

SUPREME COURT OF KENTUCKY

William Lawrence Summers v. Kentucky Bar Association

Summers · No. 2020-SC-0451-KB · Decided December 15, 2020

SUMMARY

The Supreme Court of Kentucky imposed a 180-day suspension on William Lawrence Summers for practicing law while suspended in Ohio and for related professional-conduct violations. The court also ordered Summers to notify clients and courts of his suspension and to pay the costs of the disciplinary proceedings.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Kentucky
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per curiam
JURISDICTION	Kentucky
DECIDED	December 15, 2020
DOCKET	2020-SC-0451-KB
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Attorney-discipline proceeding in which Summers and the Kentucky Bar Association moved for approval of negotiated sanctions under SCR 3.480(2).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Kentucky Supreme Court opinion and order; precedential value is not otherwise specified in the supplied text.
PARTIES	William Lawrence Summers v. Kentucky Bar Association

TOPICS

appellate procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

Attorney discipline

Professional responsibility

Legal ethics

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the Court should approve the negotiated sanctions agreed to by Summers and the Kentucky Bar Association under SCR 3.480(2).

2. What discipline should be imposed for Summers's admitted violations of SCR 3.310(5.5)(a) and SCR 3.310(8.4)(c).

HOLDINGS

1. The Court approved the negotiated sanctions agreed to by Summers and the Kentucky Bar Association under SCR 3.480(2).
2. Summers was suspended from the practice of law in Kentucky for 180 days and ordered to pay the costs of the disciplinary proceeding.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Therefore, because the Kentucky Bar Association and Summers have agreed to the imposition of 180-day suspension, the Court Orders:” (at 3)

“William Lawrence Summers is suspended from the practice of law in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, for a period of one hundred and eighty (180) days, effective from the entry date of this Opinion and Order;” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Summers was admitted to practice law in Kentucky in 1988 and was suspended from practicing law in Ohio in 2012. Before Kentucky entered a reciprocal suspension order, he accepted a retainer to represent a client in federal court in New Hampshire but did not appear at the client's court appearance, and he later admitted that he had practiced law while suspended. He pleaded guilty to federal criminal contempt, received a six-month prison sentence, and was ordered to pay restitution. Summers acknowledged violating Kentucky disciplinary rules, and the parties agreed to a 180-day suspension and payment of costs.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Summers admitted violating SCR 3.310(5.5)(a) and SCR 3.310(8.4)(c) based on practicing law while suspended in Ohio. The Kentucky Bar Association and Summers agreed to a 180-day suspension and payment of costs, and the Chair of the Inquiry Commission and a past president of the Kentucky Bar Association approved the negotiated sanctions. The Supreme Court of Kentucky approved and ordered the sanctions.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Kentucky Bar Association v. Carter, 986 S.W.2d 448 (Ky. 1999)
- Kentucky Bar Association v. Roberts-Gibson, 97 S.W.3d 450 (Ky. 2003)
- Kentucky Bar Association v. McMahon, 456 S.W.3d 400 (Ky. 2015)

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