

**BEFORE THE STATE BOARD OF EMBALMERS, FUNERAL DIRECTORS,
CEMETERIES, AND BURIAL SERVICES**

**IN THE MATTER OF
Christopher D. Ross, a licensed Funeral Director,
Board ID # 22249,
Respondent**

Case No. 19-33

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

A hearing on the above-referenced matter was held before the Arkansas State Board of Embalmers, Funeral Directors, Cemeteries, and Burial Services (the “Board”) on October 20, 2020, in the Diamond Mine on the 2nd Floor of the Department of Commerce building, located at 1 Commerce Way, Little Rock, AR 72202. Respondent Christopher Ross appeared, represented by Agather McKeel. Amanda Gibson, Associate Counsel at the Arkansas Insurance Department, appeared on behalf of the Board. Finding proper notice was given to the Respondent, the Board, from all the evidence presented, issues the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent Ross is a licensed funeral director and owner of a Type D Transport Service, TLC Mortuary Transport.
2. At all times relevant hereto, Respondent was employed at Paradise Funeral Home of Arkansas (“Paradise”).
3. On October 25, 2019, a complaint was filed against Respondent by Angela Winston.

4. Ms. Winston paid Respondent \$1,086.50 for a deposit on a headstone, which Respondent never delivered. The decedent in this matter is O.C. Winston.
5. Respondent wrote a check for \$1,086.50 to reimburse Paradise. However, that check was returned for insufficient funds.
6. Paradise ultimately paid the cemetery \$2,149.18 for the headstone.
7. On December 2, 2019, a complaint was filed against Respondent by Will Small.
8. Mr. Small paid Respondent \$975.00 for a headstone, which Respondent never delivered.
9. No refund was issued to Mr. Small from either Respondent or from Paradise.
10. Respondent's response to the complaint was submitted one day after the deadline.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Respondent's actions as described in Findings of Fact 4, 5 and 8 above, violate Ark. Code Ann. § 17-29-311(a)(2).
2. Respondent's action as described in Finding of Fact 10 above, violates Ark. Code Ann. § 17-29-311(a)(18) and Board Rule XV.4.
3. The evidence was not sufficient for the Board to determine whether Paradise refunded the money to the family of O.C. Winston.
4. The evidence was not sufficient for the Board to determine whether Respondent collected \$1,400 from the family of Keith Adams, or whether Paradise paid the cemetery \$1,000 for the headstone.
5. The evidence was not sufficient for the Board to determine whether Respondent collected \$1,400 from the family of Barron Adams, or whether Paradise paid the cemetery \$1,000 for the headstone.
6. The evidence was not sufficient for the Board to determine whether Paradise reimbursed the family of Beverly Tripp \$1,950 for the headstone.

7. The evidence was not sufficient for the Board to determine whether Respondent collected \$1,500 from the family of Thomas Everett, or whether Paradise reimbursed the family.

ORDER


Based upon the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board hereby orders the following:

1. Respondent Christopher Ross shall make restitution to Will Small in the amount of \$975, within ten (10) business days of October 20, 2020. Restitution shall be in the form of a money order or cashier's check.
2. Respondent's funeral director's license shall be suspended for 180 days, effective October 20, 2020.

IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 20th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2020.

**STATE BOARD OF EMBALMERS,
FUNERAL DIRECTORS,
CEMETERIES, AND BURIAL
SERVICES**

By:



Amanda Gibson
Counsel for the Board