

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE SIXTH DISTRICT SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

IN THE MATTER OF
JAMES JOSEPH ILIJEVICH

VSB Docket No. 26-060-136792

SUBCOMMITTEE DETERMINATION
(PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITH TERMS)

On April 15, 2026, and May 11, 2026, meetings were held in this matter before a duly convened Sixth District Subcommittee consisting of Shelia H.B. Holmes, Esquire, Subcommittee Chair; Adam R. Kinsman, Esquire, Member; and Roy H. Smith, Lay Member. During the meeting, the Subcommittee voted to approve an Agreed Disposition for a Public Reprimand with Terms pursuant to Part 6, § IV, ¶ 13-15.B.4. of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The Agreed Disposition was entered into by the Virginia State Bar by Joseph M. Caturano, Jr., Assistant Bar Counsel and James Joseph Ilijevich (“Respondent”), *pro se*.

WHEREFORE, the Sixth District Subcommittee of the Virginia State Bar hereby serves upon Respondent the following Public Reprimand with Terms:

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent was admitted to the Virginia State Bar (“VSB”) in 1996. At all relevant times, Respondent was a member of the VSB.
2. On August 8, 2023, the Circuit Court of Spotsylvania County (“Circuit Court”) sentenced Elijah Cofield (“Mr. Cofield”) to 103 years’ incarceration with 85 years suspended upon multiple criminal convictions, including: abduction, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, aggravated malicious wounding, and robbery (the “criminal case”). (CR 22-1360 to -1362; CR 22-1608 to -1613). Mr. Cofield intended to appeal the criminal case to the Court of Appeals of Virginia (“CAV”).
3. On August 17, 2023, the Circuit Court appointed Respondent to represent Mr. Cofield in the appeal to the CAV. (CAV Record 058526).
4. On August 18, 2023, Respondent filed a notice of appeal in the Circuit Court on behalf of Mr. Cofield.

5. On August 21, 2023, the Circuit Court entered an order for the court reporter to prepare and file the transcripts for the appeal to the CAV.

6. On September 14, 2023, Respondent prepared and filed a Motion for Extension of Time to File Transcript (“Motion”) because the due date for filing the transcript was approaching.

7. Respondent did not file the Motion in the CAV as required by Rule 5A:8(a) of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. Respondent filed the Motion in the Circuit Court.

8. Respondent did not monitor the Motion filed in the Circuit Court; the Circuit Court did not enter any order on an extension of time to file the transcripts.

9. On November 6, 2023, the Circuit Court transmitted the case file to the CAV, prior to receiving the transcripts from the court reporter.

10. On November 8, 2023, the transcripts in the criminal case were filed with the Circuit Court.

11. On December 19, 2023, Respondent filed a Designation of Appendix and Assignment of Error with the CAV.

12. On January 23, 2024, Respondent filed Appellant’s Opening Brief with the CAV.

13. On October 16, 2024, the CAV issued an opinion that affirmed the Circuit Court’s judgment and noted the transcripts were not timely filed and were not part of the record. The CAV also noted that Respondent failed to file the Motion for Extension of Time to File Transcript with the CAV pursuant to Rule 5A:8(a) of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia.¹ The CAV dismissed the appeal because the record was incomplete without the transcript.

14. On January 23, 2025, Respondent filed a Motion for Delayed Appeal with the CAV pursuant to Va. Code § 19.2-321.1.

15. On September 8, 2025, Mr. Cofield filed a bar complaint with the VSB against Respondent alleging, in part, “... my lawyer has not been responding to my letters or phone calls. I have repeatedly tried to contact him by mail and have written 6 letters and after 25 months I have not heard from him ...”

16. On October 1, 2025, upon receipt of the bar complaint, Respondent reviewed the status of Mr. Cofield’s appeal to the CAV. Respondent stated to the investigator for the VSB, “Frankly I just forgot [about] it ...”

