

NOV 28 2017

DISCIPLINARY BOARD

BEFORE THE
DISCIPLINARY BOARD
OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

In re

CLIFFORD F. CORDES,
Lawyer (Bar No. 5582).

Proceeding No. 17#00050

ADMONITION

Pursuant to Rule 13.5 of the Rules for Enforcement of Lawyer Conduct, the following
Admonition was issued by the Disciplinary Board Chair.

I. ADMISSION TO PRACTICE

At all times material to the complaint, you were licensed to practice in the state of
Washington.

II. FACTS

1. In 2011, Edward Toft (Toft) hired Respondent to represent him in Toft v. State of
Washington Military Department, Thurston County Superior Court Case No. 13-2-02153-3.
2. During the litigation, Toft provided Respondent with original documents, including
college diplomas, military documents (e.g. DD214 military discharge), and original tax return
documents.
3. In April 2016, the case was settled through mediation.

1 4. Starting in April 2016, Toft asked Respondent to return the original documents to
2 him.

3 5. Respondent negligently failed to maintain Toft's documents and return them to Toft.

4 6. During the period from April 2016 through March 2017, Toft made repeated efforts
5 to obtain his belongings from Respondent, including stopping by Respondent's office on
6 multiple occasions and leaving telephone messages.

7 7. Respondent could not locate Toft's documents in the client file and did not promptly
8 respond to Toft's messages and contacts.

9 8. Respondent has not completed searching all of the files that were in his office during
10 the time that he represented Toft.

11 9. Respondent is in the process of retiring and closing his practice.

12 **III. MISCONDUCT**

13 10. By failing to appropriately safeguard Toft's original documents, Respondent violated
14 RPC 1.15A(c)(3).

15 11. By failing to promptly deliver Toft's original documents to him, and by failing to
16 surrender those documents upon termination of representation, Respondent violated RPC
17 1.15A(f) and/or 1.16(d).

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19 **IV. ADMONITION**

20 **YOU ARE HEREBY ADMONISHED FOR THIS MISCONDUCT.** This admonition is
21 not a disciplinary sanction, but is a disciplinary action, and shall be admissible in evidence in
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1 subsequent discipline or disability proceedings involving you.

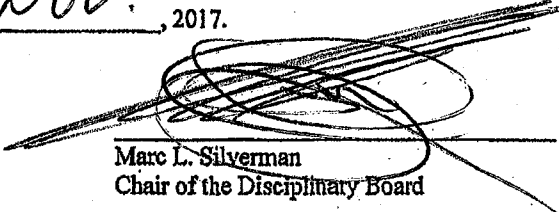
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4 Dated this 28th day of NOV., 2017.

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Marc L. Silverman
Chair of the Disciplinary Board

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13 CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

14 I certify that I caused a copy of the Admonition
15 to be delivered to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel and to be mailed
Clifford Cordes / Respondent's Counsel
914 7th Ave SE Olympia WA 98501 by Certified / first class mail,
16 postage prepaid on the 28th day of NOV, 2017.

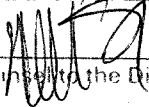
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Clerk/Counsel to the Disciplinary Board

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