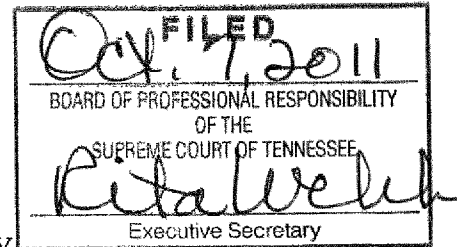


**IN THE DISCIPLINARY DISTRICT IV
OF THE
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
OF THE
SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE**



**In Re: TONY LAWRENCE MAPLES
BPR #18782, Respondent
An Attorney Licensed to
Practice Law in Tennessee
(Rutherford County)**

Docket No. 2011-2040-4-RS

JUDGMENT OF THE HEARING PANEL

This matter came before a duly appointed Hearing Panel of the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee pursuant to a Petition for Discipline filed against Tony Lawrence Maples. A hearing was held on September 27, 2011, and Mr. Maples did not appear. Based upon the Petition for Discipline, the exhibits entered at the hearing and the record as a whole, the Hearing Panel makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. A Petition for Discipline was filed on April 28, 2011.
2. The Petition was sent via certified mail and regular mail to the Mr. Maples' home address and both were returned to the Board showing "Return to Sender" and "Unable to Forward."
3. The Petition was also sent via certified mail and regular mail to an address provided by Accurint, a public records search, and both were returned to the Board showing "Not Deliverable as Addressed" and "Unable to Forward."

4. Section 8.2 of Rule 9 provides that a respondent shall serve his answer upon Disciplinary Counsel and file the original with the Board within twenty days after service of the Petition, unless such time is extended by the Chair.

5. In the event the respondent fails to answer, the charges shall be deemed admitted; provided, however, that a respondent who fails to answer within the time provided may obtain permission of the Chair (of the Board) to file an answer if such failure to file an answer was attributable to mistake, inadvertence, surprise or excusable neglect.

6. No answer or response to the Petition for Discipline was filed with the Executive Secretary of the Board of Professional Responsibility and no answer or response was served on Disciplinary Counsel within the time permitted by Section 8.2 of Rule 9.

7. The time for filing the answer or response was not extended by the Chair of the Board of Professional Responsibility, nor was a request or motion for an extension of time made or filed by Mr. Maples to answer or respond to the Petition for Discipline.

8. On July 18, 2011, the Hearing Panel granted the Board's Motion for Default Judgment.

9. The facts, as set forth below, have been deemed admitted by the Hearing Panel's July 18, 2011 Order.

COMPLAINT OF LEANNE ADAMS: FILE NO. 33430-4-RW

10. On August 25, 2010, the Board of Professional Responsibility received a complaint from LeAnne Adams alleging ethical misconduct by Respondent and the complaint was designated File No. 33430-4-RW.

11. On August 30, 2010, Disciplinary Counsel sent a copy of the complaint and a request for a response in a letter to Respondent.

12. After receiving no response, on September 17, 2010, Disciplinary Counsel sent a Notice of Temporary Suspension to Mr. Maples.

13. The September 17, 2010, Notice was returned to Disciplinary Counsel "Moved, Left No Address, Unable to Forward" on September 27, 2010.

14. Mr. Maples has yet to respond to this complaint.

15. Ms. Adams hired Mr. Maples for a civil matter in which she was a defendant, and paid him about \$3,000.

16. Mr. Maples would not return Ms. Adams' phone calls, and when she finally reached him, Mr. Maples stated that she was supposed to go to court but not to worry about it because he was going to get it postponed.

17. However, there was a hearing of which Mr. Maples failed to notify Ms. Adams.

18. A default judgment was entered against Ms. Adams in the amount of \$10,000 on November 6, 2009; \$5,000 in damages and \$5,000 in attorney fees.

19. Ms. Adams learned about the judgment from the opposing party when he sent her a demand letter dated January 14, 2010.

20. Shortly after Ms. Adams learned of the judgment, she also learned that Mr. Maples' law license had been suspended.

21. On December 8, 2009, Mr. Maples' law license was suspended for failure to respond to Board complaints.

22. Mr. Maples neglected Ms. Adams' case.

23. Mr. Maples failed to communicate with Ms. Adams. Mr. Maples has abandoned his law practice.

COMPLAINT OF LAGANTRIE HICKMAN: FILE NO. 33778-4-RW

24. On January 24, 2011, the Board of Professional Responsibility received a complaint from Lagantrie Hickman alleging ethical misconduct by Mr. Maples and the complaint was designated File No. 33778-4-RW.

25. On January 26, 2011, Disciplinary Counsel sent a copy of the complaint and a request for a response in a letter to Mr. Maples.

26. Mr. Maples has yet to respond to this complaint.

27. In early 2008, Mr. Hickman hired Mr. Maples to file a divorce complaint and paid him a total of \$1,532 over time.

28. Mr. Maples did not file a complaint, provided no legal services and failed to communicate with Complainant.

29. M. Maples and Mr. Hickman agreed that the fee would be \$1,500, but Mr. Maples called Mr. Hickman once and asked for more money.

30. When Mr. Hickman finally went to Mr. Maples' office about finalizing the divorce, Mr. Maples' office no longer existed.

31. Mr. Maples has abandoned his practice.

32. Mr. Hickman has not received a refund from Mr. Maples.

33. Mr. Maples failed to take any action in Mr. Hickman's case. Mr. Maples failed to reasonably communicate with Mr. Hickman.

