

Adekanmi Awotidebe

Employee

7049834

[Employee-related decision Date: 14 July 2023](#)

Decision - Employee-related decision

Outcome: Control of non-qualified staff (Section 43 / Section 99 order)

Outcome date: 14 July 2023

Published date: 15 December 2023

Firm details

Firm or organisation at date of publication and at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Deton Solicitors

Address(es): 28 Portland Road South Norwood London SE25 4PF England

Firm ID: 590855

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

To make a section 43 order that with effect from the date of the letter or email notifying Mr Awotidebe of this decision:

- i. no solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with his/her practice as a solicitor;
- ii. no employee of a solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the solicitor's practice;
- iii. no recognised body shall employ or remunerate him;
- iv. no manager or employee of a recognised body shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the business of that body;
- v. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit him to be a manager of the body; and
- vi. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit him to have an interest in the body

except in accordance with the SRA's prior written permission.



The section 43 order in respect of Mr Awotidebe shall be published.

Mr Awotidebe is ordered to pay the sum of £1,350 in relation to the SRA's costs of investigating this matter.

Reasons/basis

Summary of decision

The SRA has put restrictions on where and how Mr Awotidebe can work in an SRA regulated firm. It was found that:

Mr Awotidebe backdated and signed four documents that were sent to the claimant's solicitors and to the court while acting for clients.

Mr Awotidebe's acts of backdating and signing three statement of truth were potentially misleading to the court.

Mr Awotidebe received judicial criticism on 22 July 2022¹ because of his actions.

Mr Awotidebe's actions were dishonest

Facts

Mr Awotidebe is an Advanced Paralegal Member of CILEX and works for Deton Solicitors, 28 Portland Road, South Norwood London SE25 4PF.

Mr Awotidebe acted for clients in litigation proceedings. It was found that he did not sign and date (i) the defence (ii) the application notice (iii) the witness evidence in support and (iv) the covering letter to the court on the dates stated on them, namely 16 November 2020. He finalised these documents after 16 November 2020, they were not eligible for signature and dating until then, and he signed and incorrectly dated them. The act of backdating documents, and signing a statement of truth, were a dishonest attempt to mislead the court into believing (i) that the defence was served and filed earlier than it was, and (ii) the application for relief from sanction was made in anticipation of a breach of an earlier court order rather than after it was dishonest. This is because attempting to mislead a district judge as to what is factually true was an act of deceit.

The court expressed concern that Mr Awotidebe's actions were an attempt to mislead the court. It found his actions, including dating documents correctly and making statements of truth, to be 'casual and perfunctory'.

Our decision on outcome

An order pursuant to section 43(2) of the Solicitors Act 1974 was imposed as his conduct meant that it was undesirable for him to be

involved in a legal practice without the SRA's prior approval.

This was because Mr Awotidebe's conduct was serious and his actions were dishonest. He was also ordered to pay costs of £1,350.

What our section 43 order means

To make an order pursuant to section 43 that with effect from the date of the letter or email notifying Mr Awotidebe of this decision:

- i. no solicitor shall employ or remunerate her in connection with his/her practice as a solicitor;
- ii. no employee of a solicitor shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the solicitor's practice;
- iii. no recognised body shall employ or remunerate him;
- iv. no manager or employee of a recognised body shall employ or remunerate him in connection with the business of that body;
- v. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit him to be a manager of the body; and
- vi. no recognised body or manager or employee of such a body shall permit him to have an interest in the body except in accordance with the SRA's prior written permission

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