

COLUMBIA BASIN HERALD

## Bar association disbars Adame

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**Bar association disbars Adame** By Cameron Probert,  
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OLYMPIA - A Moses Lake attorney was disbarred for 12 counts related to taking money he didn't earn.

The Washington State Supreme Court disbarred Rolando M. Adame following a recommendation from the Washington State Bar Association's Disciplinary Board, according to bar association records. The action went into effect on Nov. 21.

Adame pleaded guilty to second-degree assault and bail jumping in Grant County Superior Court after shooting his brother with bird shot during an argument, according to court records. He was sentenced to eight months in jail.

The disciplinary proceedings were in progress prior to Adame's guilty plea, and did not involve the criminal charges. They disbarment revolved around a series of contracts Adame had with the Mexican consulate to represent Mexican nationals, according to bar records. The contracts started in 2005, when the consulate paid Adame \$5,000 in advance.

Adame deposited the money and earned \$1,687 during the first year, keeping the remaining amount, according to the bar association. The next year, the consulate renewed its contract with Adame, adding a requirement that the attorney open a separate account to deposit the \$5,000 advance payment. The agreement also required Adame to send bi-monthly statements to the consulate. The statements needed to include the number of hours spent on each case and the amount of money remaining.

Adame deposited the money into his general operating account. He was instructed to handle one case for about four months, according to the bar association. At the end of the time period, \$105 from the consulate remained in Adame's account. He did not refund the remaining money.

The consulate contracted Adame a third time starting in December 2007, giving him a \$4,000 advance and making the same requirements as the previous year, according to the bar association.

Adame again didn't open a separate bank account for the money, and deposited into a pooled trust account, according to the association. Adame didn't do any work for the consulate and didn't refund the money. He did pay an employee with the money.

The final count related to the bar association's investigation, according to the association. Adame sent a slip "purported to reflect the consulate's instructions to (Adame.)" The message slip was altered, leaving out "critical information" about what the consulate authorized.

The hearing officer found Adame took money he didn't earn, treated the advance payments as if he had earned them already, and didn't follow the rules of his agreement with the consulate, according to the association.