

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

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RELEASE OF INFORMATION
RE: STEVEN M. MOORE, BPR NO. 14651
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BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
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January 21, 2002

NASHVILLE LAWYER DISBARRED

Steven M. Moore, a Nashville lawyer, has been disbarred by order of the Supreme Court entered on January 15, 2002. Moore represented a client on an insurance claim and obtained a \$5,000.00 settlement. The attorney signed his client's name to the \$5,000.00 check without permission or authority and deposited the check in his attorney trust account.

Moore and the client had agreed that Moore would handle the claim on a contingent fee basis for one third of the amount obtained. Immediately after depositing the \$5,000.00 check in his trust account Moore withdrew \$4,000.00 for his personal use.

Moore sent his client a check for \$1,000.00 after his personal withdrawal. The client refused the check. Moore claimed that he was owed additional fees for other matters in excess of \$4,000.00. His client had informed him that he disputed the additional fee. Subsequently, Moore's attorney trust account was overdrawn. The rules of professional conduct required the attorney to hold disputed funds in the trust account pending resolution of the dispute.

Disciplinary Counsel filed a petition for discipline pursuant to the Rules of the Supreme Court. Moore filed no answer to the petition nor did he appear at the hearing in the matter. The hearing panel of the Board of Professional Responsibility recommended disbarment of Moore unanimously. The hearing panel found that he had engaged in conversion and theft of client funds and that he forged his client's name to a check. It was also found that Moore made false statements to disciplinary counsel involving material facts. Moore was also found to have committed trust account violations and to have engaged in conduct that was deceitful, dishonest and fraudulent.

A disbarred attorney may not apply for reinstatement to the bar for at least five years after disbarment. An attorney petitioning for reinstatement must have a hearing before a hearing committee of the Board of Professional Responsibility. The hearing committee makes a written report to the Supreme Court of Tennessee. The Supreme Court has the sole discretion to order the reinstatement of a disciplined attorney.

CAH:mw

Moore 1190 rel.doc

