



# OFFICE OF BAR COUNSEL

Certified Article Number

7196 9008 9111 7520 8705

SENDERS RECORD

November 8, 2013

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**BY FIRST-CLASS AND CERTIFIED  
MAIL NO. 7196 9008 9111 7520 8705**

Laura Heiser, Esquire  
173 Minnie Lane  
Bakersville, NC 28705

Re: *In re Laura Heiser, Esquire*  
(Bar Membership No. 411822)  
Bar Docket No. 2012-D110

Dear Ms. Heiser:

This office has completed its investigation of the above-referenced matter. We find that your conduct reflected a disregard of certain ethical standards under the District of Columbia Rules of Professional Conduct (the "Rules"). We are, therefore, issuing you this Informal Admonition pursuant to D.C. Bar Rule XI, §§ 3, 6, and 8.

We find that while you were employed by the Department of Justice ("DOJ") as an attorney, you permitted your Bar membership to lapse from November 30, 1990 until readmission on December 8, 2011. On November 13, 1989, you became an inactive member of the Ohio Bar, the only other Bar where you were a member. Therefore, you were not an active member of any Bar between November 30, 1990 and December 8, 2011, although you represented the United States in matters during that period and certified to the Department of Justice that you were an active attorney in the District of Columbia.

You state that although you filled out a U.S. Postal Service change of address form when you moved in 1990, you did not independently notify the Bar of your change of address and you did not receive any notices from the Bar alerting you about your suspension. You state that your failure to pay dues was unintentional. You further state that the DOJ has had to notify the courts in only a few cases because you were in the Antitrust Division which does not have a large volume of cases.

We find that your failure to maintain an active license while you practiced law as a DOJ attorney violated Rules 5.5(a) and 8.4(d). Rule 5.5(a) states that a lawyer shall not "practice law in a jurisdiction where doing so violates the regulation

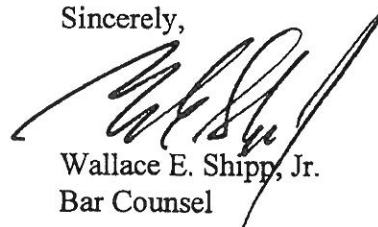
of the legal profession in that jurisdiction.” Rule 8.4(d) states that it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to “engage in conduct that seriously interferes with the administration of justice.” Furthermore, your incorrect certification and statements to the DOJ about your suspension violated Rule 8.4(c) which prohibits an attorney from “engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.” This Rule may be violated by intentional as well as reckless conduct.

In deciding to issue this letter of Informal Admonition rather than institute formal disciplinary charges against you, we have taken into consideration that you took this matter seriously, cooperated with our investigation, and have accepted responsibility for your misconduct including by accepting this Informal Admonition. We also considered that you have no prior discipline and that you have retired from DOJ and no longer practice law.

This letter constitutes an Informal Admonition for your violation of Rules 5.5(a) and 8.4(d) pursuant to D.C. Bar R. XI, §§ 3, 6, and 8 and is public when issued. Please refer to the Attachment to this letter of Informal Admonition for a statement of its effect and your right to have it vacated and have a formal hearing before a Hearing Committee.

If you would like to have a formal hearing, you must submit a written request for a hearing within 14 days of the date of this letter to the Office of Bar Counsel, with a copy to the Board on Professional Responsibility, unless Bar Counsel grants an extension of time. If a hearing is requested, this Informal Admonition will be vacated, and Bar Counsel will institute formal charges pursuant to D.C. Bar R. XI, § 8 (b). The case will then be assigned to a Hearing Committee and a hearing will be scheduled by the Executive Attorney for the Board on Professional Responsibility pursuant to D.C. Bar R. XI, § 8 (c). Such a hearing could result in a recommendation to dismiss the charges against you or a recommendation for a finding of culpability, in which case the sanction recommended by the Hearing Committee is not limited to an Informal Admonition.

Sincerely,



Wallace E. Shipp, Jr.  
Bar Counsel

Enclosure: Attachment to Letter of Informal Admonition

WES/EAH/jnb