



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

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RELEASE OF INFORMATION
RE: ROBERT LAWSON CHEEK, JR., BPR #15407
CONTACT: ALAN D. JOHNSON
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
615-361-7500

August 13, 2015

KNOX COUNTY LAWYER DISBARRED

On August 12, 2015, Robert Lawson Cheek, Jr. was disbarred by the Tennessee Supreme Court. The disbarment took effect immediately. Mr. Cheek must pay the Board of Professional Responsibility's costs and expenses and court costs within ninety days.

On April 30, 2014, Mr. Cheek entered a guilty plea to mail fraud in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee. On May 21, 2014, the Tennessee Supreme Court summarily suspended Robert Lawson Cheek, Jr. from the practice of law pursuant to Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 9, Section 22.3. The Board of Professional Responsibility filed a Final Petition for Discipline to determine the extent of Mr. Cheek's discipline. Another Petition for Discipline was filed against Mr. Cheek based upon a complaint received after his summary suspension on May 21, 2014. The two cases were consolidated for Final Hearing.

Mr. Cheek misappropriated settlement funds, withheld money from settlements to pay subrogation claims, paid only a portion of the claims, and in some cases, he forged his clients' signatures on settlement checks. The Hearing Panel determined that Mr. Cheek violated Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3, Diligence; 1.5, Fees; 1.15, Safekeeping Property; 8.4(a - d), Misconduct.

Should Mr. Cheek petition for reinstatement, he must establish that he has paid restitution to his former clients, complied with the terms and conditions of probation ordered by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee, and complied with any recommendations of the Tennessee Lawyer Assistance Program.

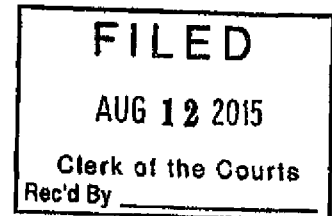
In an unrelated case, Mr. Cheek was previously disbarred on May 15, 2014. To date, Mr. Cheek has not been reinstated from his previous disbarment.

Mr. Cheek must comply with Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 9, Sections 28 and 30 regarding the obligations and responsibilities of disbarred attorneys.

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE
AT NASHVILLE

IN RE: ROBERT LAWSON CHEEK, JR., BPR # 15407
An Attorney Licensed to Practice Law in Tennessee
(Knox County)

No. **M2014-00936-SC-BAR-BP**
BOPR Nos. 2014-2318-2-AJ(22.3)
2014-2409-2-AJ



ORDER OF ENFORCEMENT

This matter is before the Court upon a Petition for Final Discipline filed against Robert Lawson Cheek, Jr., on July 1, 2014; upon a Petition for Discipline filed against Robert Lawson Cheek, Jr., on December 19, 2014; upon Order entered January 20, 2015 consolidating Docket Numbers 2014-2318-2-AJ (22.3) and 2014-2409-2-AJ; upon Motion for Default Judgment and that the Allegations Contained in the Petition for Discipline Be Deemed Admitted filed on February 5, 2015; upon entry of an Order Granting Motion for Default on March 2, 2015; upon entry of the Final Decree of the Hearing Panel on April 8, 2015; upon service of the Final Decree of the Hearing Panel on Mr. Cheek by the Executive Secretary of the Board on April 20, 2015; upon entry of the Judgment on the Board of Professional Responsibility's Application for Assessment of Costs on May 21, 2015; upon service of the Judgment on the Board of Professional Responsibility's Application for Assessment of Costs on Mr. Cheek by the Executive Secretary of the Board on May 22, 2015; upon consideration and approval by the Board on June 12, 2015; upon expiration of the appeal period with no appeal taken; and upon the entire record in this cause.

From all of which the Court approves the Order of the Hearing Panel and adopts the Hearing Panel's Judgment as the Court's Order.

On August 31, 2012, Mr. Cheek was suspended from the practice of law for non-compliance with Continuing Legal Education requirements. On May 15, 2014, Mr. Cheek was disbarred by this Court pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 4.1 (2006) (Docket No. M2012-02741-SC-BAR-BP). To date, Mr. Cheek has not requested, nor been granted reinstatement.

**IT IS, THEREFORE, CONSIDERED, ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND
DECREED BY THE COURT THAT:**

(1) Robert Lawson Cheek, Jr., is disbarred from the practice of law pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 12.1.

(2) Pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 12.7, Mr. Cheek shall be required to make restitution to the following individuals. Payment of restitution is a condition precedent to reinstatement. In the event restitution is made by the Tennessee Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection ("TLFCP"), Mr. Cheek will be responsible for reimbursement to the TLFCP of the same amount:

- (a) Donna Loveday in the amount of \$17,370.13;
- (b) Kristina Thiagarajan in the amount of \$91,856.18; and,
- (c) Vincent Appleton in the amount of \$60,000.00.

(3) As a further condition of reinstatement, Mr. Cheek must comply with all conditions imposed on him by the United States District Court of the Eastern District of Tennessee in Docket No. 3:13-CR-00158-01, and must confer with the Tennessee Lawyer Assistance Program ("TLAP") for a consultation and shall comply with any recommendations of TLAP.

(4) Mr. Cheek shall comply in all aspects with Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, §§ 28 and 30 (2014) regarding the obligations and responsibilities of disbarred attorneys and the procedure for reinstatement. Prior to seeking reinstatement, Mr. Cheek must meet all CLE requirements and pay any outstanding registration fees, including those due from the date of suspension until the date of reinstatement.

(5) Pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 28.5, this Order shall be effective immediately.

(6) Pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 31.3, Mr. Cheek shall pay to the Board of Professional Responsibility the expenses and costs of this matter in the amount of \$923.86 and shall pay to the Clerk of this Court the costs incurred herein within ninety (90) days of the entry of this Order, for all of which execution may issue if necessary.

(7) The Board of Professional Responsibility shall cause notice of this discipline to be published as required by Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 28.11.

PER CURIAM