

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE FIFTH DISTRICT, SECTION III SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

IN THE MATTER OF
DOMINICK ANTHONY PILLI

VSb Docket No. 25-053-133576

SUBCOMMITTEE DETERMINATION
(PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITH TERMS)

On January 28 and September 8, 2026, meetings in this matter were held before a duly convened Fifth District, Section III Subcommittee consisting of Matthew Patrick Tsun, Esq., Chair Presiding; Alisa Chunephisal, Member; and Barbara W. Hutto, Lay Member. The Subcommittee voted to approve an agreed disposition for a Public Reprimand with Terms pursuant to the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-15.B.4. The agreed disposition was entered into by the Virginia State Bar, by Elizabeth K. Shoenfeld, Senior Assistant Bar Counsel, Dominick Anthony Pilli (“Respondent”), and Timothy Joseph Battle, counsel for Respondent.

WHEREFORE, the Fifth District, Section III 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 1989. At all relevant times, Respondent was a member of the VSB.
2. Respondent represented David and Sheilah James in litigation involving a lease for their business. The lawsuit was filed on July 19, 2022, and the Jameses retained Respondent on September 17, 2022.
3. Respondent originally planned to bill the Jameses on an hourly basis; however, they subsequently agreed that he would charge flat fees for services such as pleadings, discovery, and depositions.
4. On November 2, 2022, the Jameses considered filing for bankruptcy. Respondent charged a \$2,500 flat fee for a “Chapter 7, or Chapter 11, or Chapter 13 bankruptcy

to be determined for corporate entity and debt once decided and determined.” Respondent’s fee agreement stated the following regarding when portions of the fee would be earned:

LEGAL FEES TO BE EARNED IN STAGES OF THE CASE

For your information, your legal fees in this case will be earned in the stage(s) delineated below:
(35%) (100 Percent) for Initial Consultation and Filing of Petition/ Notice of Appearance / Counsel of Record;
(33%) (100 Percent) for Statute, Case Law, & Civil or Criminal Procedure preparation, Pretrial Motion(s), Discovery & Filing(s);
(30%) (100 Percent) for Final Court Appearances(s);

5. Respondent represented that Mr. James paid \$750 of the \$2,500, which was paid in cash on November 23, 2022.
6. Respondent did not deposit the \$750 into a trust account.
7. Although Respondent asserted that he prepared work product for the contemplated bankruptcy filing, Respondent neither filed a bankruptcy petition nor otherwise noticed an appearance in a bankruptcy matter on behalf of the Jameses.
8. Mr. James told the VSB that he decided to hold off on a bankruptcy filing because it was a “backup plan” if they could not prevail in the lawsuit.
9. On September 3, 2024, the Jameses paid Respondent \$2,500 to conduct legal research for their case. Respondent did not deposit the \$2,500 into a trust account.
10. Respondent outsourced some of this research to an external group. Respondent did not provide a memorandum with the completed research until October 19, 2024.

II. NATURE OF MISCONDUCT

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

RULE 1.15 Safekeeping Property

(a) Depositing Funds.

- (1) All funds received or held by a lawyer or law firm on behalf of a client or a third party, or held by a lawyer as a fiduciary, other than reimbursement of advances for costs and expenses shall be deposited in one or more identifiable trust accounts; all other

property held on behalf of a client should be placed in a safe deposit box or other place of safekeeping as soon as practicable.

(b) Specific Duties. A lawyer shall:

...

- (5) not disburse funds or use property of a client or of a third party with a valid lien or assignment without their consent or convert funds or property of a client or third party, except as directed by a tribunal.

By failing to deposit the \$750 he was paid for the bankruptcy and the \$2,500 he was paid for legal research into an identifiable trust account even though he received the funds before they were fully earned, Respondent violated Rule 1.15(a)(1).

By depositing the \$750 he was paid for the bankruptcy and the \$2,500 he was paid for legal research into non-trust accounts even though he received the funds before they were fully earned, Respondent violated Rule 1.15(b)(5).

III. PUBLIC REPRIMAND WITH TERMS

Accordingly, it is the decision of the Subcommittee to impose a Public Reprimand with Terms. The terms are:

1. For a period of two years following the issuance of any Subcommittee Determination approving this Agreed Disposition, Respondent will not engage in any conduct that violates Virginia Rule of Professional Conduct 1.15, 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.

If Respondent violates this term, pursuant to the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-15.F, the District Committee shall hold a hearing and Respondent shall be required to show cause why a Certification for Sanction Determination should not be imposed. 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 the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 13-9.E, the Clerk of the Disciplinary System shall assess costs.

FIFTH DISTRICT, SECTION III SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE VIRGINIA STATE BAR

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Patrick Tsun', is written over a horizontal line.

Matthew Patrick Tsun
Subcommittee Chair

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on October 1, 2026, a true and complete copy of the foregoing Subcommittee Determination was sent to Dominick Anthony Pilli, Respondent, by certified and first-class mail at Law Offices of Dominick A Pilli PC, 11325 Random Hills Road, Suite 360, Fairfax, Virginia 22030, Respondent's last address of record with the Virginia State Bar, and by email to dominick.pilli@gmail.com; and to Timothy Joseph Battle, counsel for Respondent, by first-class mail at Law Office of Timothy J. Battle, Post Office Box 320593, Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4593, and by email to tjbattle@verizon.net.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Elizabeth K. Shoenfeld", written over a horizontal line.

Elizabeth K. Shoenfeld
Senior Assistant Bar Counsel