

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

**PANEL A**

**IN RE: BARBARA A. KETRING-BEUCH**

Arkansas Bar ID # 97074

CPC Docket No. 2005-119

**CONSENT FINDINGS & ORDER**

The formal charges of misconduct upon which this Consent Order is premised, involving respondent attorney Barbara A. Ketring-Beuch of Pulaski County, Arkansas, arose from information brought to the attention of the Committee on Professional Conduct by Deborah Hope of Jacksonville, Arkansas. Following Respondent Attorney's receipt of the formal complaint, the attorney entered into discussion with the Executive Director which has resulted in an agreement to discipline by consent pursuant to Section 20.B of the Arkansas Supreme Court Procedures Regulating Professional Conduct of Attorneys at Law (2002).

Deborah Hope received a "right to sue" letter from the EEOC on May 25, 2004, and she had ninety (90) days thereafter in which to file a federal court suit to vindicate her rights in a dispute with her former employer. She hired Ms. Ketring-Beuch on June 2, 2004, to file suit for her, and Ms. Hope paid the \$150.00 filing fee. Respondent closed her North Little Rock office in early 2005 without notice to Ms. Hope, who has been unable to locate or contact Respondent since then.

Court records show Respondent filed suit for Ms. Hope in federal court on July 22, 2004, and had summons issued for both defendants, but failed to obtain service on either within the required 120 days and she did not obtain an extension of time for such service. The trucking company defendant is a publicly-listed company. The Court sent Respondent an order filed January 5, 2005, giving her until January 21, 2005, to complete such service, which she failed to do. On January 25, 2005, an Order was filed dismissing Ms. Hope's case without prejudice upon Respondent's failure to ever secure service on the defendants. Respondent has taken no action to attempt to get this Order set aside.

Upon consideration of the formal complaint and attached exhibits, admissions made by the respondent attorney, the terms of the written consent, the approval of Panel A of the Committee on Professional Conduct, and the Arkansas Model Rules of Professional Conduct, the Committee on Professional Conduct finds:

A. Ms. Ketring-Beuch's conduct violated Model Rule 1.1 in that she failed to be thorough enough in her handling of Ms. Hope's matter to timely secure service of process upon either defendant, even after she was reminded of this by the Court and given an extension to complete service. Model Rule 1.1 requires that a lawyer shall provide competent representation to a client. Competent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation.

B. Ms. Ketring-Beuch's conduct violated Model Rule 1.3 in that she failed to be sufficiently diligent twice to obtain service of process on the defendants, thereby allowing her client's suit to be dismissed. Model Rule 1.3 requires that a lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client.

WHEREFORE, in accordance with the consent to discipline presented by Respondent and Executive Director, it is the decision and order of the Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on Professional Conduct that Respondent Barbara A. Ketring-Beuch, Arkansas Bar No. 97074, be, and hereby is, REPRIMANDED for her conduct in this matter and assessed Committee costs of \$50.00. 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 with 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 A

By \_\_\_\_\_

Bart F. Virden, Chairperson, Panel A

Date \_\_\_\_\_