

**SANCTION DECISION OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE
OF THE GENERAL LEGAL COUNCIL**

COMPLAINT NO. 35/2025

IN THE MATTER OF **Ms. Trudy-Ann Russell**, an
Attorney-at-Law

AND

IN THE MATTER OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION ACT,
1971

BETWEEN

LINDIE GRIFFITHS

COMPLAINANT

AND

TRUDY-ANN RUSSELL

RESPONDENT

Panel: -

Mrs. Daniella Gentles-Silvera, KC – Chairman
Mr. Harrington McDermott
Ms. Sidia Smith

Appearances:

Mr. Lindie Griffiths, Complainant
No appearance for Ms. Trudy-Ann Russell.

Hearing dates:

February 7, 2026.

COMPLAINT

1. On January 17, 2026, we found Trudy Ann-Russell (“the Respondent”), guilty of professional misconduct, she having breached Canon 1(b) of the Canons of the Legal Profession (Canons of Professional Ethics Rules), which states that:

“An Attorney shall at all time maintain the honor and dignity of the profession and shall abstain from behavior which tend to discredit the profession of which she is a member”

2. The Court of Appeal decision of Owen Clunie v General Legal Council (Misc. App No. 3 of 2013) [2014] JMCA Civ 31 makes it clear that disciplinary proceedings under the Legal Profession Act afford the attorney, who has been found guilty of professional misconduct, the opportunity to make submissions to the disciplinary committee as to the appropriate sanction. Accordingly, a sanction hearing was fixed for February 7, 2026. The Respondent was however absent. The Panel therefore satisfied itself that the Respondent had been served with the notice of the sanction hearing and

thereafter proceeded to give its oral decision on sanctions with a promise to reduce this decision in writing. This it now does.

THE LAW

3. **Fuglers LLP et al v Solicitors Regulatory Authority [2014] EWHC 179** (applied by our local Court of Appeal in **Minett Lawrence v General Legal Council (ex parte Kaon Northover [2022] JMCA Misc. 1)**) provides authority for the approach to be taken by the disciplinary committee in determining the appropriate sanction to be imposed in disciplinary proceedings of this nature. Such an approach involves a three-staged consideration, namely:
 - (i) The seriousness of the misconduct;
 - (ii) The purpose for which sanctions are imposed; and
 - (iii) A determination of what sanction most appropriately fulfills that purpose for the seriousness of the misconduct

The Panel will similarly adopt this three-staged approach below.

ANALYSIS

4. We find that the misconduct for which the Respondent was found guilty is of a very serious nature.
5. The Respondent has been in practice for 13 years and is the attorney-at-law having carriage of sale of a property for which the Complainant is the purchaser. The parties to the sale entered into the sales agreement on March 11, 2024 and the sale has not been completed to date due to the Respondent's neglect.
6. On the evidence, the Respondent failed to carry out amendments requested by the National Housing Trust to documents necessary to effect the transfer of the property. This was the position in November 2024, when the Complainant became aware of the NHT's request, and to date the status remains the same. This is also a most unusual case where, in the face of the protracted delay in the completion of the transaction, there has been a gross lack of communication on the part of the Respondent. From November 2024 to date, the Complainant has received no word from the Respondent regarding the transaction. Having regard to the delay, the Complainant made several attempts to contact the Respondent, both personally and through his attorney-at-law. When these efforts were unsuccessful, he visited the Respondent's office personally. These efforts to reach the Respondent were unsuccessful. All this time, the Respondent has been in possession of the the sum of \$2,502,250.00 on account of the purchase price. Although the complaint did not include any suggestion of a misappropriation of

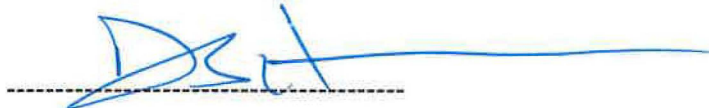
these funds, the panel decries the current state of affairs where funds are being held for such a long time by the Respondent in furtherance of a sale and yet the Complainant is unable to have any kind of dialogue with the Respondent regarding the status of the transaction.

7. The Complainant's frustration was palpable during the disciplinary hearing. Indeed, he was in limbo as the sale transaction was not being advanced, there was no communication from the Respondent, and his funds were tied up in the transaction. To add to this, his plans for the property were thwarted, particularly his planned construction of a house for his daughter. In his words, the matter has caused him stress and inconvenience.
8. As far as the profession is concerned, we are of the view that the Respondent's conduct has the potential to paint the picture of members of the profession being inefficient, non-responsive professionals who are prone to unjustifiable and protracted delays. The misconduct established in this case therefore has the potential to significantly diminish the trust and confidence placed in the profession and serves to lower the reputation of the legal profession in the eyes of the members of the public.
9. The Panel notes that allegations of this nature against an attorney usually elicit some kind of remedial action on the part of the attorney. This was not so in this case. On the evidence, nothing has changed since the lodging of the complaint in February 2025. To add to this, Respondent did not participate in hearing. The result is that, even after these proceedings have ended, the Complainant will be in the same position as far as the non-completion of the transaction is concerned.
10. The purpose of a sanction against an attorney who has been found guilty of professional misconduct is: to punish the attorney for his misconduct; to act as a deterrent against further acts of misconduct on the part of the offending attorney, and other members of the profession; to remove the risk of re-offending; and to maintain the high standards of the profession and maintain the confidence of the public in the integrity of the members of the profession (see **Bolton v Law Society [1994] 2 All ER 486**). We are of the view that this case requires an appropriate sanction to protect the public from attorneys who chose to act in the manner that the Respondent has done in the instant case. The sanction imposed in this case must deter future similar conduct from this and other attorneys and it must be such as to preserve the public confidence and trust in the legal profession.
11. In full appreciation of all the relevant facts and circumstances as set out in this decision, the Panel hereby orders that:
 - (a) The Attorney, Trudy-Ann Russell is struck off the roll of Attorneys-at-law entitled to practice in the several courts in Jamaica.

(b) The Attorney is to pay costs of \$50,000.00 to the Complainant and costs of \$10,000.00 to the General Legal Council.

12. This decision is to be read and treated as one with our Decision given on the 17th of January 2026.

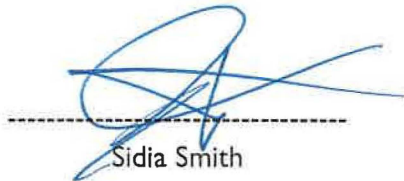
DATED THE 7TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2026



Daniella Gentles-Silvera, KC



Harrington McDermott



Sidia Smith