

RE: HABITUAL TARDINESS OF MS. CECILIA L. ASILO, COURT STENOGRAPHER III, REGIONAL TRIAL COURT, PASIG CITY, BRANCH 151.

A.M. NO. 05-9-555-RTC. October 14, 2005

Ponente: CALLEJO, SR., J.

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CALLEJO, SR., J.:

According to the Certification dated April 29, 2005 issued by Hermogena F. Bayani, SC Chief Judicial Staff Officer, Leave Division, Office of the Administrative Services, Office of the Court Administrator (OCA), Cecilia L. Asilo, Court Stenographer III, Regional Trial Court, Pasig City, Branch 151, incurred the following tardiness:

November 2004 - 10 times

December 2004 - 15 times

In her Letter dated May 30, 2005, Ms. Asilo explains that her tardiness for the said months were incurred mainly because she had to attend to her sick mother who was staying with her. She states that her mother was very weak during those months and could not even attend to her personal needs. Being the only daughter, she is the only one who could give her mother full attention. She explains further that, during those times, she had to monitor her mother's blood pressure from time to time and bring her to the family doctor for her medical check-up.

The OCA opined that Ms. Asilo's explanation does not merit consideration to justify her habitual tardiness. Thus, the OCA recommended that this matter be re-docketed as a regular administrative matter and that Ms. Asilo be reprimanded and warned that a repetition of the same or similar offense will warrant the imposition of a more severe penalty.

We agree with the said recommendation.

There is no doubt that Ms. Asilo has been habitually tardy. Civil Service Memorandum Circular No. 23, Series of 1998 provides that "[a]ny employee shall be considered habitually tardy if he incurs tardiness, regardless of the number of minutes, ten (10) times a month for at least two (2) months in a semester or at least two (2) consecutive months during the year."

An employee who is frequently late falls short of the stringent standard of conduct demanded from everyone connected with the administration of justice. Inherent in this mandate is the strict observance of prescribed office hours and the competent use of every moment thereof for public service, if only to expiate the Government, and ultimately, the people who shoulder the cost of maintaining the Judiciary.[1]

Ms. Asilo's explanation is not meritorious. The Court has previously held that moral obligations, performance of household chores, traffic problems and health, domestic and financial concerns are not sufficient reasons to excuse habitual tardiness.[2]

WHEREFORE, Ms. Cecilia L. Asilo is REPRIMANDED for her habitual tardiness and is STERNLY WARNED

that a repetition of the same or similar offense shall be dealt with more severely.

SO ORDERED.

Puno, (Chairman), Austria-Martinez, Tinga, and Chico-Nazario, JJ., concur.

[1] Re: Habitual Tardiness of Mr. Theodore G. Jaymalin, Clerk III, Metropolitan Trial Court - Office of the Clerk of Court, Manila, A.M. No. P-04-1863, 12 August 2004, 436 SCRA 182.

[2] Re: Imposition of Corresponding Penalties for Habitual Tardiness Committed During the Second Semester of 2002, A.M. No. 00-6-09-SC, 14 August 2003, 409 SCRA 9.

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