

The Supreme Court of Ohio

FILED

APR 20 2016

Disciplinary Counsel,
Relator,
v.
James William Thomas Jr.,
Respondent.

Case No. 2015-1001

CLERK OF COURT
SUPREME COURT OF OHIO
ON CERTIFIED REPORT BY THE
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL
CONDUCT OF THE SUPREME COURT

ORDER

On July 22, 2014, in *In re: James William Thomas, Jr.*, case No. 2014-1205, respondent, James William Thomas Jr., was suspended on an interim basis pursuant to former Gov.Bar R. V(5). Pursuant to this court's order, respondent was required to file with the clerk of this court an affidavit showing compliance with the order, showing proof of service of all notices required by the order, and setting forth the address where respondent would receive communications. Respondent did not file an affidavit of compliance.

The Board of Professional Conduct filed its final report in this court on June 15, 2015, and filed a supplemental report on remand on October 5, 2015, recommending that pursuant to Gov.Bar R. V(12)(A)(2), respondent, James William Thomas Jr., be indefinitely suspended from the practice of law with credit for time served under the interim felony suspension imposed on July 22, 2014, and with reinstatement to the practice of law subject to conditions. No objections to said final report were filed, and this cause was considered by the court.

On consideration thereof, it is ordered and adjudged by this court that case No. 2014-1205 is dismissed and that, pursuant to Gov.Bar R. V(12)(A)(2) and consistent with the opinion rendered herein, respondent, James William Thomas Jr., Attorney Registration No. 0074051, last known business address in Eaton, Ohio, is indefinitely suspended from the practice of law with no credit for the time served under his interim felony suspension. It is further ordered that in addition to the requirements of Gov.Bar R. V(25), respondent's reinstatement to the practice of law shall be conditioned upon respondent's (1) completion of his period of incarceration, (2) payment of restitution for the benefit of former clients E.T. (\$72,149.40), R.B. (\$17,487), and K.O. (\$3,346) as set forth in the restitution order in his criminal case, (3) compliance with all terms and conditions of his criminal probation, (4) successful completion of a substance-abuse and addiction-treatment program approved by the Ohio Lawyers Assistance Program ("OLAP"), (5) execution of an OLAP contract for a term to be determined by OLAP, and (6) full compliance with all treatment recommendations of OLAP and his treating professionals.

It is further ordered that respondent immediately cease and desist from the practice of law in any form and respondent is forbidden to appear on behalf of another before any court, judge, commission, board, administrative agency, or other public authority.

It is further ordered that effective immediately, respondent is forbidden to counsel, advise, or prepare legal instruments for others or in any manner perform legal services for others.

It is further ordered that respondent is hereby divested of each, any, and all of the rights, privileges, and prerogatives customarily accorded to a member in good standing of the legal profession of Ohio.

It is further ordered that before entering into an employment, contractual, or consulting relationship with any attorney or law firm, respondent shall verify that the attorney or law firm has complied with the registration requirements of Gov.Bar R. V(23)(C). If employed pursuant to Gov.Bar R. V(23), respondent

shall refrain from direct client contact except as provided in Gov.Bar R. V(23)(A)(1) and from receiving, disbursing, or otherwise handling any client trust funds or property.

It is further ordered that respondent be taxed the costs of these proceedings in the amount of \$22.51, which costs shall be payable to this court by cashier's check or money order on or before 90 days from the date of this order. It is further ordered that if these costs are not paid in full on or before 90 days from the date of this order, interest at the rate of 10% per annum shall accrue as of 90 days from the date of this order and the matter may be referred to the Attorney General for collection. It is further ordered that respondent is liable for all collection costs pursuant to R.C. 131.02 if the debt is certified to the Attorney General for collection. It is further ordered that respondent may not petition for reinstatement until costs and all accrued interest are paid in full.

It is further ordered that pursuant to Gov.Bar R. X(13), respondent shall complete one credit hour of continuing legal education for each month, or portion of a month, of the suspension. As part of the total credit hours of continuing legal education required by Gov.Bar R. X(13), respondent shall complete one credit hour of instruction related to professional conduct required by Gov.Bar R. X(3)(B) for each six months, or portion of six months, of the suspension.

It is further ordered by the court that within 90 days of the date of this order, respondent shall reimburse any amounts that have been awarded against respondent by the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection pursuant to Gov.Bar R. VIII(7)(F). It is further ordered by the court that if after the date of this order, the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection awards any amount against respondent pursuant to Gov.Bar R. VIII(7)(F), respondent shall reimburse that amount to the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection within 90 days of the notice of such award.

It is further ordered that respondent shall not be reinstated to the practice of law in Ohio until (1) respondent complies with the requirements for reinstatement set forth in the Supreme Court Rules for the Government of the Bar of Ohio, (2) respondent complies with the Supreme Court Rules for the Government of the Bar of Ohio, (3) respondent complies with this and all other orders of the court, and (4) this court orders respondent reinstated.

It is further ordered that on or before 30 days from the date of this order, respondent shall do the following:

1. Notify all clients being represented in pending matters and any co-counsel of respondent's suspension and consequent disqualification to act as an attorney after the effective date of this order and, in the absence of co-counsel, also notify the clients to seek legal service elsewhere, calling attention to any urgency in seeking the substitution of another attorney in respondent's place;
2. Regardless of any fees or expenses due respondent, deliver to all clients being represented in pending matters any papers or other property pertaining to the client or notify the clients or co-counsel, if any, of a suitable time and place where the papers or other property may be obtained, calling attention to any urgency for obtaining such papers or other property;
3. Refund any part of any fees or expenses paid in advance that are unearned or not paid and account for any trust money or property in the possession or control of respondent;
4. Notify opposing counsel or, in the absence of counsel, the adverse parties in pending litigation, of respondent's disqualification to act as an attorney after the effective date of this order and file a notice of disqualification of respondent with the court or agency before which the litigation is pending for inclusion in the respective file or files;

5. Send all notices required by this order by certified mail with a return address where communications may thereafter be directed to respondent;
6. File with the clerk of this court and disciplinary counsel of the Supreme Court an affidavit showing compliance with this order, showing proof of service of the notices required herein, and setting forth the address where the respondent may receive communications; and
7. Retain and maintain a record of the various steps taken by respondent pursuant to this order.

It is further ordered that until such time as respondent fully complies with this order, respondent shall keep the clerk and disciplinary counsel advised of any change of address where respondent may receive communications.

It is further ordered that service shall be deemed made on respondent by sending this order, and all other orders in this case, to respondent's last known address.

It is further ordered that the clerk of this court issue certified copies of this order as provided for in Gov.Bar R. V(17)(D)(1) and that publication be made as provided for in Gov.Bar R. V(17)(D)(2).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maureen O'Connor", written over a horizontal line.

Maureen O'Connor
Chief Justice