¹ Rule 5A:8. Record on Appeal: Transcript or Written Statement. (a) Transcript. — The transcript of any proceeding is a part of the record when it is filed in the office of the clerk of the trial court no later than 60 days after entry of the final judgment. This deadline may be extended by a judge of this Court only upon a written motion filed within 90 days after the entry of final judgment. Timely motions will be granted only upon a showing of good cause to excuse the delay.

17. On January 15, 2026, the CAV granted Respondent's Motion for Delayed Appeal, permitting leave to file a replacement notice of appeal from the judgment rendered against Mr. Cofield by the Circuit Court.

18. At no time during the representation did Respondent speak with Mr. Cofield in person or on the telephone.²

19. When the investigator for the VSB asked Respondent about Mr. Cofield's six (6) letters to Respondent over the previous two (2) years and the numerous attempted telephone calls with Respondent, Respondent stated he does not remember receiving any recent letters from Mr. Cofield and does not know about the telephone calls from Mr. Cofield.

20. On April 4, 2026, Respondent filed a replacement notice of appeal with the Circuit Court to pursue Mr. Cofield's appeal to the CAV from the judgment rendered against Mr. Cofield by the Circuit Court in 2023.

II. NATURE OF MISCONDUCT

Such conduct by Respondent constitutes misconduct in violation of the following provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct:

Rule 1.1 Competence

A lawyer shall provide competent representation to a client. Competent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation.

Rule 1.3 Diligence

a. A lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client.

By failing to file the Motion for Extension of Time to File Transcript with the CAV by the due date as required by Rule 5A:8(a) of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Respondent violated Rules 1.1 and 1.3(a).

By failing to monitor the Motion for Extension of Time to File Transcript in the Circuit Court, being unaware the Circuit Court did not enter any order on the Motion or by declining to enter the order on a lack of jurisdiction, Respondent violated Rules 1.1 and 1.3(a).

By failing to monitor the appeal with the CAV from January 23, 2025, to October 1, 2025, Respondent violated Rule 1.1 and 1.3(a)

² Respondent stated to the investigator for the VSB that he sent copies of pleadings to Mr. Cofield.

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.
- b. A lawyer shall explain a matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the client to make informed decisions regarding the representation.

By failing to communicate with Mr. Cofield for at least 2 years during the representation on the appeal, and by failing to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information from Mr. Cofield for 2 years on the status of the appeal, despite numerous letters and telephone calls from Mr. Cofield, Respondent violated Rule 1.4(a).

By failing to explain the dismissal of the appeal on October 16, 2024, to Mr. Cofield; by failing to explain the motion for a delayed appeal to Mr. Cofield and obtain Mr. Cofield's consent; and by failing to explain the issues in the appeal to Mr. Cofield to permit Mr. Cofield to make informed decisions regarding the representation on the appeal, Respondent violated Rule 1.4(b).

III. PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITH TERMS

Accordingly, it is the decision of the Subcommittee to impose a Public Reprimand with

Terms. The terms shall be:

1. NO FURTHER MISCONDUCT

For a period of one (1) year following the entry of a Subcommittee Determination (Public Reprimand with Terms), Respondent will not engage in any conduct that violates the Virginia Rules of Professional Conduct, including any amendments thereto, and/or which violates any analogous provisions, and any amendments thereto, of the disciplinary rules of another jurisdiction in which Respondent may be admitted to practice law. The terms contained in this paragraph will be deemed to have been violated when any ruling, determination, judgment, order, or decree has been issued against Respondent by a disciplinary tribunal in Virginia or elsewhere, containing a finding that Respondent has violated one or more provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct referred to above, *provided, however*, that the conduct upon which such finding was based occurred within the period referred to above, and provided, further, that such ruling has become final.

2. MCLE

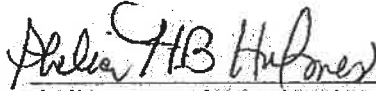
On or before November 1, 2026, Respondent will complete six (6) hours of continuing legal education credits by attending courses approved by the Virginia State Bar in the subject matter of criminal appeals (3 hours) and law office management (3 hours). Respondent's Continuing Legal Education attendance obligation set forth in this paragraph

will not be applied toward his Mandatory Continuing Legal Education requirement in Virginia or any other jurisdictions in which Respondent may be licensed to practice law. Respondent will certify his compliance with the terms set forth in this paragraph by delivering a fully and properly executed Virginia MCLE Board Certification of Attendance form (Form 2) to Bar Counsel, promptly following his attendance of each such CLE program(s).

