



**BEFORE THE BOARD OF DISCIPLINARY APPEALS
APPOINTED BY
THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS**

IN THE MATTER OF §
PERRY CORTESE § **CAUSE NO. 59813**
STATE BAR CARD NO. 00790508 §

JUDGMENT OF DISBARMENT

On the 29th day of January, 2021, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals considered the Motion for Entry of Judgment of Disbarment filed in the above case by Petitioner, Commission for Lawyer Discipline of the State Bar of Texas, against Respondent, Perry Cortese. The Board finds that:

- (1) It has continuing jurisdiction of this matter pursuant to Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure 8.05 (“TRDP”);
- (2) The United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit affirmed Respondent, Perry Cortese’s, conviction and sentence on or about June 5, 2020; the Supreme Court of the United States denied Respondent’s Petition for Writ of Certiorari on or about November 23, 2020;
- (3) Petitioner filed its Motion for Entry of Judgment of Disbarment on or about September 9, 2020, and served same on Respondent in accordance with TRDP 8.05;
- (4) Respondent’s conviction for the commission of an Intentional Crime as defined by TRDP 1.06(V) and for a Serious Crime as defined by TRDP 1.06(GG), for which he was sentenced in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division, has become final and is not subject to appeal;
- (5) Petitioner’s Motion for Entry of Judgment of Disbarment should be granted.

Interlocutory Suspension

On the 26th day of January, 2018, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals entered an Interlocutory Order of Suspension, which included the following findings of fact and conclusions of law:

- (1) Respondent, Perry Cortese, whose State Bar Card number is 00790508, is licensed by the Supreme Court of Texas to practice law and but is not currently authorized to practice law in the State of Texas.
- (2) On or about September 24, 2015, Respondent was charged by Superseding Indictment with Wire and Mail Fraud Conspiracy and International Money Laundering Conspiracy, in Cause No. 8:15-cr-320-T-23TGW, styled *United States of America v. Perry Don Cortese*, in the United States District Court, Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division.
- (3) On or about October 20, 2017, a Judgment in a Criminal Case was entered in Cause No. 8:15-cr-320-T-23TGW, styled *United States of America v. Perry Don Cortese*, in the United States District Court, Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division, wherein Respondent was found guilty of Conspiracy to Commit Mail and Wire Fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1341, 1343 and 1349 and Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1956(a)(2)(A), 1956(a)(2)(B)(i) and 1956(h) and was committed to the custody of the United States Bureau of Prisons to be imprisoned for a total term of 300 months, consisting of 240 months as to count one and 60 months as to count two, each count consecutive to the other, and ordered to pay \$3,767,196.00 in restitution. Upon release from imprisonment, Cortese will be on supervised release for a term of 36 months.
- (4) Respondent, Perry Cortese, is the same person as the Perry Don Cortese who is the subject of the criminal case described above.
- (5) Respondent has appealed the criminal conviction.
- (6) This Board has jurisdiction to hear and determine this matter. Tex. R. Disciplinary P. (“TRDP”) 7.08(G);
- (7) Respondent, Perry Cortese, having been convicted of Conspiracy to Commit Mail and Wire Fraud and Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering, has been convicted of an Intentional Crime as defined by TRDP 1.06(V).
- (8) Respondent has also been convicted of a Serious Crime as defined by TRDP 1.06(GG).
- (9) Having been found guilty and convicted of an Intentional and Serious Crime and having appealed such conviction, Respondent, Perry Cortese, should have his license to practice law in Texas suspended during the appeal of his criminal conviction. TRDP 8.04.
- (10) The Board retains jurisdiction to enter a final judgment in this matter when the criminal appeal is final.

Disbarment

The Board concludes that Respondent shall be disbarred pursuant to Texas Rule of Disciplinary Procedure 8.05. It is, therefore, accordingly, **ORDERED, ADJUDGED, and DECREED** that Respondent, Perry Cortese, State Bar No. 00790508, be and hereby is **DISBARRED** from the practice of law in the State of Texas, and his license to practice law in this state be and hereby is revoked.

It is further **ORDERED, ADJUDGED, and DECREED** that Respondent, Perry Cortese, is hereafter prohibited, effective immediately, from practicing law in Texas, holding himself out as an attorney at law, performing any legal service for others, accepting any fee directly or indirectly for legal services, appearing as counsel or in any representative capacity in any proceeding in any Texas court or before any Texas administrative body, or holding himself out to others or using his name, in any manner, in conjunction with the words “attorney,” “counselor,” or “lawyer.”

It is further **ORDERED** that Respondent, Perry Cortese, shall immediately notify each of his current clients in writing of this disbarment. In addition to such notification, Respondent is **ORDERED** to return any files, papers, unearned monies, and other property, which belongs to clients and former clients and is in Respondent’s possession or control, to the respective clients or former clients or to another attorney at the client’s or former client’s request. Respondent is further **ORDERED** to file with the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary Counsel’s Office, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701), within thirty (30) days of the signing of this judgment by the Board, an affidavit stating that all current clients have been notified of Respondent’s disbarment and that all files, papers, monies, and other property belonging to all clients and former clients have been returned as ordered herein.

It is further **ORDERED** that Respondent, Perry Cortese, shall, on or before thirty (30) days from the signing of this judgment by the Board, notify in writing each and every justice of the

peace, judge, magistrate, administrative judge or officer, and chief justice of each and every court or tribunal in which Respondent has any matter pending of the terms of this judgment, the style and cause number of the pending matter(s), and the name, address, and telephone number of the client(s) Respondent is representing. Respondent is further **ORDERED** to file with the State Bar of Texas, Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487 (1414 Colorado St., Austin, TX 78701), within thirty (30) days of the signing of this judgment by the Board, an affidavit stating that each and every justice of the peace, judge, magistrate, administrative judge or officer, and chief justice has received written notice of the terms of this judgment.

It is further **ORDERED** that Respondent, Perry Cortese, if he has not already done so, immediately surrender his Texas law license and permanent State Bar Card to the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, Statewide Compliance Monitor, State Bar of Texas, P. O. Box 12487, Austin, Texas 78711, for transmittal to the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Texas.

It is further **ORDERED** that a certified copy of the Petition for Compulsory Discipline on file herein along with a copy of this Final Judgment of Disbarment be sent to the Chief Disciplinary Counsel of the State Bar of Texas, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, Texas 78711.

Signed this 1st day of February 2021.



Chair Presiding
BOARD OF DISCIPLINARY APPEALS