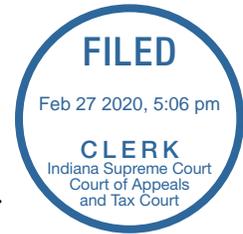


In the Indiana Supreme Court



In the Matter of: Patricia L. Rios,
Respondent

Supreme Court Case No.
19S-DI-511

Published Order Approving Statement of Circumstances and Conditional Agreement for Discipline

Pursuant to Indiana Admission and Discipline Rule 23(12.1)(b), the Indiana Supreme Court Disciplinary Commission and Respondent have submitted for approval a “Statement of Circumstances and Conditional Agreement for Discipline” stipulating agreed facts and proposed discipline as summarized below.

Stipulated Facts: “Client” hired Respondent to assist him with an immigration matter. Client paid Respondent \$1,420 – more specifically, a \$1,000 retainer for legal work and a \$420 anticipated filing fee. After Respondent had done a minimal amount of work and before anything was filed, Client terminated Respondent and asked for a refund of the filing fee and any unearned attorney fees. Respondent wrote Client a check for \$920 (the \$420 filing fee and \$500 in unearned legal fees), but the check bounced. After Respondent would not write Client another check, Client sued Respondent in small claims court and obtained a default judgment in January 2017 for \$920 plus \$101 in court costs and post-judgment interest at the rate of 8% per annum. In May 2019, Respondent provided Client a \$1,000 cashier’s check in partial satisfaction of the amount she owes to Client.

Violation: The parties agree that Respondent violated Indiana Professional Conduct Rule 1.16(d) by failing to timely refund advance payment of fees and expenses that have not been earned or incurred.

Discipline: The parties propose the appropriate discipline is a public reprimand. The Court, having considered the submissions of the parties, now approves the agreed discipline and imposes a **public reprimand** for Respondent’s misconduct.

The costs of this proceeding are assessed against Respondent. Pursuant to the parties’ stipulation, the Court hereby orders Respondent to pay the following expenses in separate checks to be transmitted to the Commission: (1) \$34.31, payable to the Commission for investigative expenses; and (2) \$250.00, payable to the Clerk for court costs. The expenses of the hearing officer will be separately submitted.

With the acceptance of this agreement, the hearing officer appointed in this case is discharged.

Done at Indianapolis, Indiana, on 2/27/2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Loretta H. Rush", written over a horizontal line.

Loretta H. Rush
Chief Justice of Indiana

All Justices concur.