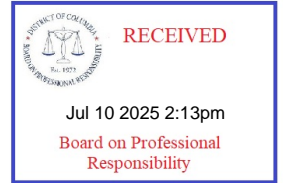


**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS
BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**



In the Matter of	:	
	:	
CHARLES A. ROSS, ESQUIRE	:	Disciplinary Docket No. 2024-D022
	:	
Respondent,	:	
	:	
A Member of the Bar of the	:	
District of Columbia Court of Appeals	:	
	:	
Bar Number: 1044644	:	
Date of Admission: July 7, 2017	:	
	:	

SPECIFICATION OF CHARGES

The disciplinary proceedings instituted by this petition are based upon conduct that violates the standards governing the practice of law in the District of Columbia as prescribed by D.C. Bar Rule X and D.C. Bar Rule XI, § 2(b).

Jurisdiction for this disciplinary proceeding is prescribed by D.C. Bar Rule XI. Pursuant to D.C. Bar Rule XI, § 1(a), jurisdiction is found because:

1. Respondent Charles A. Ross is a member of the Bar of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, having been admitted July 7, 2017, and assigned Bar number 1044644.

2. At all relevant times herein, Ross was a solo practitioner and maintained his law office, Charles Ross, PLLC, in the District of Columbia.

3. In March 2023, Paul Holston retained Ross to represent him in all

matters related to his divorce and child custody case. At the time, Holston lived in South Carolina while his wife and children lived in D.C, and there was also an active D.C. civil protective order between Holston and his wife. Ross agreed to file a motion to amend the order while also helping arrange visitation with Holston and his children.

4. On August 28, 2023, Ross sent Holston a text message stating “I filed [the complaint for divorce] this morning and the filing is under review.” This was false, as Ross never filed the complaint. Two days later, Ross sent an email to opposing counsel stating “My client would like to begin divorce proceeding. We will file this week.”

5. During a phone call on October 6, 2023, Ross told Holston that the initial hearing for his divorce case was set in November. On November 1, 2023, he told Holston that the hearing had been rescheduled to later in the month. Both statements were false.

6. On November 2, 2023, Ross sent Holston a text message falsely stating that he had filed the motion to modify the civil protective order and that Holston’s wife would be served with the motion by 12 p.m. the next day. On November 7, 2023, Ross sent Holston a text falsely stating that service had been confirmed on the motion.

7. After the text message on November 7th, Ross failed to maintain

adequate communication with Holston. Holston tried contacting Ross by email and phone several times to discuss the case and prepare for the upcoming hearing, which Holston believed was scheduled for November 21, 2023. Finally, on November 16th, Holston contacted D.C. Superior Court and discovered that his divorce complaint and motion to modify the civil protective order had never been filed and there was no hearing scheduled in his matter. Holston immediately sent Ross a text message, questioning him about the false information Ross had previously provided. Ross responded saying that he would forward his emails with the attached filings, but he only sent the drafts of both the divorce complaint and motion to modify the civil protective order.

8. On November 20, 2023, Holston sent Ross a formal termination letter, asked for a refund, and requested his client file. Ross refunded Holston the entire retainer amount and forwarded the client file, which consisted only of the draft complaint for divorce and draft motion to modify the CPO, to Holton's successor counsel.

9. After Holston filed a disciplinary complaint, Disciplinary Counsel opened an investigation and requested Ross to respond to Holston's allegations of misconduct. In his written response and during a Zoom interview with Disciplinary Counsel, Ross falsely claimed that he outsourced the filing of Holston's divorce complaint and motion to modify the civil protective order to an

administrative legal support service, ABC Legal. He falsely claimed that ABC Legal notified him that it had completed the filings and that court hearings had been scheduled; however, Ross never produced any communications with ABC Legal, nor did he produce any contract or service agreement between him and ABC Legal.

