

*People v. Reuler*, No. 02PDJ061. 8.27.02. Attorney Regulation. The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' Conditional Admission of Misconduct and suspended Respondent, Maurice Reuler, attorney registration number 00720, from the practice of law for a period of three years with conditions. In one matter, respondent was retained by a client to handle the estate of her deceased husband. Respondent initially gave the client an estimate of his fees and executed a fee agreement. The client signed a general durable power of attorney designating respondent as her attorney-in-fact and agent. Respondent made unauthorized disbursements from the estate for legal fees, constituting negligent conversion in violation of Colo. RPC 8.4(c). On several occasions, the client requested and did not receive an accounting, and when respondent did provide an accounting, it was not itemized. The accounting had been constructed at a later date because respondent had not kept contemporaneous billing records. The amount respondent charged the client for handling the estate matter constituted an unreasonable fee in violation of Colo. RPC 1.5(a). Respondent failed to hold client property in trust in violation of Colo. RPC 1.15(a). Respondent was ordered to pay restitution to the client. In a second matter, respondent represented a client in a dissolution of marriage proceeding. Respondent charged and attempted to collect an unreasonable fee in violation of Colo. RPC 1.5(a), failed to surrender papers and property to which the client was entitled in violation of Colo. RPC 1.16(d), and engaged in conduct adversely reflecting on respondent's fitness to practice law by improperly asserting attorney liens against the client's property in an effort to leverage payment of an unreasonable fee in violation of Colo. RPC 8.4(h). Respondent was ordered to pay the costs of the proceeding.