

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA

THE FLORIDA BAR,

Complainant,

v.

MICHAEL ANDREW ADAMS,

Respondent.

Supreme Court Case  
No. SC-

The Florida Bar File  
No. 2021-30,740 (9B)

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**COMPLAINT**

The Florida Bar, complainant, files this Complaint against Michael Andrew Adams, respondent, pursuant to the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar and alleges:

1. Respondent is and was at all times mentioned herein a member of The Florida Bar admitted on June 1, 2011 and is subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Florida.
2. Respondent practiced law in Orange County, Florida, at all times material.
3. The Ninth Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee "B" found probable cause to file this complaint pursuant to Rule 3-7.4, of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar, and this complaint has been approved by the presiding member of that committee.

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4. Respondent and Jonathan Blevins were employed as associate attorneys by the law firm of Dan Newlin Injury Attorneys. Mr. Blevins' wife, Jessica Blevins, was employed at the firm as a legal assistant.

5. Respondent, Mr. Blevins, and Ms. Blevins resigned from Dan Newlin Injury Attorneys on January 6, 2021.

6. Prior to their resignation, respondent and Mr. Blevins formed a new law firm called Blevins & Adams Law Group PLLC (hereinafter referred to as "B & A Firm") on or about November 4, 2020.

7. Prior to their resignation, respondent and Mr. Blevins made digital copies of confidential client information from the case management system of Dan Newlin Injury Attorneys, including medical records of clients that they intended to represent under the B & A Firm. Respondent and Mr. Blevins were not authorized to make digital copies of confidential client information for this purpose.

8. Ms. Blevins, with the knowledge of Mr. Blevins and/or respondent, assisted in the unauthorized copying of client files of Dan Newlin Injury Attorneys.

9. Respondent and Mr. Blevins intentionally deleted client email addresses from Dan Newlin Injury Attorneys' case management system in order to make it more difficult for Dan Newlin Injury Attorneys to contact these clients.

10. Upon their resignation from Dan Newlin Injury Attorneys, respondent and Mr. Blevins immediately began soliciting clients of Dan Newlin Injury Attorneys to become clients of the B & A Firm.

11. Respondent and Mr. Blevins failed to follow the bar's required procedures for lawyers leaving law firms.

12. Respondent and Mr. Blevins did not give Dan Newlin prior notice of their intention to resign from the law firm nor did they attempt to negotiate with Dan Newlin an acceptable joint letter to be sent to the affected clients advising them of the resignation and of the clients' rights to choose to remain a client of the law firm, to choose representation by the departing lawyer, or to choose representation by other lawyers or law firms.

13. By reason of the foregoing, respondent has violated the following Rules Regulating The Florida Bar:

(a) 3-4.3 The standards of professional conduct required of members of the bar are not limited to the observance of rules and avoidance of prohibited acts, and the enumeration of certain categories of misconduct as constituting grounds for discipline are not all-inclusive nor is the failure to specify any particular act of misconduct be construed as tolerance of the act of misconduct. The commission by a lawyer of any act that is unlawful or contrary to honesty and justice may constitute a cause for discipline whether the act is committed in the course of the lawyer's

relations as a lawyer or otherwise, whether committed within Florida or outside the state of Florida, and whether the act is a felony or a misdemeanor.

(b) 4-5.8(c)(1) Absent a specific agreement otherwise, a lawyer who is leaving a law firm may not unilaterally contact those clients of the law firm for purposes of notifying them about the anticipated departure or to solicit representation of the clients unless the lawyer has approached an authorized representative of the law firm and attempted to negotiate a joint communication to the clients concerning the lawyer leaving the law firm and bona fide negotiations have been unsuccessful.

(c) 4-5.8(d)(1) When a joint response has not been successfully negotiated, unilateral contact by individual members or the law firm must give notice to clients that the lawyer is leaving the law firm and provide options to the clients to choose to remain a client of the law firm, to choose representation by the departing lawyer, or to choose representation by other lawyers or law firms.

(d) 4-5.8(d)(3) In all instances, notice to the client required under this rule must provide information concerning potential liability for fees for legal services previously rendered, costs expended, and how any deposits for fees or costs will be handled. In addition, if appropriate, notice

must be given that reasonable charges may be imposed to provide a copy of any file to a successor lawyer.

(e) 4-8.4(a) A lawyer shall not violate or attempt to violate the Rules of Professional Conduct, knowingly assist or induce another to do so, or do so through the acts of another.

(f) 4-8.4(d) A lawyer shall not engage in conduct in connection with the practice of law that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, including to knowingly, or through callous indifference, disparage, humiliate, or discriminate against litigants, jurors, witnesses, court personnel, or other lawyers on any basis, including, but not limited to, on account of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, employment, or physical characteristic.

WHEREFORE, The Florida Bar prays respondent will be appropriately disciplined in accordance with the provisions of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar as amended.



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### **CERTIFICATE OF SERICE**

I certify that this document has been efiled with The Honorable John A. Tomasino, Clerk of the Supreme Court of Florida, with a copy provided via email to Henry Lee Paul, at [henry@henryleepaul.com](mailto:henry@henryleepaul.com); and that a copy has been furnished by United States Mail via certified mail No. 7017 1450 0000 7821 0568, return receipt requested to Henry Lee Paul, whose record bar address is Post Office Box 18685, Tampa, Florida 33679-8685 and via email to Ashley Taylor Morrison, Bar Counsel, [amorrison@floridabar.org](mailto:amorrison@floridabar.org), [orlandooffice@floridabar.org](mailto:orlandooffice@floridabar.org), on this 20th day of October, 2022.



Patricia Ann Toro Savitz  
Staff Counsel

**NOTICE OF TRIAL COUNSEL AND DESIGNATION OF PRIMARY EMAIL ADDRESS**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the trial counsel in this matter is Ashley Taylor Morrison, Bar Counsel, whose address, telephone number and primary email address are The Florida Bar, Orlando Branch Office, The Gateway Center, 1000 Legion Place, Suite 1625, Orlando, Florida 32801-1050, (407) 425-5424 and [amorrison@floridabar.org](mailto:amorrison@floridabar.org), [orlandooffice@floridabar.org](mailto:orlandooffice@floridabar.org). Respondent need not address pleadings, correspondence, etc. in this matter to anyone other than trial counsel and to Staff Counsel, The Florida Bar, 651 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2300, [psavitz@floridabar.org](mailto:psavitz@floridabar.org).

**MANDATORY ANSWER NOTICE**

RULE 3-7.6(h)(2), RULES REGULATING THE FLORIDA BAR,  
PROVIDES THAT A RESPONDENT SHALL ANSWER A COMPLAINT.