

OFFICE OF
GENERAL
COUNSEL

FY 2024-25
REPORT



643 NORTH STATE ST.
JACKSON, MS 39202

PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

The Office of General Counsel plays an important role in regulating the legal profession and supporting Mississippi lawyers in upholding the high professional standards and ethics needed to serve their clients and the larger community.

MB STATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1:

The Mississippi Bar promotes the highest standards of competence and professionalism, and fosters a legal profession equipped to meet the needs of clients and the larger community.

STRATEGY 1:

Working with our partners to effectively regulate the legal profession in Mississippi.



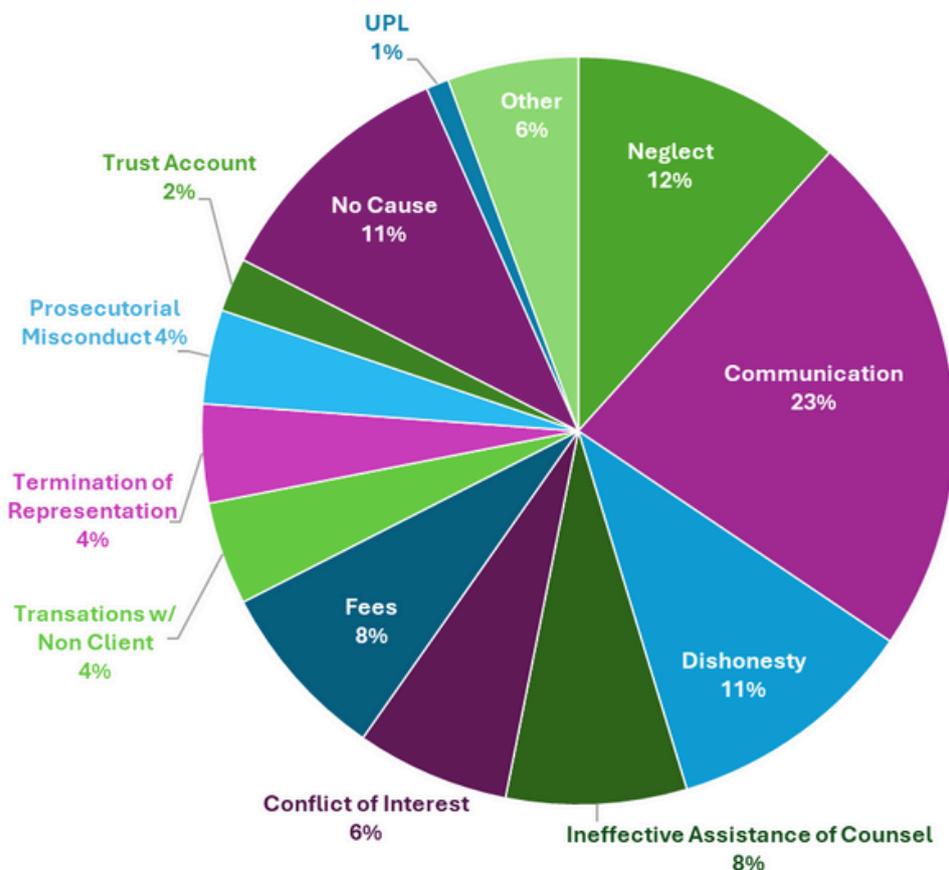
OUR PARTNERS:

COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
COMPLAINT TRIBUNALS
MISSISSIPPI SUPREME COURT



4% ACTIVE
LAWYERS RECEIVED
A COMPLAINT

TYPES OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED



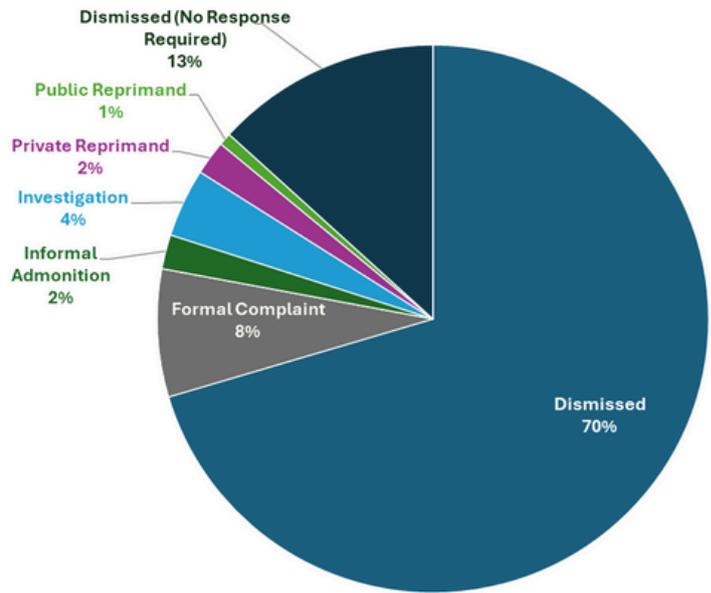
COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Committee is a designated disciplinary agent of the Mississippi Supreme Court. It reviews complaints filed against attorneys and determines if probable cause exists that a lawyer committed an ethical violation. Dispositions include dismissal, referral for additional investigation, informal admonition, private reprimand, public reprimand, or referral for a formal complaint.

544 COMPLAINTS CLOSED

REASONS A COMPLAINT MAY BE DISMISSED WITHOUT A NEED FOR RESPONSE:

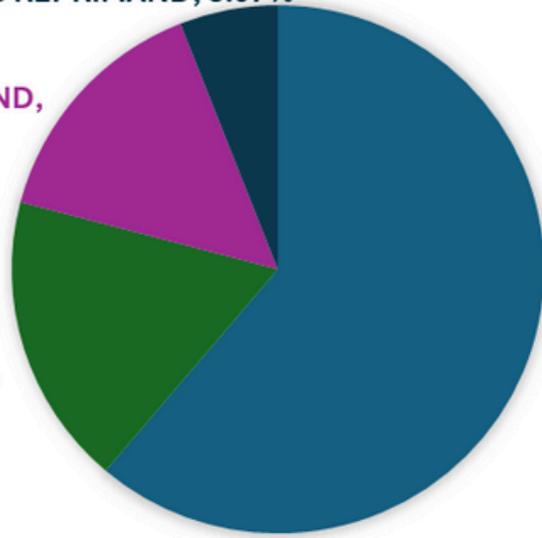
- COMPLAINT CONCERNS THE OUTCOME OF THE CASE BUT DOES NOT SPECIFY AN ETHICS VIOLATION
- COMPLAINT IS FILED TOO LATE
- COMPLAINT IS DUPLICATIVE OR IDENTICAL TO A PREVIOUS FILING