If any of the terms are not met by the time specified, pursuant to Part 6, § IV, ¶13-15.F of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the District Committee shall hold a hearing and Respondent shall be required to show cause why a District Committee should not certify this matter to the Disciplinary Board for determination of a sanction. Any proceeding initiated due to failure to comply with terms will be considered a new matter and an administrative fee and costs will be assessed.

Pursuant to Part 6, § IV, ¶ 13-9.E. of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs.

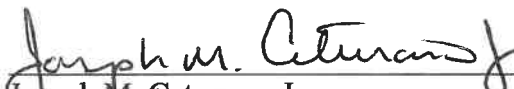
SIXTH DISTRICT SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR



Shelia H.B. Holmes, Esquire
Subcommittee Chair

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I certify that on the 13th day of May 2026, a true and complete copy of the Subcommittee Determination (Public Reprimand with Terms) was sent by certified mail to James Joseph Ilijevich at 4036 Plank Road, Fredericksburg, VA 22407, Respondent's last address of record with the Virginia State Bar, and by email to jiljevich@verizon.net.



Joseph M. Caturano, Jr.
Assistant Bar Counsel

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE SIXTH DISTRICT SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

IN THE MATTER OF
JAMES JOSEPH ILIJEVICH

VSB Docket No. 26-060-136792

AGREED DISPOSITION
PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITH TERMS

Pursuant to the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-15.B.4, the Virginia State Bar by Joseph M. Caturano Jr., Assistant Bar Counsel, and James Joseph Ilijevich ("Respondent"), enter into the following agreed disposition arising out of this matter.

I. STIPULATIONS OF FACT

1. Respondent was admitted to the Virginia State Bar ("VSB") in 1996. At all relevant times, Respondent was a member of the VSB.
2. On August 8, 2023, the Circuit Court of Spotsylvania County ("Circuit Court") sentenced Elijah Cofield ("Mr. Cofield") to 103 years' incarceration with 85 years suspended upon multiple criminal convictions, including: abduction, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, aggravated malicious wounding, and robbery (the "criminal case"). (CR 22-1360 to -1362; CR 22-1608 to -1613). Mr. Cofield intended to appeal the criminal case to the Court of Appeals of Virginia ("CAV").
3. On August 17, 2023, the Circuit Court appointed Respondent to represent Mr. Cofield in the appeal to the CAV. (CAV Record 058526).
4. On August 18, 2023, Respondent filed a notice of appeal in the Circuit Court on behalf of Mr. Cofield.
5. On August 21, 2023, the Circuit Court entered an order for the court reporter to prepare and file the transcripts for the appeal to the CAV.
6. On September 14, 2023, Respondent prepared and filed a Motion for Extension of Time to File Transcript ("Motion") because the due date for filing the transcript was approaching.

