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DISBARRED ATTORNEY PATRICK BRADLEY CHARGED WITH MULTIPLE FELONIES FOR THEFT OF MORE THAN \$146,000 FROM CLIENTS

PA Lawyers Fund for Client Security can help with reimbursements to Individuals who have lost money due to attorney theft.



NORRISTOWN, Pa. (April 11, 2017) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele announced the arrest of disbarred Attorney Patrick J. Bradley, 45, of Colledgeville, on multiple felonies for the theft and misappropriation of \$146,917.01 in client funds. Bradley is charged with multiple counts of Dealing in the Proceeds of Unlawful Activities, Theft by Unlawful Taking, Theft by Deception, Receiving Stolen Property, Theft by Failing to Make Required Dispositions of Funds Received, Deceptive Business Practices, Unauthorized Practice of Law and related charges.

On Aug. 1, 2016, the District Attorney's Office received information about Bradley from The Office of Disciplinary Counsel of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. The ODC had performed its own investigation into Bradley's handling of client funds dating back to 2013, which ultimately led to the suspension of the defendant's law license on Aug. 9, 2015. Bradley continued to practice law without a license and was disbarred on Sept. 15, 2016.

The ODC then referred the matter to the DA's Office to review for possible criminal charges. A criminal investigation by the Montgomery County Detective Bureau revealed that the defendant through his law firm, Bradley Law LLC, established and managed Special Needs Trust Agreements for five clients, establishing himself as the sole trustee. He then used assets in these accounts for his own benefit. The funds stolen from these trust accounts was \$116,340.01. Additionally, Bradley was paid by seven additional victims to provide legal services in obtaining orders and guardianships for families with a special needs family member. He failed to perform the necessary legal work and used the funds totaling \$30,577 for his own personal use. Bradley used the stolen funds to pay for items such as his home mortgage payment, gas, restaurant meals, movie tickets, sporting goods, utility bills, cellular phone service and other many other personal items.

"The defendant's actions in unlawfully taking a significant sum of money earmarked to help those with special needs is not only illegal but it's disturbing on a basic human level," said DA Steele. "The defendant was put in a position of trust and he took advantage of some good people who were trying to take care of loved ones by establishing trusts for their ongoing care. He earned their trust, and then he preyed on these families."

In making the announcement, Steele was joined by Luzerne County District Attorney Stefanie Salavantis, who is a member of the board of Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security (palawfund.com) and serves as the board's treasurer. Part of the mission of the fund is to reimburse victims of attorney dishonesty in the practice of law. A portion of the dues that every attorney pays to be licensed to practice law goes to the fund.

"The Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund was created by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to reimburse clients who have suffered losses as a result of misappropriation of funds by their attorneys. This horrific act perpetrated by Mr. Bradley on his vulnerable clients is a perfect example of how the Fund can remedy the wrong that was committed upon them," said Salavantis. The 12 victims related to the Bradley criminal case are in various stages of applying to the fund for reimbursement of their lost funds.

While the criminal investigation centered on 12 victims, there may be others. Anyone with information concerning questionable legal interactions or use of their funds by Bradley is asked to call the Montgomery County Detective Bureau at 610-278-3368.

Bradley was arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Cathleen Rebar, who set bail at \$250,000 unsecured, and Bradley was released. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for 10 a.m., May 2, 2017, in front of Judge Rebar.

The case will be prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Kelli McGinnis.

Approved for release:

Kevin R. Steele

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.