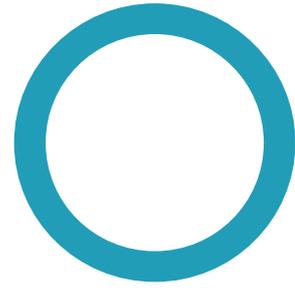
PUBLIC REPRIMAND, 5.97%

PRIVATE REPRIMAND, 14.93%

INFORMAL ADMONITION, 17.91%

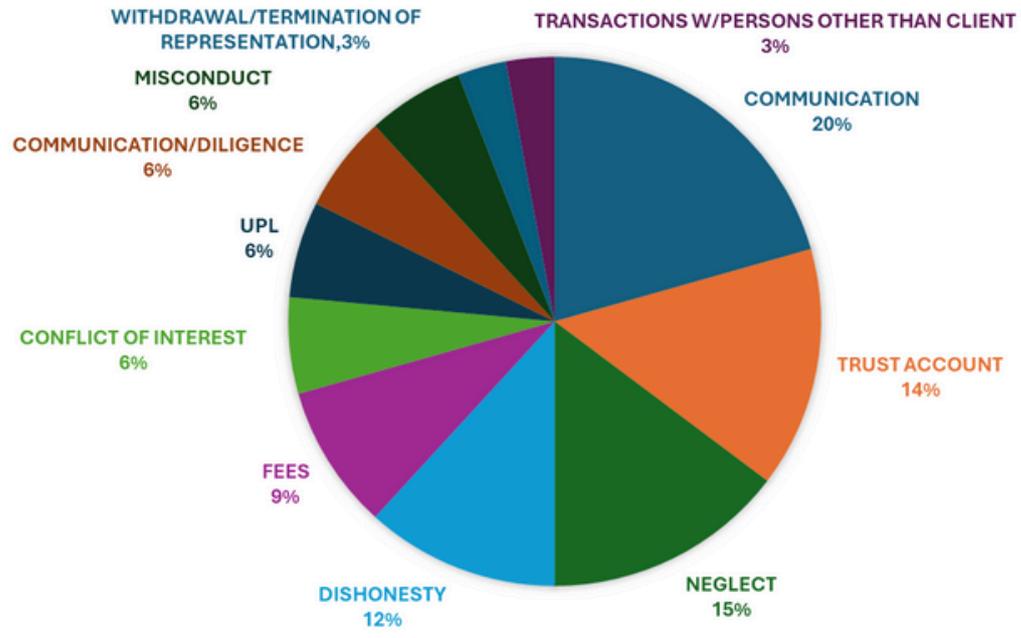


FORMAL COMPLAINT, 61.19%