7. Respondent did not file the Motion in the CAV as required by Rule 5A:8(a) of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. Respondent filed the Motion in the Circuit Court.
8. Respondent did not monitor the Motion filed in the Circuit Court; the Circuit Court did not enter any order on an extension of time to file the transcripts.
9. On November 6, 2023, the Circuit Court transmitted the case file to the CAV, prior to receiving the transcripts from the court reporter.
10. On November 8, 2023, the transcripts in the criminal case were filed with the Circuit Court.
11. On December 19, 2023, Respondent filed a Designation of Appendix and Assignment of Error with the CAV.
12. On January 23, 2024, Respondent filed Appellant's Opening Brief with the CAV.
13. On October 16, 2024, the CAV issued an opinion that affirmed the Circuit Court's judgment and noted the transcripts were not timely filed and were not part of the record. The CAV also noted that Respondent failed to file the Motion for Extension of Time to File Transcript with the CAV pursuant to Rule 5A:8(a) of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia.¹ The CAV dismissed the appeal because the record was incomplete without the transcript.
14. On January 23, 2025, Respondent filed a Motion for Delayed Appeal with the CAV pursuant to Va. Code § 19.2-321.1.
15. On September 8, 2025, Mr. Cofield filed a bar complaint with the VSB against Respondent alleging, in part, "... my lawyer has not been responding to my letters or phone calls. I have repeatedly tried to contact him by mail and have written 6 letters and after 25 months I have not heard from him ..."
16. On October 1, 2025, upon receipt of the bar complaint, Respondent reviewed the status of Mr. Cofield's appeal to the CAV. Respondent stated to the investigator for the VSB, "Frankly I just forgot [about] it ..."
17. On January 15, 2026, the CAV granted Respondent's Motion for Delayed Appeal, permitting leave to file a replacement notice of appeal from the judgment rendered against Mr. Cofield by the Circuit Court.

¹ Rule 5A:8. Record on Appeal: Transcript or Written Statement. (a) Transcript. — The transcript of any proceeding is a part of the record when it is filed in the office of the clerk of the trial court no later than 60 days after entry of the final judgment. This deadline may be extended by a judge of this Court only upon a written motion filed within 90 days after the entry of final judgment. Timely motions will be granted only upon a showing of good cause to excuse the delay.

18. At no time during the representation did Respondent speak with Mr. Cofield in person or on the telephone.²

19. When the investigator for the VSB asked Respondent about Mr. Cofield's six (6) letters to Respondent over the previous two (2) years and the numerous attempted telephone calls with Respondent, Respondent stated he does not remember receiving any recent letters from Mr. Cofield and does not know about the telephone calls from Mr. Cofield.

20. On April 4, 2026, Respondent filed a replacement notice of appeal with the Circuit Court to pursue Mr. Cofield's appeal to the CAV from the judgment rendered against Mr. Cofield by the Circuit Court in 2023.

II. NATURE OF MISCONDUCT

Such conduct by Respondent constitutes misconduct in violation of the following provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct:

Rule 1.1 Competence

A lawyer shall provide competent representation to a client. Competent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation.

Rule 1.3 Diligence

a. A lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client.

By failing to file the Motion for Extension of Time to File Transcript with the CAV by the due date as required by Rule 5A:8(a) of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Respondent violated Rules 1.1 and 1.3(a).

By failing to monitor the Motion for Extension of Time to File Transcript in the Circuit Court, being unaware the Circuit Court did not enter any order on the Motion or by declining to enter the order on a lack of jurisdiction, Respondent violated Rules 1.1 and 1.3(a).

By failing to monitor the appeal with the CAV from January 23, 2025, to October 1, 2025, Respondent violated Rule 1.1 and 1.3(a)

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.

² Respondent stated to the investigator for the VSB that he sent copies of pleadings to Mr. Cofield.

- b. A lawyer shall explain a matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the client to make informed decisions regarding the representation.

By failing to communicate with Mr. Cofield for at least 2 years during the representation on the appeal, and by failing to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information from Mr. Cofield for 2 years on the status of the appeal, despite numerous letters and telephone calls from Mr. Cofield, Respondent violated Rule 1.4(a).

By failing to explain the dismissal of the appeal on October 16, 2024, to Mr. Cofield; by failing to explain the motion for a delayed appeal to Mr. Cofield and obtain Mr. Cofield's consent; and by failing to explain the issues in the appeal to Mr. Cofield to permit Mr. Cofield to make informed decisions regarding the representation on the appeal, Respondent violated Rule 1.4(b).

