

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE SECOND DISTRICT SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

IN THE MATTER OF  
PAUL GRANVILLE WATSON, IV

VS B Docket No. 08-022-073510 (Leonard Leverne Victory)

SUBCOMMITTEE DETERMINATION  
(PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITHOUT TERMS)

On February 11, 2009, a hearing in this matter was held before a duly convened Second District Subcommittee consisting of Mark Del Duca, Esquire, Mr. David Jones, lay member, and Bobby W. Davis, Esquire, Chair.

Pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraphs 13.G.4. and 13G.1.d.(3) of the Rules of the Virginia Supreme Court, the Second District Subcommittee of the Virginia State Bar hereby serves upon the Respondent the following Public Reprimand without Terms entered into as an agreed disposition between the bar and the Respondent:

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant hereto, Paul Granville Watson, IV, hereinafter "Respondent", has been an attorney licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
2. Respondent represented Leonard Leverne Victory as criminal defense counsel at trial and in his appeal.
3. Following the entry of the sentencing order on October 26, 2007, Respondent timely noted an appeal and ordered the transcript of the proceedings.
4. On December 26, 2007, Respondent moved for and was granted an extension until January 25, 2008 to file the trial transcripts. However, when Respondent moved for a further extension, the Court failed to grant the extension.

5. On March 10, 2008, the Clerk of the Court of Appeals forwarded to Respondent letters directed to the Court from Mr. Victory expressing concern with the course of his appeal and the lack of news from Respondent.
6. On March 21, 2008, the Court of Appeals issued its order dismissing the appeal for failure to file the transcript.
7. On May 2, 2008, Respondent moved for and won a delayed appeal for Mr. Victory. Notwithstanding Respondent's knowledge of Mr. Victory's clear concern with the appeal and desire to receive news of the case status, Respondent failed to advise Mr. Victory of the March 21, 2008 dismissal of his appeal and of his delayed appeal until Respondent telephoned Mr. Victory on June 10, 2008.
8. Mr. Victory filed one or more complaints with the Virginia State Bar regarding Respondent's representation. Prior to opening a formal ethics inquiry, the bar attempted to informally resolve the dispute between client Victory and Respondent by sending Respondent a pro-active letter on March 6, 2008 that forwarded to Respondent Mr. Victory's complaint letter. Therein, the bar demanded that Respondent respond to Mr. Victory and advise the bar in writing thereof on or before March 17, 2008. The bar's letter advised Respondent that pursuant to RPC 8.1(c ), Respondent had a duty to comply with said demand and that the failure to do so "in a timely manner may result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions."
9. Notwithstanding the bar's demand, Respondent failed to respond to the bar.
10. On March 27, 2008, the bar opened an active investigation and sent Respondent formal notice along with another copy of Mr. Victory's complaint. Therein, the bar demanded that Respondent submit a written answer to the complaint within 21 days. Again citing Rule 8.1(c ), the bar advised Respondent that : "Failure to respond in a timely manner to this and other lawful demands from the bar for information about the complaint may result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions."
11. Notwithstanding the bar's demand, Respondent failed to respond with a written answer to the complaint.
12. With Respondent failing to answer the complaint, the bar was compelled to refer this matter to the Second District Committee for a full investigation on May 5, 2008.

13. In the course of its investigation, the bar received further notice from Mr. Victory that Respondent was failing to respond to his inquiries. On December 3, 2008, the bar forwarded to Respondent Mr. Victory's letter to Respondent and asked that Respondent reply to Mr. Victory and provide a copy of such to the bar no later than December 15, 2008.
14. Notwithstanding the bar's request of December 3, 2008, Respondent failed to respond to the bar.

## II. NATURE OF MISCONDUCT

Such conduct by Paul Granville Watson, IV constitutes misconduct in violation of the following provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct:

### RULE 1.4      Communication

- (a) A lawyer shall keep a client reasonably informed about the status of a matter and promptly comply with reasonable requests for information.

### RULE 8.1      Bar Admission And Disciplinary Matters

An applicant for admission to the bar, or a lawyer already admitted to the bar, in connection with a bar admission application, any certification required to be filed as a condition of maintaining or renewing a license to practice law, or in connection with a disciplinary matter, shall not:

- (c) fail to respond to a lawful demand for information from an admissions or disciplinary authority, except that this Rule does not require disclosure of information otherwise protected by Rule 1.6;

## III. PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITHOUT TERMS

Accordingly, it is the decision of the subcommittee to impose a Public Reprimand without Terms and the Respondent is hereby so reprimanded.

Pursuant to Paragraph 13.B.8.c., the Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs.

SECOND DISTRICT SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

By



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Bobby W. Davis  
Chair

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2009, I caused to be mailed by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, a true and correct copy of the Subcommittee Determination (PUBLIC Reprimand Without Terms) to Paul Granville Watson, IV, Esquire, Respondent, at, P.O. Box 600, Eastville, VA 23347, his last address of record with the Virginia State Bar.



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Paul D. Georgiadis  
Assistant Bar Counsel