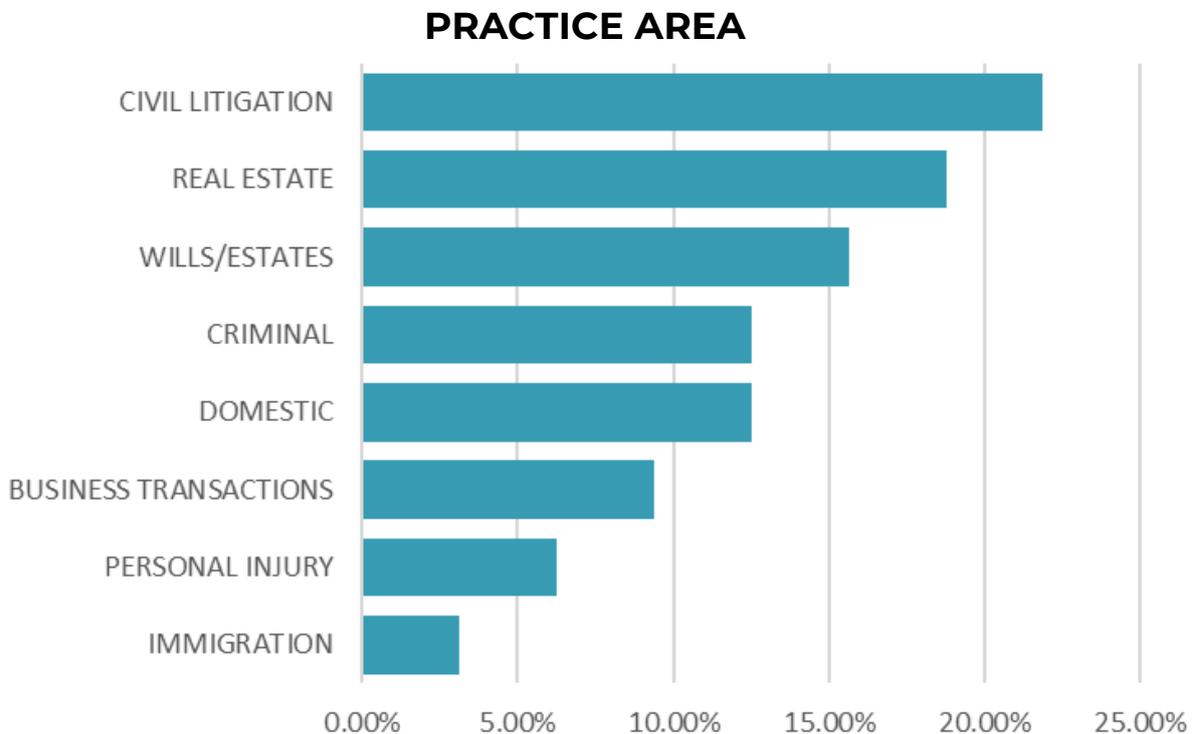
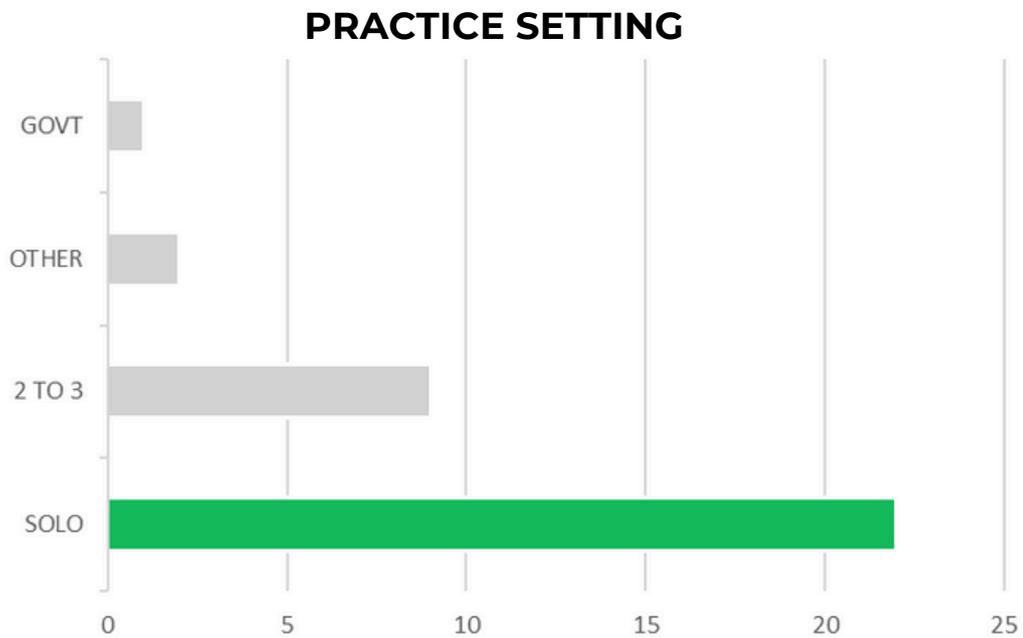
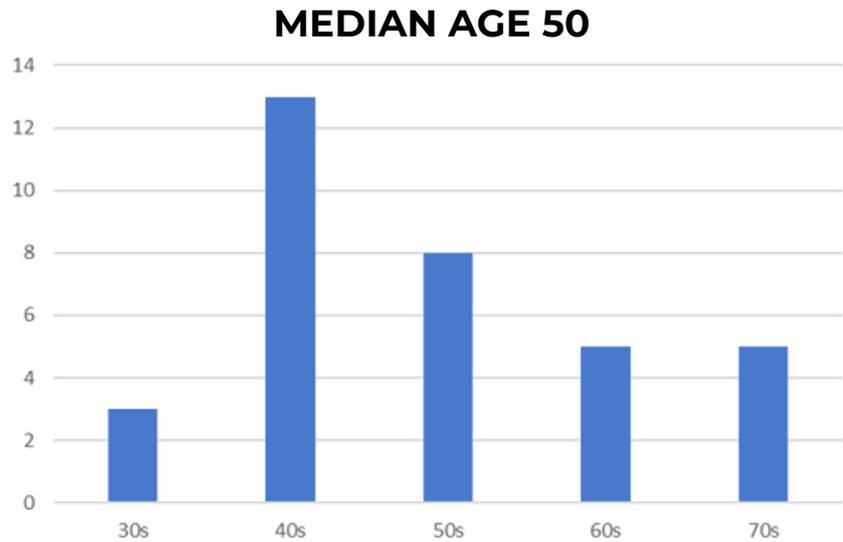
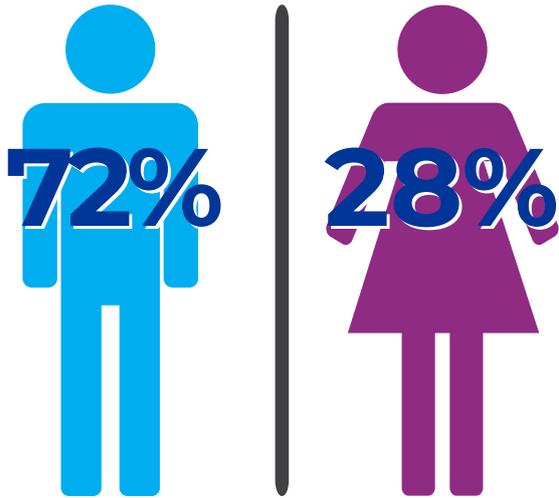


