

SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

Disciplinary Counsel v. Collins

2025-Ohio-5393 · No. 2025-0793 · Decided December 4, 2025

SUMMARY

The Supreme Court of Ohio held that attorney Cedric Preston Collins violated Prof.Cond.R. 8.4(c) by submitting inaccurate and undocumented fee applications for court-appointed legal services. The court imposed a two-year suspension from the practice of law, stayed in its entirety on the condition that Collins commit no further misconduct.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Ohio
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per curiam; Chief Justice Kennedy; Justice DeWine; Justice Deters; Justice Hawkins; Justice Shanahan; Justice Fischer; Justice Brunner
JURISDICTION	Supreme Court of Ohio
DECIDED	December 4, 2025
DOCKET	2025-0793
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Attorney-discipline proceeding arising from a certified report of the Board of Professional Conduct of the Supreme Court of Ohio. The parties stipulated to the facts, misconduct, aggravating and mitigating factors, and recommended sanction, and waived objections to the board's report.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The Supreme Court of Ohio independently reviews the record and determines the appropriate sanction for attorney misconduct, considering the ethical duties violated, aggravating and mitigating factors, and sanctions imposed in comparable cases.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published

TOPICS

- administrative law
- agency adjudication
- judicial review of agency action
- remedies
- restitution

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Collins's submission of inaccurate and undocumented fee applications constituted misrepresentation in violation of Prof.Cond.R. 8.4(c).
2. What sanction was appropriate for Collins's misconduct in light of the aggravating and mitigating factors and comparable attorney-discipline cases.

HOLDINGS

1. Collins violated Prof.Cond.R. 8.4(c) by submitting inaccurate and undocumented certified fee applications, and his conduct constituted misrepresentation rather than intentional dishonesty, deceit, or fraud.
2. A two-year suspension from the practice of law, stayed in its entirety on the condition that Collins commit no further misconduct, is the appropriate sanction.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“We adopt the board’s finding of misconduct and conclude that Collins engaged in misrepresentation rather than intentional dishonesty, deceitfulness, or fraudulent misconduct.” (¶ 18)

“Accordingly, Cedric Preston Collins is hereby suspended from the practice of law in Ohio for two years with the entire suspension stayed on the condition that he commit no further misconduct.” (¶ 31)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

During 2021 and 2022, Collins performed extensive court-appointed work in Franklin, Licking, and Fairfield Counties but failed to maintain contemporaneous records of his time or the time worked by attorneys covering cases for him. He reconstructed billing entries from dockets, pleadings, notices, emails, telephone records, and text messages, resulting in numerous certified fee applications reporting implausible daily totals and repetitive in-court billing entries. Audits found thousands of claimed hours and numerous days exceeding 16, 20, or 24 billed hours, although disciplinary counsel stipulated that there was no reason to believe Collins intentionally overbilled or failed to perform the claimed services. Collins later corrected his recordkeeping practices and reimbursed the counties \$22,810.25.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Disciplinary counsel filed an October 2024 complaint alleging that Collins submitted inaccurate and undocumented fee applications for court-appointed legal services. A three-member hearing panel found misconduct and recommended a conditionally stayed two-year suspension. The Board of Professional Conduct adopted the panel's report, and the Supreme Court of Ohio independently reviewed and adopted the findings and recommended sanction.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Disciplinary Counsel v. McCloskey, 2023-Ohio-3447
- Disciplinary Counsel v. Karris, 2011-Ohio-4243
- Disciplinary Counsel v. Kraemer, 2010-Ohio-3300
- Disciplinary Counsel v. Fowerbaugh, 1995-Ohio-261
- Disciplinary Counsel v. Markijohn, 2003-Ohio-4129
- Dayton Bar Assn. v. Kinney, 2000-Ohio-445
- Disciplinary Counsel v. Agopian, 2006-Ohio-6510
- Lorain Cty. Bar Assn. v. Robinson, 2021-Ohio-2123
- Toledo Bar Assn. v. Stahlbush, 2010-Ohio-3823
- Dayton Bar Assn. v. Swift, 2014-Ohio-4835

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