

SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA
Case No. S00Y0378.

Atlanta

JAN 18 2000

The Honorable Supreme Court met pursuant to adjournment.

The following order was passed:

IN THE MATTER OF JANICE L. HUGHES

This disciplinary proceeding is before the Court on Respondent Janice L. Hughes' Petition for Voluntary Discipline filed pursuant to Bar Rule 4-227 (c) after the issuance of two Formal Complaints against her and the appointment of a special master. In her petition, Hughes admits to having violated Standard 44 (lawyer shall not wilfully abandon or wilfully disregard a legal matter entrusted to her to the detriment of her client) of Bar Rule 4-102 (d), and asks this Court to impose a Review Panel reprimand, and require her to make restitution and return client records. The State Bar recommended that the special master accept the petition, which he did, recommending the requested sanctions. Having reviewed the record in this case, we agree that under the circumstances, a Review Panel reprimand is appropriate.

Hughes admits that she violated Standard 44 by accepting fees from two clients, Marcia Doss and Gail Rich, but not performing the required work in their cases, not responding to their calls or letters, and not returning Rich's records upon request. In mitigation of her conduct, Hughes states that she was in a treatment program for severe depression caused by her husband's illness and death; that she has no prior disciplinary record; that she had no selfish or dishonest motive because she thought she had taken reasonable steps to protect her clients' interests; that she made timely good faith efforts at restitution; that she has cooperated with disciplinary authorities; and that she is remorseful for her behavior.

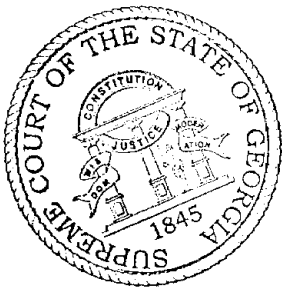
Accordingly, it is hereby ordered that the Review Panel administer a Review Panel reprimand at its next meeting declaring Hughes' conduct to be improper, Bar Rule 4-102 (b) (4) and that, within 90 days from the date of this

order, Hughes make restitution to Doss in the amount of \$400 and to Rich in the amount of \$227.79, and that she return all documents and medical records belonging to Rich.

All the Justices concur, except Carley, J., who is disqualified.

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, appearing to read "Eugene M. Starnes".

, Chief Deputy Clerk