



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

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RELEASE OF INFORMATION
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BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
615-361-7500

July 20, 2012

MEMPHIS LAWYER SUSPENDED

On July 18, 2012, Michelle L. Betserai, of Memphis, Tennessee, was suspended from the practice of law by Order of the Tennessee Supreme Court for two (2) years. She was further ordered to pay restitution to four (4) complainants and costs to the Board of Professional Responsibility.

The Board of Professional Responsibility filed a Petition for Discipline on November 30, 2009 containing four complaints of misconduct. A Supplemental Petition for Discipline was filed on October 3, 2011 containing one complaint of misconduct. Ms. Betserai failed to diligently represent her clients by failing to file pleadings in a timely manner which resulted in adverse outcomes for her clients. Ms. Betserai failed to enter a final decree after a divorce hearing and the case was later dismissed for lack of prosecution. Ms. Betserai promised to file a motion to set aside the dismissal but she failed to do so. In other cases, Ms. Betserai failed to file an answer to a counter-complaint in a divorce and a default judgment was taken against her client. Ms. Betserai also abandoned her practice by moving out of state without completing or handling pending matters for clients. Finally, Ms. Betserai made misrepresentations during testimony as an expert witness about belonging to a bar association and about her level of participation in an appeal.

Her actions violate the following Rules of Professional Conduct: 1.1, Competence; 1.3, Diligence; 1.4, Communication; 1.5(a) and (b), Fees; 1.16(d), Declining and Terminating Representation; 3.2, Expediting Litigation; 8.1(b) Bar Admission and Disciplinary Matters; and 8.4(a), (c) and (d), Misconduct.

Ms. Betserai must comply with the requirements of Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 9, Sections 18 and 19, should she seek reinstatement of her Tennessee law license and she may not resume practice until reinstated by further order of the Court.

Betserai 1866-9 rel.doc

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