

**JEFFREY L. COTTON II**  
(Suspension)

On December 19, 2022, the Idaho Supreme Court entered a Disciplinary Order suspending Boise attorney Jeffrey L. Cotton II from the practice of law for a period of five years, with two years of that suspension withheld. The suspension is effective retroactively to July 17, 2022, the date Mr. Cotton voluntarily ceased practicing law.

The Idaho Supreme Court found that Mr. Cotton violated I.R.P.C. 1.3 [Diligence]; I.R.P.C. 1.4 [Communication with client]; I.R.P.C. 1.7(a)(2) [Conflict of interest based on personal interests of the lawyer]; I.R.P.C. 4.2 [Communicating about the subject of the representation with a person known to be represented by another lawyer]; I.R.P.C. 8.4(b) [Engaging in a criminal act that reflects adversely on the lawyer's honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as a lawyer in other respects]; and I.R.P.C. 8.4(d) [Engaging in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice]. The Idaho Supreme Court's Disciplinary Order followed a stipulated resolution of an Idaho State Bar disciplinary proceeding in which Mr. Cotton admitted that he violated those Rules.

The formal charge case related to three separate matters. In the first matter, Mr. Cotton represented a client in a divorce case. During that representation, Mr. Cotton engaged in a romantic relationship with his client, discussed the divorce case with the opposing party without the authorization of opposing counsel, and destroyed a surveillance camera at the marital property. With respect to that conduct, Mr. Cotton admitted violations of I.R.P.C. 1.7(a)(2), I.R.P.C. 4.2, and I.R.P.C. 8.4(b). In the second matter, Mr. Cotton pleaded guilty to misdemeanor resisting or obstructing officers following his arrest for purposely following a marked law enforcement vehicle too closely and then failing to comply with the officers' directions after being pulled over. With respect to that conduct, Mr. Cotton admitted violating I.R.P.C. 8.4(b). In the third matter, Mr. Cotton represented a client in a divorce case, but failed to appear for four court hearings in that case without prior notice to his client, the court, or opposing counsel, resulting in multiple continuances and unnecessary delay. With respect to that conduct, Mr. Cotton admitted violations of I.R.P.C. 1.3, I.R.P.C. 1.4, and I.R.P.C. 8.4(d). Mr. Cotton's cooperation during the disciplinary proceedings and his lack of any prior discipline were considered as mitigating factors.

The Disciplinary Order provided that upon reinstatement, if any, after the three years of imposed suspension, Mr. Cotton will serve a two-year period of probation with terms and conditions that include individual therapy, a supervising attorney, monthly compliance reports, and the immediate imposition of the withheld period of suspension if he violates the terms of his probation or admits or is found to have violated any Idaho Rules of Professional Conduct for which a public sanction is imposed for conduct that occurred during the probationary period.

Inquiries about this matter may be directed to: Bar Counsel, Idaho State Bar, P.O. Box 895, Boise, Idaho 83701, (208) 334-4500.