



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

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**RELEASE OF INFORMATION**  
**RE: JOHN CRIS HELTON, BPR #014339**  
**CONTACT: ERIC A FULLER**  
**BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
**615-361-7500**

April 8, 2024

**TENNESSEE LAWYER SUSPENDED**

Effective April 8, 2024, the Supreme Court of Tennessee suspended John Cris Helton from the practice of law for five (5) years, with four (4) years to be served as an active suspension pursuant to Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 9, Section 12.2, and the remainder to be served on probation conditioned upon Mr. Helton's engagement of a practice monitor.

A Petition for Discipline was filed alleging Mr. Helton failed to file required federal income tax returns for several years and willfully attempted to avoid his tax liabilities. After the United States Internal Revenue Service initiated civil litigation against Mr. Helton to recover approximately \$400,000.00 in owed income taxes, Mr. Helton filed for Chapter 7 Bankruptcy protection, asserting that this Internal Revenue Service lien should be discharged. The federal bankruptcy court determined that the tax debt was non-dischargeable because the failure to pay was willful and intentional. On appeal, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the district court ruling.

Mr. Helton executed a Conditional Guilty Plea acknowledging his conduct violated Tennessee Rules of Professional 8.4(c)(misconduct).

Mr. Helton must comply with the requirements of Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 9, Sections 28 and 30.4, regarding the obligations and responsibilities of suspended attorneys and the procedure for reinstatement.

Helton 3296-3 rel.doc