



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

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**RELEASE OF INFORMATION**  
**RE: A. SAIS PHILLIPS FINNEY, #028845**  
**CONTACT: EILEEN BURKHALTER SMITH**  
**BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
**615-361-7500**

January 29, 2020

**DAVIDSON COUNTY LAWYER CENSURED**

On January 28, 2020, A. Sais Phillips Finney, a Tennessee attorney, received a Public Censure from the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Tennessee Supreme Court.

Ms. Finney represented a client in the rehearing of a custody matter in juvenile court. After two preliminary hearings, the request for rehearing was withdrawn by the father of the children prior to the scheduled trial. Ms. Finney told her client in person that she would seek reimbursement of the attorney fees against the father, but she did not file a motion for the client's attorney fees. Ms. Finney failed to respond to at least two requests in writing from her client to provide an affidavit to assist in seeking reimbursement of the fees.

In response to a *pro se* filing by the client, the court ordered Ms. Finney to "provide [an] affidavit of fees and signed retainer letter directly to the Court." Ms. Finney did not respond in any way to this directive by the court, and the client's request for fees against the father was eventually dismissed.

Ms. Finney's failure to comply with the court's order to provide an affidavit of her fees is in violation of Rules 1.3 (diligence), 3.4(c) (fairness to opposing party and counsel) and 8.4(d) (prejudice to the administration of justice) for disobeying an obligation under the rules of a tribunal. Ms. Finney's failure to respond to written requests from her client to provide an affidavit of her fees is in violation of Rules 1.3 and 1.4 (communication). Ms. Finney is in violation of Rule 1.16 (termination of representation) for failing to protect her client's interests upon her withdrawal from the representation. The client suffered potential harm in her ability to have her claim for attorney fees considered on the merits.

By these acts, Ms. Finney has violated Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3 (diligence), 1.4 (communication), 1.16 (termination of representation), 3.4(c) (fairness to opposing party and counsel), and 8.4(d) (prejudice to the administration of justice) and is hereby Publicly Censured for this conduct.

A Public Censure is a rebuke and warning to the attorney, but it does not affect the attorney's ability to practice law.

Finney 61556-5 rel.doc