III. PROPOSED DISPOSITION

Accordingly, Assistant Bar Counsel and Respondent tender to a Subcommittee of the Sixth District Committee for its approval the Agreed Disposition of a Public Reprimand with Terms as representing an appropriate sanction if this matter were to be heard through an evidentiary hearing by the Sixth District Committee. The terms shall be met by the due dates set forth below and are as follows:

1. **NO FURTHER MISCONDUCT**

For a period of one (1) year following the entry of a Subcommittee Determination (Public Reprimand with Terms), Respondent will not engage in any conduct that violates the Virginia Rules of Professional Conduct, including any amendments thereto, and/or which violates any analogous provisions, and any amendments thereto, of the disciplinary rules of another jurisdiction in which Respondent may be admitted to practice law. The terms contained in this paragraph will be deemed to have been violated when any ruling, determination, judgment, order, or decree has been issued against Respondent by a disciplinary tribunal in Virginia or elsewhere, containing a finding that Respondent has violated one or more provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct referred to above, *provided, however*, that the conduct upon which such finding was based occurred within the period referred to above, and *provided, further*, that such ruling has become final.

2. **MCLE**

On or before November 1, 2026, Respondent will complete six (6) hours of continuing legal education credits by attending courses approved by the Virginia State Bar in the subject matter of criminal appeals (3 hours) and law office management (3 hours). Respondent's Continuing Legal Education attendance obligation set forth in this paragraph

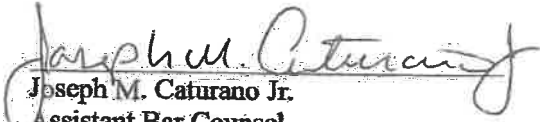
will not be applied toward his Mandatory Continuing Legal Education requirement in Virginia or any other jurisdictions in which Respondent may be licensed to practice law. Respondent will certify his compliance with the terms set forth in this paragraph by delivering a fully and properly executed Virginia MCLE Board Certification of Attendance form (Form 2) to Bar Counsel, promptly following his attendance of each such CLE program(s).

If any of the terms are not met by the due dates contained herein, Respondent agrees that the District Committee shall hold a hearing and Respondent shall be required to show cause why a Certification for Sanctions Determination should not be imposed pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-15.F of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia. Any proceeding initiated due to failure to comply with terms will be considered a new matter, and an administrative fee and costs will be assessed pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-9.E of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

If the agreed disposition is approved, the Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs.

Pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-30.B of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Respondent's prior disciplinary record shall be furnished to the Subcommittee considering this agreed disposition.

VIRGINIA STATE BAR


Joseph M. Caturano Jr.
Assistant Bar Counsel


James Joseph Iijevich
Respondent



RECEIVED
May 13, 2026
VIRGINIA STATE BAR
CLERK'S OFFICE

Virginia State Bar

SIXTH DISTRICT COMMITTEE

PLEASE REPLY TO:
Joanne Fronfelter, Clerk
1111 East Main Street, Suite 700
Richmond, Virginia 23219-0026

May 13, 2026

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL & EMAIL: jilijevich@verizon.net

James Joseph Ilijevich
James Ilijevich, Attorney at Law
4036 Plank Road
Fredericksburg, VA 22407

Certified Article Number

9414 7266 9904 2248 6768 68

SENDER'S RECORD

Re: In the Matter of James Joseph Ilijevich
VSB Docket No. 26-060-136792

Dear Mr. Ilijevich:

Enclosed is a Subcommittee Determination (Public Reprimand with Terms) hereby served on you by the Sixth District Subcommittee of the Virginia State Bar.

Please be aware that this disposition will become a part of your disciplinary record.

Pursuant to Part 6, Section IV, Paragraphs 13-15.F and 13-15.G of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, if you fail to comply with the terms by the dates indicated in the Subcommittee Determination, the alternative disposition may be imposed. Imposition of the alternative sanction may involve a public show cause notice and a public hearing pursuant to Part Six, Section IV, Paragraphs 13-15.F and 13-16.BB of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

Sincerely,


Shelia Hunter-Bonaparte Holmes
Subcommittee Chair

Enclosure

cc: Elijah Cofield, Complainant
Joanne Fronfelter, Clerk of the Disciplinary System
Joseph M. Caturano Jr., Assistant Bar Counsel
Amanda Miller, Investigator