

**LAURENCE A. HECKER**

*167 N.J. 5 (2001)*

of Toms River (Ocean County)

Suspension 3 Months

Decided: March 7, 2001

Effective: April 2, 2001

Admitted: 1965

***APPEARANCES BEFORE REVIEW BOARD***

*John McGill, III, Deputy Ethics Counsel, argued the cause on behalf of the Office of Attorney Ethics.*

*Laurence A. Hecker, respondent, argued the cause pro se.*

The Supreme Court of New Jersey held that a suspension from the practice of law for a period of three months was the appropriate discipline for an attorney who engaged in gross neglect, lack of diligence, negligent misappropriation of trust funds, failure to safeguard client funds, record keeping violations and failure to supervise a non-lawyer assistant. The non-lawyer assistant had stolen monies from respondent previously. After his incarceration, the respondent rehired the assistant, who also had a history of addiction to drugs and alcohol. By his actions, respondent placed clients' funds at extreme risk and, in fact, the assistant, again, stole from an estate account for which the respondent was responsible.