34 LAWYERS DISCIPLINED OR REFERRED FOR A FORMAL COMPLAINT

ETHICAL DUTIES VIOLATED

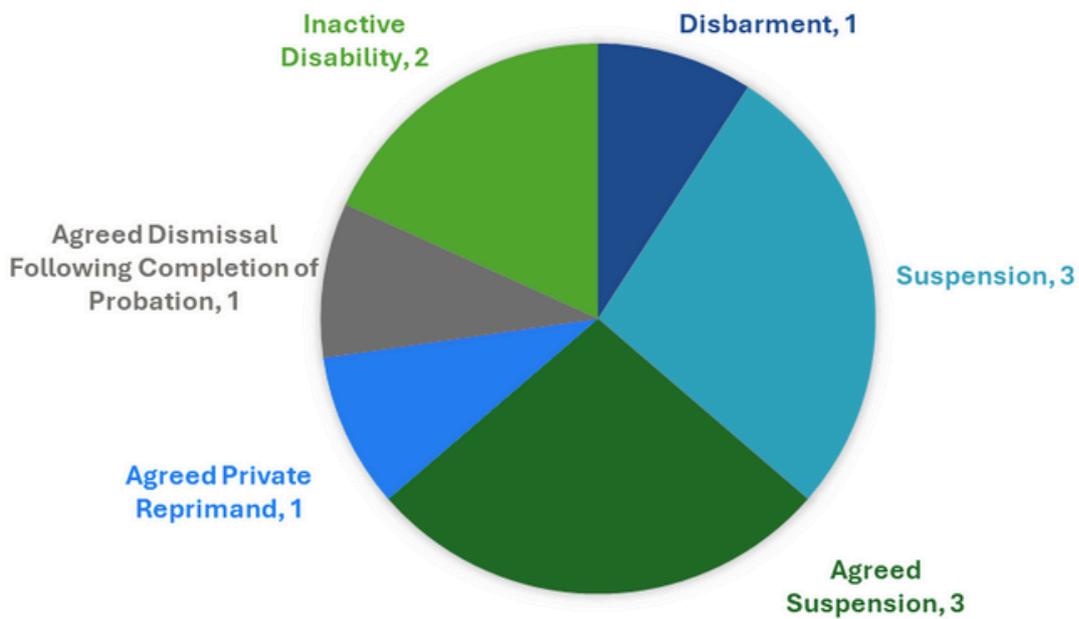


DEMOGRAPHICS OF DISCIPLINED ATTORNEYS

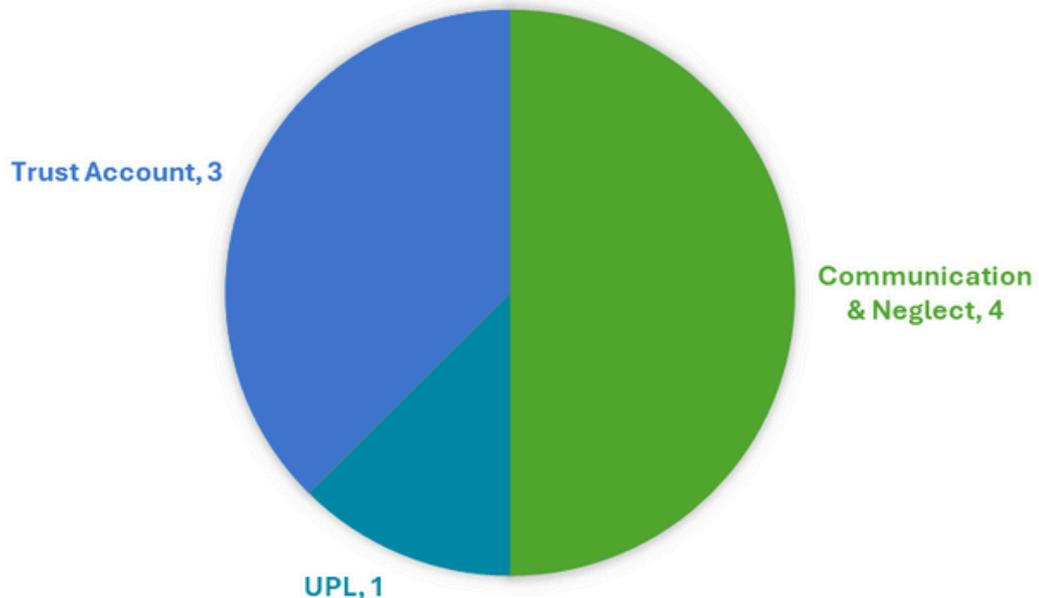


COMPLAINT TRIBUNALS

Complaint Tribunals are also designated disciplinary agents and are appointed by the Mississippi Supreme Court from panels of judges and attorneys from each Supreme Court District. When constituted, each Complaint Tribunal consists of two attorneys and one judge, who serves as the Presiding Judge of the Tribunal. The Complaint Tribunals hear Formal Complaints and can enter opinions and judgments exonerating, reprimanding (privately or publicly), suspending or disbaring an attorney.