34. Mr. Maples is currently disbarred, pursuant to the February 14, 2011 Order of the Supreme Court.

35. Prior to his disbarment on February 14, 2011, Mr. Maples had previously been suspended from the practice of law for six (6) months, and received three (3) prior private informal admonitions from the Board.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. With regard to the complaint of Ms. Adams, the Hearing Panel finds that the acts and omissions by Mr. Maples as set forth in the Petition for Discipline constitute ethical misconduct in violation of the following Rules of Professional Conduct: 1.1, Competence; 1.3, Diligence; 1.4, Communication; 1.5, Fees; 3.2, Expediting Litigation; 8.1(b) Bar Admission and Disciplinary Matters; and 8.4(a) and (d), Misconduct.

2. With regard to the Complaint of Ms. Hickman, the Hearing Panel finds that the acts and omissions by Mr. Maples as set forth in the Petition for Discipline constitute ethical misconduct in violation of the following Rules of Professional Conduct: 1.1, Competence; 1.3, Diligence; 1.4, Communication; 1.5, Fees; 3.2, Expediting Litigation; 8.1(b) Bar Admission and Disciplinary Matters; and 8.4(a) and (d), Misconduct.

3. The Supreme Court has adopted for use by its Hearing Panels the ABA Center for Professional Responsibility Standards for Imposing Lawyer Sanctions (ABA Standards), and the Hearing Panel finds that the following ABA Standards are applicable in this case.

4. Section 4.41 of the ABA Standards state:

Disbarment is generally appropriate when:

(a) a lawyer abandons the practice and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client; or

- (b) a lawyer knowingly fails to perform services for a client and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client; or
- (c) a lawyer engages in a pattern of neglect with respect to client matters and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client.

5. Section 7.1 of the ABA Standards state:

Disbarment is generally appropriate when a lawyer knowingly engages in conduct that is a violation of a duty owed to the profession with the intent to obtain a benefit for the lawyer or another, and causes serious or potentially serious injury to a client, the public, or the legal system.

6. Further, Mr. Maples' prior disciplinary history supports disbarment.

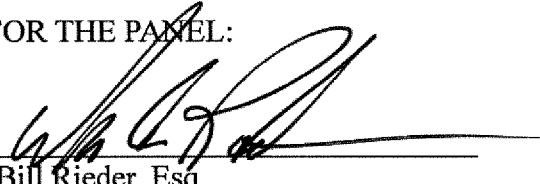
JUDGMENT

Based on the above, this Hearing Panel finds that Mr. Maples should be disbarred. Further, the Panel finds that Mr. Maples should pay restitution in the amount of \$1,532.00 to Ms. Hickman and \$3,000.00 to Ms. Adams to refund the legal fees the complainants paid to Mr. Maples. Further, the Panel finds that Mr. Maples must pay restitution in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Ms. Adams as a result of the default judgment entered against her, and that Mr. Maples shall pay any post-judgment interest and/or penalties necessary to absolve Ms. Adams of any liability in that matter. If Ms. Adams has already paid the judgment in that matter, Mr. Maples shall pay restitution in the full amount paid by Ms. Adams.

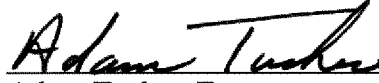
The Hearing Panel further finds that, as a condition of reinstatement, Mr. Maples must submit to an evaluation by the Tennessee Lawyer's Assistance Program.

NOTICE: THIS JUDGMENT MAY BE APPEALED PURSUANT TO SECTION 1.3 OF SUPREME COURT RULE 9 BY FILING A PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI, WHICH PETITION SHALL BE MADE UNDER OATH OR AFFIRMATION AND SHALL STATE THAT IT IS THE FIRST APPLICATION FOR THE WRIT. SEE TENN. CODE ANN. § 27-8-104(a) AND 27-8-106


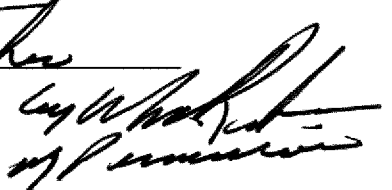
FOR THE PANEL:



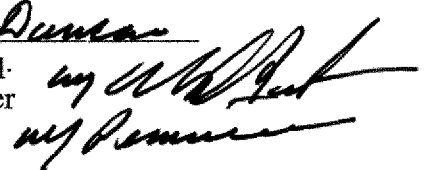
Bill Rieder, Esq.
Hearing Panel Chair



Adam Tucker, Esq.
Hearing Panel Member

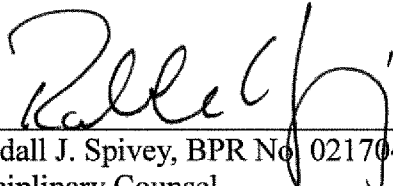


Christina Duncan, Esq.
Hearing Panel Member



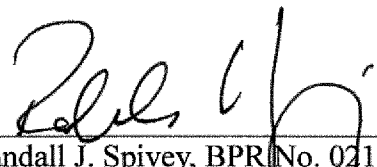
Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy S. Jones
Chief Disciplinary Counsel

By: 
Randall J. Spivey, BPR No. 021704
Disciplinary Counsel
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Brentwood, Tennessee 37027
(615) 695-0935

Certificate of Service

I certify that a copy of the foregoing has been sent to the Respondent, Tony Lawrence Maples, 2707 Sewanee Place, Murfreesboro, TN 37128 and 2716 Sewanee Place, Murfreesboro, TN 37128 by regular mail on this the 29th day of September, 2011.


Randall J. Spivey, BPR No. 021704
Disciplinary Counsel