



BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
of the
SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE

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RELEASE OF INFORMATION
RE: TONY LAWRENCE MAPLES, NO. 18782
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BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

August 27, 2003

MURFREESBORO ATTORNEY SUSPENDED BY SUPREME COURT

By Order of the Supreme Court entered August 25, 2003, Tony Lawrence Maples, a Murfreesboro attorney, was suspended from the practice of law for six months. Mr. Maples is required to attend and complete an office management and a lawyer trust accounts seminar prior to resuming the practice of law. The Petition for Discipline arose out of four complaints of misconduct. A hearing was conducted by a Hearing Committee of the Board of Professional Responsibility on May 2, 2003. Mr. Maples settled a personal injury case for \$9,000.00 in October, 1999, the proceeds of which were not paid to the client. Another client paid \$20,000.00 to Mr. Maples' firm toward settlement of the client's divorce. When the divorce settlement did not materialize, the firm did not have the \$20,000.00 to return to the client. On February 17, 2000, Mr. Maples' wife, who worked for Mr. Maples, borrowed \$18,000.00 from the client who had the \$9,000.00 settlement to repay the divorce client his \$20,000.00. Mr. Maples learned of the loan and the \$20,000.00 missing funds on the night the loan was made. Mr. Maples, nonetheless, took no action to investigate the conduct of his wife nor to monitor his assets. On March 23, 2000, \$3,000.00 was paid to Mr. Maples' firm in partial settlement of another client's post-divorce matter. The \$3,000.00 was not deposited into Mr. Maples' trust account but to his personal account. When Mr. Maples wrote the client a check from his trust account for \$3,000.00 on May 30, 2000, the check was dishonored due to insufficient funds. On March 22, 2000, Mr. Maples settled a case for another client for \$15,000.00, the proceeds of which were not paid to the client. Mr. Maples asserted that he did not know of any of these problems until June, 2000, when brought to his attention by attorneys inquiring about the status of the settlements. Mr. Maples', his wife, and others testified that it was Mr. Maples' wife who had misappropriated the monies without Mr. Maples' knowledge. All monies were subsequently paid to the clients from various sources. By a Judgment filed on May 21, 2003, the Hearing Committee found that Mr. Maples had violated disciplinary rules prohibiting an attorney from engaging in dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misappropriation, limiting business relationships with a client, and requiring an attorney to preserve the identify of funds and property of a client and suspended Mr. Maples for six months. Mr. Maples had been

temporarily suspended pursuant to Section 4.3 of Supreme Court Rule 9 from October 21, 2000, through February 2, 2001, arising out of these same actions.

The Court further ordered that Mr. Maples pay the costs of the disciplinary proceedings and comply in all respects with Rule 9 regarding the obligations and responsibilities of a suspended attorney. Mr. Maples may resume the practice of law upon the expiration of the period of suspension.

Maples 1056 rel.doc