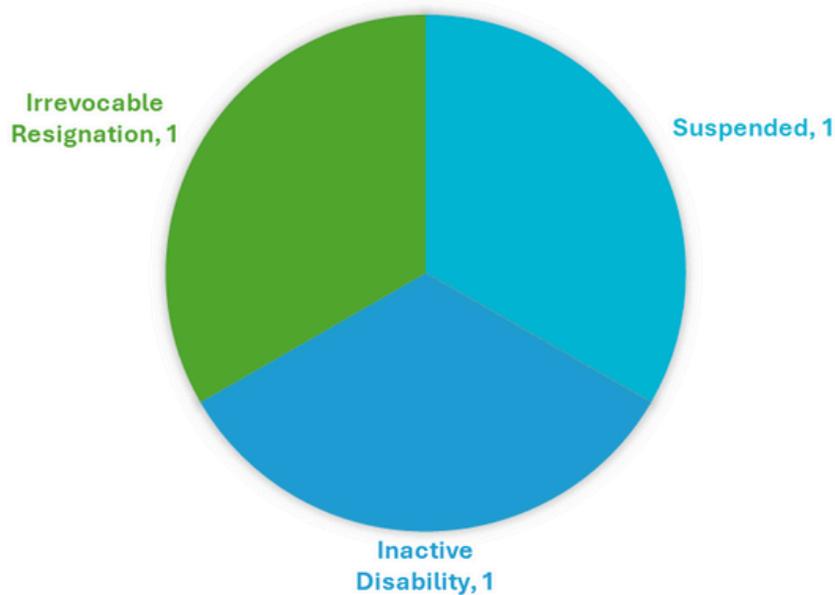


ETHICAL DUTIES VIOLATED

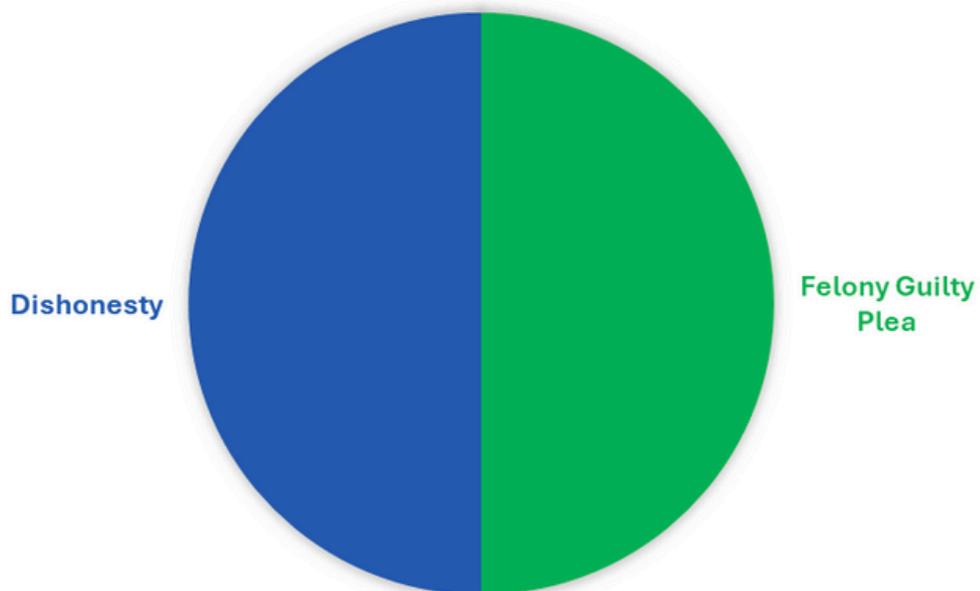


MISSISSIPPI SUPREME COURT

The Mississippi Supreme Court has exclusive and inherent jurisdiction of matters relating to attorney discipline, reinstatement and inactive disability proceedings. The Court retains certain attorney discipline matters instead of appointing a Complaint Tribunal. Formal Complaints involving reciprocal discipline in Mississippi for an attorney disciplined in another jurisdiction, felony guilty pleas or convictions, matters involving disability proceedings with no corresponding disciplinary