

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

IN RE: DISCIPLINE OF JAMES R. KENT.

No. 30440

**FILED**

DEC 17 1997

JANETTE M. BLOOM  
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT  
BY *J. Richards*  
CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK

ORDER APPROVING ISSUANCE OF PUBLIC REPRIMAND

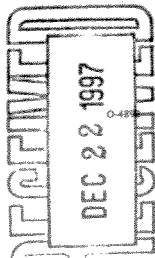
Pursuant to SCR 113 and in exchange for a stated form of discipline, attorney James R. Kent tendered a conditional guilty plea to a formal disciplinary complaint. Kent agreed to receive a public reprimand, pay disciplinary costs, and comply with probationary terms. The plea was accepted by a hearing panel of the Southern Nevada Disciplinary Board, which thereafter forwarded findings and recommendations to this court for final approval. See SCR 113(1).

Having reviewed the record, we approve the stated form of discipline set forth in the panel's findings and recommendations. Kent shall pay disciplinary costs and shall comply with the terms of probation as set forth in the panel's recommendation. Further, we authorize the publication, in accordance with SCR 121, of the following letter of public reprimand.

To: James Ronald Kent, Attorney at Law

In March 1995, the state bar put you on notice of a complaint filed against you by Sharon Lange. In September 1995, the state bar again requested your written response to Lange's complaint. You failed to respond to the matter prior to the screening of the complaint and did not formally respond until filing your answer on April 4, 1996.

In a separate matter, Charlotte and Darrel Labrum retained you on March 30, 1994, to investigate the criminal conviction of their son. You agreed to investigate the possibility of post-conviction relief with a view towards retrying the case.



After several phone calls were unreturned, you contacted the Labrums and informed them that you would work in an expeditious manner. Shortly thereafter, the Labrums made numerous attempts to contact you, all of which were unsuccessful. You had no communication with them from approximately July 1994 through July 1995, at which time you communicated to them that your investigation and research into the matter revealed that a motion to withdraw their son's guilty plea would be meritless. Therefore, you did not take any further legal action in pursuit of this matter. A grievance file was opened in August 1995. Thereafter, you failed to respond to the state bar's requests for information until filing your answer on April 4, 1996.

In a third matter, on October 14, 1993, you were appointed to represent Aaron Jackson relative to Jackson's allegations of ineffective assistance of counsel at trial and on appeal. Jackson had already filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus on his own behalf, and you were appointed to aid him in supplementing his petition. On October 27, 1993, you requested detailed information from Jackson, to which Jackson did not respond. After receiving no response from Jackson, you failed to adequately communicate with him. You failed to pursue Jackson's legal matter in a prompt and efficient manner. A grievance file was opened in October 1995. Thereafter, you failed to respond to the state bar's requests for information until filing your answer on April 4, 1996.


In a fourth matter, a client retained you to seal his criminal records. On March 29, 1995, you drafted and executed a petition to seal records. Thereafter, you were advised by a representative of the District Attorney's office that it was the new policy of that office not to accept petitions to seal records unless prepared on prescribed, typed, and pre-printed forms. You then directed your staff to obtain the pre-printed forms, but neglected to follow up on the acquisition of the forms. As a result, the client's case was not properly calendared for status review. Further, you failed to adequately and promptly review this matter on behalf of the client. The client was unable to contact you throughout the summer of 1995, despite numerous attempts. In October 1995, the client stopped payment on his retainer checks and retained another attorney to pursue the matter. A grievance file was opened in October 1995. Thereafter, you failed to respond to the state bar's requests for information until filing your answer on April 4, 1996.

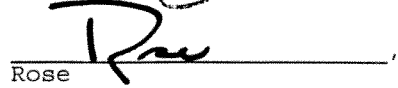
Your conduct is in violation of SCR 153 (diligence), SCR 154 (communication), and SCR 200(2) (failure to respond to a lawful request for information from a discipline authority), and

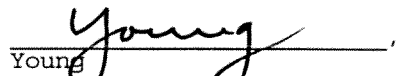
warrants disciplinary action. You are therefore publicly reprimanded for your actions.

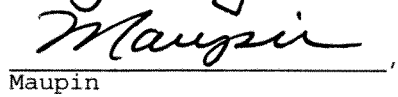
It is so ORDERED.

  
Shearing, C.J.

  
Springer, J.

  
Rose, J.

  
Young, J.

  
Maupin, J.

cc: Gary R. Goodheart, Chairman,  
Southern Nevada Disciplinary Board  
Rob W. Bare, Bar Counsel  
Wayne Elevins, Executive Director  
Peter L. Knight