10. During the relevant time, ABC Legal never provided any services to Charles Ross, Esquire or Charles Ross, PLLC.

Ross's conduct violated the following District of Columbia Rules of Professional Conduct:

- a. Rule 1.3(a), in that Ross failed to represent Holston zealously and diligently within the bounds of the law;
- b. Rule 1.3(c) in that Ross failed act with reasonable promptness in representing Holston;
- c. Rule 1.4(a), in that Ross failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of his matter and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information;
- d. Rule 1.4(b) in that Ross failed to explain the matter to the extent reasonably necessary for Holston to make informed decisions regarding the representation;
- e. Rule 8.1(a) in that Ross, in connection with a disciplinary

matter, knowingly made false statements of facts;

- f. Rule 8.4(c) in that Ross engaged in conduct involving fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, and/or dishonesty; and
- g. Rule 8.4(d) in that Ross engaged in conduct that seriously interfered with the administration of justice.

Respectfully submitted,

Hamilton P. Fox III

Hamilton P. Fox III
Disciplinary Counsel

Dru M. Foster

Dru M. Foster
Assistant Disciplinary Counsel

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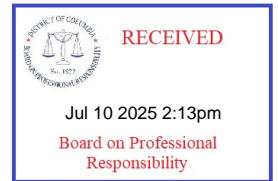
VERIFICATION

I affirm that the facts stated in the Specification of Charges to be true.

Dru M. Foster

Dru M. Foster
Assistant Disciplinary Counsel

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS
BOARD ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**



In the Matter of

CHARLES A. ROSS, ESQUIRE,

Respondent,

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**Disciplinary Docket Nos.
2024-D022**

PETITION INSTITUTING FORMAL DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

A. This Petition (including the attached Specification of Charges which is made part of this Petition) notifies Respondent that disciplinary proceedings are hereby instituted pursuant to Rule XI, § 8(c), of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals' Rules Governing the Bar (D.C. Bar R.).

B. Respondent is an attorney admitted to practice before the District of Columbia Court of Appeals on the date stated in the caption of the Specification of Charges.

C. A lawyer member of a Hearing Committee assigned by the Board on Professional Responsibility (Board) pursuant to D.C. Bar R. XI, § 4(e)(5), has approved the institution of these disciplinary proceedings.

D. **Procedures**

(1) **Referral to Hearing Committee** – When the Board receives the Petition Instituting Formal Disciplinary Proceedings, the Board shall refer it to a Hearing Committee.

(2) **Filing Answer** – Respondent must respond to the Specification of Charges by filing an answer with the Board and by serving a copy on the Office of Disciplinary Counsel within 20 days of the date of service of this Petition, unless the time is extended by the Chair of the Hearing Committee. Permission to file an answer after the 20-day period may be granted by the Chair of the Hearing Committee if the failure to file an answer was attributable to mistake, inadvertence, surprise, or excusable neglect. If a limiting date occurs on a Saturday, Sunday, or official holiday in the District of Columbia, the time for submission will be extended to the next business day. Any motion to extend the time to file an answer, and/or any other motion filed with the Board or Hearing Committee Chair, must be served on the Office of Disciplinary Counsel at the address shown on the last page of this petition.

(3) **Content of Answer** – The answer may be a denial, a statement in exculpation, or a statement in mitigation of the alleged misconduct. Any charges not answered by Respondent may be deemed established as provided in Board Rule 7.7.

(4) **Mitigation** – Respondent has the right to present evidence in mitigation to the Hearing Committee regardless of whether the substantive allegations of the Specification of Charges are admitted or denied.

(5) **Process** – Respondent is entitled to fifteen days’ notice of the time and place of hearing, to be represented by counsel, to cross-examine witnesses, and to present evidence.

E. In addition to the procedures contained in D.C. Bar R. XI, the Board has promulgated Board Rules relating to procedures and the admission of evidence which are applicable to these procedures. A copy of these rules is being provided to Respondent with a copy of this Petition.

WHEREFORE, the Office of Disciplinary Counsel requests that the Board consider whether the conduct of Respondent violated the District of Columbia Rules of Professional Conduct, and, if so, that it impose/recommend appropriate discipline.

Hamilton P. Fox III

Hamilton P. Fox, III
Disciplinary Counsel

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