



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

10 CADILLAC DRIVE, SUITE 220
BRENTWOOD, TENNESSEE 37027
TELEPHONE: (615) 361-7500
(800) 486-5714
FA24: (615) 367-2480
E-MAIL: ethics@tbpr.org
Website: www.tbpr.org

RELEASE OF INFORMATION
RE: WILLIAM BRANCH LAWSON, BPR #010796
CONTACT: JOSEPH K. BYRD
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
615-361-7500

October 27, 2020

UNICOI COUNTY LAWYER PERMANENTLY DISBARRED

Effective October 27, 2020, the Supreme Court of Tennessee permanently disbarred William Branch Lawson from the practice of law and ordered restitution in the amount of \$67,850.00, and costs of the disciplinary proceeding be paid.

The Board filed a Petition for Discipline against Mr. Lawson consisting of five (5) separate disciplinary complaints. The Hearing Panel found Mr. Lawson failed to appear in court or provide any legal services for which he was paid fees by clients, failed to refund unearned fees to his clients, misappropriated the fees paid to him, misappropriated funds held in his trust account for a third party to settle other obligations and cases, failed to act with diligence in the representation of his clients, abandoned his practice, failed to respond to the Board's lawful request for information and engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit and misrepresentations in violation of Tennessee Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3 (diligence), 1.5 (fees), 1.15 (safekeeping property and funds), 1.16 (declining or terminating representation) 8.1 (bar admissions and disciplinary matters), and 8.4(a) and (c) (misconduct).

Mr. Lawson must comply with the requirements of Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 9, Section 28, regarding the obligations and responsibilities of permanently disbarred attorneys.

Lawson 3051-1 rel.doc

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE
AT NASHVILLE

FILED
10/27/2020
Clerk of the
Appellate Courts

IN RE: WILLIAM BRANCH LAWSON, BPR #010796
AN ATTORNEY LICENSED TO PRACTICE LAW IN TENNESSEE
(Unicoi County)

No. M2020-01441-SC-BAR-BP
BOPR NO. 2019-3051-1-TL

ORDER OF ENFORCEMENT

This matter is before the Court upon a Petition for Discipline filed against Attorney William Branch Lawson on November 12, 2019; upon a Motion for Default Judgment and That Charges in Petition for Discipline Be Deemed Admitted filed February 10, 2020; upon an Order for Default Judgment entered March 18, 2020; upon final hearing held May 7, 2020; upon Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law entered July 1, 2020; upon service of the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law of the Hearing Panel on Mr. Lawson by the Executive Secretary of the Board on July 1, 2020; upon the Board's Application for Assessment of Costs filed July 16, 2020; upon Findings and Judgment of Assessment of Costs entered August 11, 2020; upon service of the Findings and Judgment of Assessment of Costs upon Mr. Lawson on August 11, 2020; upon consideration and approval by the Board on September 11, 2020; upon expiration of the appeal period with no appeal taken; and upon the entire record in this cause.

On May 24, 2019, Mr. Lawson was suspended by this Court, pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 12.2 (Case No. M2019-00921-SC-BPR-BP), and said suspension remains in effect.

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

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

(1) William Branch Lawson is permanently 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. Lawson shall make restitution to the following individuals listed below:

(a) Lewis and Rebecca Welch	\$1,350.00
(b) Linda Lance	\$1,500.00
(c) Denise Arnett	\$65,000.00

To the extent restitution is paid by the Tennessee Lawyer's Fund for Client Protection ("TLFCP"), Mr. Lawson shall reimburse TLFCP for said amount and shall remain obligated to the individuals listed above for any unpaid restitution.

(3) The temporary suspension entered in this matter by the Court on May 24, 2019, (M2019-00921-SC-BAR-BP) pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 12.2 is hereby dissolved.

(4) Pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 28.1, this Order shall be effective upon entry.

(5) Pursuant to Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 31.3(d), Mr. Lawson shall pay to the Board of Professional Responsibility the expenses and costs of this matter in the amount of \$1,575.04 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.

(6) Mr. Lawson shall comply in all aspects with Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 9, § 28 regarding the obligations and responsibilities of disbarred attorneys.

(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