered that for a one-year period beginning with the date of this order, Stuhler is required to submit to quarterly evaluations and assessments of his intake and case management procedures by the State Bar's Law Practice Management Program and Stuhler shall waive confidentiality so that the Office of General Counsel may ensure that he has undergone the required assessments.



SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA
Clerk's Office, Atlanta

I hereby certify that the above is a true extract from the minutes of the Supreme Court of Georgia.

Witness my signature and the seal of said court hereto affixed the day and year last above written.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lynn M. Stucke".

, Chief Deputy Clerk