

James Mark Tompkins

Solicitor

162065

[Sanction Date: 25 February 2025](#)

Decision - Sanction

Outcome: Rebuke

Outcome date: 25 February 2025

Published date: 16 April 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Hodders Law Ltd

Address(es): 50 Station Road, Harlesden, LONDON, NW10 4UA, England

Firm ID: 554857

Firm or organisation at date of publication

Name: JAFFE PORTER CROSSICK LLP

Address(es): Omni House, 252 Belsize Road, LONDON, NW6 4BT, England

Firm ID: 471111

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

Rebuke and costs

Reasons/basis

Mr Tompkins is a solicitor, currently working at Jaffe Porter Crossick LLP, a regulated body.

At the time of the misconduct detailed below, Mr Tompkins was a director at Hodders Law Limited (the firm), a recognised body.

Short summary of decision

We have issued Mr Tompkins with a rebuke and an order to pay £1,350 in costs for breaches of the SRA Accounts Rules.

On 3 August 2023, a forensic investigation officer (FIO) at the SRA produced a forensic investigation report (FIR). The FIR identified that:

1. On 23 September 2022, the firm had 408 client ledgers (holding a combined total of £351,141.12) where there had been no transactions on the ledger since 31 December 2019, at the latest.
2. As at 23 September 2022, the firm had five client account suspense ledgers holding a total of £578,336.90. This amount had been reduced to £21,115.22 by the date of the FIR.

Facts of the misconduct

It was found that: Mr Tompkins failed to ensure that client money was returned promptly to clients as soon as there was no longer any proper reason to hold those funds.

In doing so, Mr Tompkins breached rule 2.5 of the SRA Accounts Rules 2019.

Mr Tompkins failed to ensure that the firm kept and maintained accurate, contemporaneous, and chronological records to record in client ledgers (identified by the client's name and an appropriate description of the matter to which they relate) all receipts and payments which were client money on the client side of the client ledger account.

In doing so, Mr Tompkins breached Rule 8.1(a)(i) of the SRA Accounts Rules 2019.

Decision on sanction

It was decided that a rebuke was an appropriate and proportionate sanction. This was because Mr Tompkins' conduct was serious by reference to the following factors in the SRA Enforcement Strategy:

1. There was an underlying concern in the public interest - namely that a solicitor's stewardship of the public's money should be beyond reproach.
2. Mr Tompkins' actions had the potential to cause harm.

A more serious sanction was not considered to be proportionate by reference to the following factors in the Enforcement Strategy:

1. There was no evidence that client money had been misappropriated, and no shortage on the firm's client account.
2. There were no allegations of dishonesty or lack of integrity and Mr Tompkins had not acted intentionally or recklessly in breach of his regulatory obligations.

SRA Accounts Rules breached

Rule 2.5 You ensure that client money is returned promptly to the client, or the third party for whom the money is held, as soon as there is no longer any proper reason to hold those funds.

Rule 8.1 You keep and maintain accurate, contemporaneous, and chronological records to:

(a) record in client ledgers identified by the client's name and an appropriate description of the matter to which they relate:

(i) all receipts and payments which are client money on the client side of the client ledger account

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