

Ohio Lawyer Who Took \$128K From Mentally Ill Client Suspended

“An Ohio attorney who stole from and overcharged a client nearly \$129,000 was indefinitely suspended by the state’s highest court,” reports Melissa Heelan in *Bloomberg Law*.

“The Dublin, Ohio, lawyer first began working for the client, who suffered from mental illness, alcoholism, and depression, in 2015, the court said. His then-firm agreed to represent her pro bono for \$20 per month. But Buttars entered into a separate written fee agreement, agreeing to represent her “in any capacity” for an hourly rate of \$250.”

“The client told Buttars that even though she couldn’t pay him right away, she was going to receive ‘a substantial inheritance’ from her mother when she passed away, the court said.”

“After the mother died in 2015, Buttars—who soon after formed his own firm—administered the estate and did various nonlegal, personal jobs for the client, according to the court. He helped her look for a new apartment, mowed her lawn, and went shopping for her. He sometimes charged his hourly rate of \$250 and at other time the paralegal rate of \$150 per hour, the court said.”

Read the article.