



**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
FAX: (615) 367-2480
E-MAIL: ethics@tbpr.org
Website: www.tbpr.org

RELEASE OF INFORMATION
RE: WILLIAM JAMES TAYLOR, BPR #26742
CONTACT: EILEEN BURKHALTER SMITH
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
615-361-7500

March 28, 2016

KNOX COUNTY LAWYER CENSURED

On March 24, 2016, William James Taylor, an attorney licensed to practice law in Tennessee, received a Public Censure from the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Tennessee Supreme Court.

Mr. Taylor represented a plaintiff in a civil action and failed to respond to a motion for summary judgment which was then granted. Mr. Taylor filed the notice of appeal untimely, resulting in the dismissal of the appeal. The cost of the appeal was taxed to the client and was left unpaid for over two years. Mr. Taylor later paid the cost of appeal. Mr. Taylor stated in a motion to withdraw from the appeal that he had advised the client the appeal would be a “waste of time” and the client “had failed to comply with Rules of Civil Procedure and discovery, failed to be cooperative with me, and his conduct has rendered it unreasonably difficult, if not impossible, for me to carry out my employment effectively.” Mr. Taylor sent at least four documents including court filings to the client’s incorrect mailing address, resulting in significant delays of communication.

In another matter, Mr. Taylor settled a personal injury matter for a client. After entry of a stipulation of dismissal, the client changed her mind about the settlement. After one letter to his client setting forth the facts of the settlement, Mr. Taylor failed to respond to the client and failed to communicate with opposing counsel. The funds were not distributed for over two years. Eventually, the funds were distributed and Mr. Taylor waived his fee.

By these acts, Mr. Taylor violated Tennessee Rules of Professional Conduct 1.3 (diligence), 1.4 (communication), 1.6 (confidential information), 1.16 (terminating representation), 3.2 (expediting litigation), and 8.4(d) (prejudice to the administration of justice). Two clients suffered actual and potential harm as a result of Mr. Taylor’s actions.

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