charges, and petitions by lawyers seeking reinstatement are considered directly by the Supreme Court. The Court also reviews appeals of Complaint Tribunal decisions de novo.



ETHICAL DUTIES VIOLATED



ETHICAL GUIDANCE

The Office of General Counsel is instrumental in educating Mississippi lawyers on their ethical responsibilities in order to avoid misconduct through CLE presentations and other resources. The Office of General Counsel also helps lawyers navigate ethical conundrums as they arise by fielding calls daily.

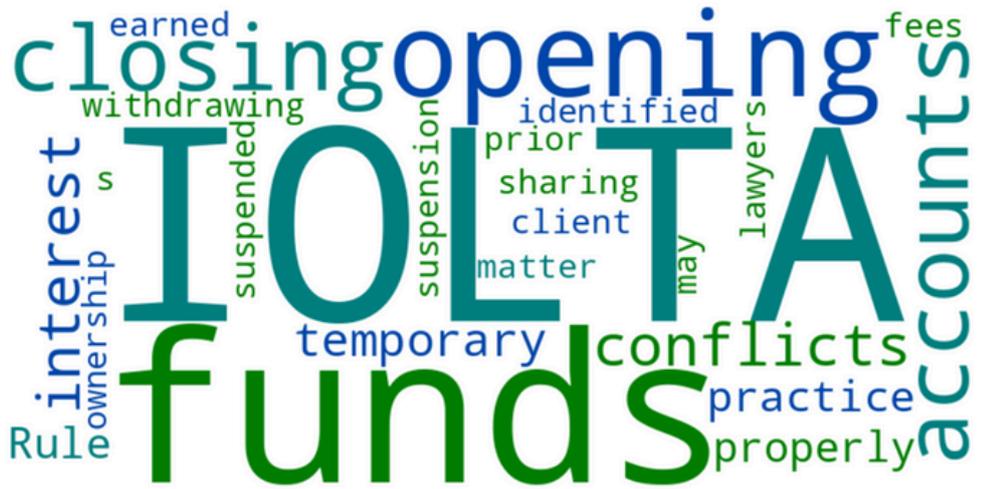
MB STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1:

