

**BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
PANEL B**

IN RE: LISA M. DENNIS, Respondent
Arkansas Bar ID#92169
CPC Docket No. 2004-008

FILED

APR 02 2004

CONSENT FINDINGS AND ORDER

**LESLIE W. STEEN
CLERK**

The formal charges of misconduct upon which this Findings and Order is based arose from information provided to the Committee by Ms. Dennis on September 15, 2003. Information was also obtained through the documents on file with the Arkansas Supreme Court Clerk in the matter of Angela Doss v. Arkansas Department of Human Services, 03-01074. Ms. Dennis was appointed to represent Ms. Doss in the appeal of the lower court's decision to terminate her parental rights.

On January 30, 2004, Respondent was served with a formal complaint, supported by information contained in the self-referral and also the Orders of the Arkansas Supreme Court. A response was filed. The Respondent and the Executive Director negotiated a discipline by consent proposal, which was submitted to this Panel.

The information before the Panel revealed that Angela Doss had her parental rights terminated by court order entered February 18, 2003. Thereafter, Ms. Doss filed a pro se Notice of Appeal. Ms. Dennis was appointed by Judge Stacey Zimmerman on March 11, 2003, to represent Ms. Doss in the appeal of this matter. Ms. Dennis sought and obtained an Order extending the time to file the record on appeal. The Order was entered on June 10, 2003. This caused the Order to be untimely as it was entered on the 91st day following the filing of the Notice of Appeal.

Ms. Dennis tendered the record to the Clerk of the Arkansas Supreme Court on September 8, 2003. One week later, after being notified by the Clerk's Office that the record could not be accepted because of the untimely Order Extending the Time to File the Record, Ms. Dennis filed a Motion for Rule on the Clerk. In the Motion, Ms. Dennis accepted full responsibility for the late filing of the Order. On that same date, Ms. Dennis self-reported to the Office of Professional Conduct. On October 9, 2003, the Arkansas Supreme Court denied the Motion for Rule on the Clerk. The denial means that Ms. Doss will not be allowed the opportunity to have the matter involving termination of her parental rights heard on appeal.

Upon consideration of the formal complaint and attached exhibit materials, the response, the consent proposal, and other matters before it, and the Arkansas Model Rules of Professional Conduct, Panel B of the Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on Professional Conduct finds:

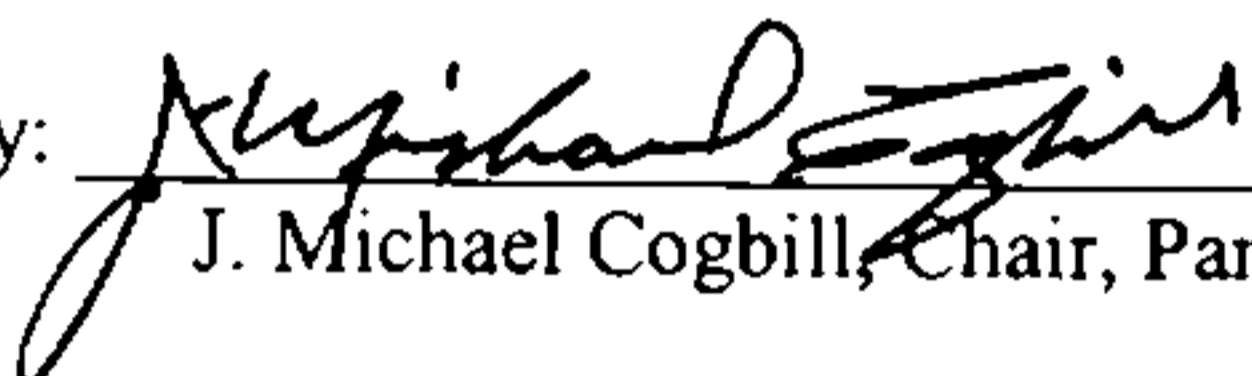
1. That Ms. Dennis' conduct violated Model Rule 1.3 when she failed to file the record in Ms. Doss' appeal within ninety (90) days of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal and when she failed to obtain a timely Order extending the time for filing Ms. Doss' record on appeal. Model Rule 1.3 requires that a lawyer act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client.

2. That Ms. Dennis' conduct violated Model Rule 8.4(d) because her failure to timely file her client's record with the Supreme Court or to obtain a timely Order Extending the Time to File the Record on appeal caused Ms. Doss to lose her right to have her matter heard at the appellate level. Model Rule 8.4(d) requires that a lawyer not engage in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice.

WHEREFORE, it is the decision and order of the Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on

Professional Conduct, acting through its authorized Panel B, that LISA M. DENNIS, Arkansas Bar ID# 92169, be, and hereby is, CAUTIONED for her conduct in this matter. Further, pursuant to Section 18.A. of the Procedures of the Arkansas Supreme Court Regulating Professional Conduct of Attorneys at Law (2002), Ms. Dennis is assessed the costs of this proceeding in the amount of \$50. The costs assessed herein shall be payable by cashier's check or money order payable to the "Clerk, Arkansas Supreme Court" delivered to the Office of Professional Conduct within thirty (30) days of the date this Findings and Order is filed of record with the Clerk of the Arkansas Supreme Court.

ARKANSAS SUPREME COURT COMMITTEE
ON PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT - PANEL B

By: 
J. Michael Cogbill, Chair, Panel B

Date: April 2, 2004

(13.M, Rev.1-1-02)