



**BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE**

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RELEASE OF INFORMATION
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November 1, 2001

MEMPHIS LAWYER SUSPENDED

Samuel L. Perkins, a Memphis lawyer, has been suspended from the practice of law by Order of the Supreme Court filed October 29, 2001. Perkins was suspended for a period of 45 days, beginning October 15 through November 29, 2001.

The Court also required Perkins to complete the Board's September, 2001 Ethics Workshop (which he did), and to obtain and provide to Disciplinary Counsel a law office practice assessment report from his monitor, Legal Management Services, Inc., by November 29, 2001. The objective of the practice assistance monitoring is to help Perkins in the areas of ensuring proper delegation of tasks to his support staff and ensuring such staff do not act in matters requiring the professional judgment of a lawyer, calendaring, docket control, moving with reasonable promptness and improving his communications with clients.

Perkins neglected clients' divorce and personal injury cases, failed to move with reasonable diligence and promptness and did not keep his clients reasonably informed about the status of their legal matters. He also failed to properly supervise a former member of his support staff who created attorney-client relationships with clients without his knowledge, and who handled virtually all telephonic and mail communications with his clients. This former employee also gave clients false and fraudulent court dates, forged his signature to correspondence; and pleadings, accepted fees, and prepared certain legal documents, all without Perkins' knowledge. Perkins' discharge of the former employee in October 2000, his prompt corrective action taken to conclude the clients' cases after disciplinary complaints were filed, and his refund of fees in matters which he did not desire to handle, were considered mitigating by the Supreme Court.

The Board of Professional Responsibility filed a petition for discipline against Perkins pursuant to Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 9, and Perkins submitted a conditional guilty plea resulting in the 45 day suspension.

Section 18 of Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 9 requires Perkins to notify by registered or certified mail all clients being represented in pending matters; all co-counsel and opposing counsel of the Supreme Court's Order suspending his license. The 45 day actual suspension period will expire without the need for a reinstatement proceeding, and Perkins may resume the practice of law without conditions beginning on November 30, 2001.