The Mississippi Bar promotes the highest standards of competence and professionalism, and fosters a legal profession equipped to meet the needs of clients and the larger community.

STRATEGY 2:

Providing members with high quality education opportunities and ethics guidance

461 CALLS



ETHICS OPINIONS
ACCESSED ONLINE

TOP TEN

1. OPINION 267 – ETHICAL USE OF AI
2. OPINION 266 – INDEMNITY AGREEMENTS IN SETTLEMENT RELEASES
3. OPINION 144 – OBLIGATIONS OF THE LAWYER WHEN TERMINATED
4. OPINION 254 – DESTROYING OLD FILES
5. OPINION 250 – RETAINER AGREEMENTS
6. OPINION 244 – CONFLICTS IN DIVORCE LITIGATION



14,712

7. OPINION 49 – OBLIGATIONS OF TERMINATED LAWYER AND SUCCESSOR LAWYER
8. OPINION 215 – EX PARTE CONTACT WITH FORMER EMPLOYEES OF A REPRESENTED PARTY
9. OPINION 262 – FINANCING LEGAL SERVICES
10. OPINION 222 – USING A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY STRUCTURE

CLE PRESENTATIONS

TOPICS:

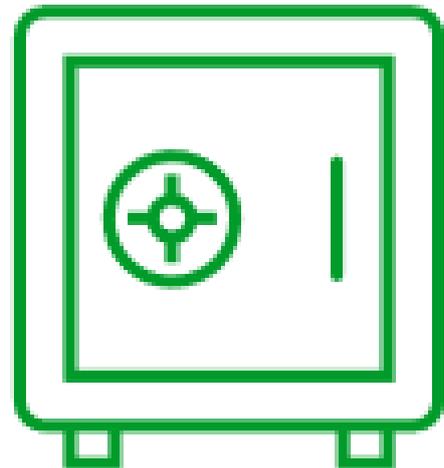
- AVOIDING SCAMS
- COMMON CLIENT COMPLAINTS
- COMPLEXITY OF REPRESENTING MUNICIPALITIES
- CONFIDENTIALITY
- CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
- ETHICAL USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
- FEE AGREEMENTS
- LAW PRACTICE MANAGEMENT RESOURCES
- LAWYER'S ROLE IN PREVENTING MONEY LAUNDERING
- LAWYER'S SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ASSOCIATES & NON-LAWYER STAFF
- TRUST ACCOUNT RECORDKEEPING



**2,506 MISSISSIPPI LAWYERS
REACHED**

TRUST ACCOUNT SCHOOL

THE OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL INTRODUCED TRUST ACCOUNT SCHOOL THIS YEAR WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEE IN DEVELOPING THE CURRICULUM. THE 4 HOUR COURSE, COMPOSED OF A MIX OF LECTURES AND HANDS ON RECONCILIATION EXERCISES, IS DESIGNED TO TEACH LAWYERS THE CORRECT WAY TO MAINTAIN A TRUST ACCOUNT AND HOW TO PREVENT ERRORS. 36 LAWYERS ATTENDED ONE OF FOUR SESSIONS.



WHAT PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING

Today's CLE was excellent. Hands-on reconciliation exercise was great. I would encourage lawyers to bring their bookkeeper to this CLE, particularly for the protective measures that can be implemented. Thanks y'all for all your hard work for the MS Bar. It is appreciated.

Very well done. Excellent preparation and delivery.

I think this needs to be part of Ethics Class in law school. No one taught me this in law school and I had to teach myself and it was painful.