

People v. Stephanie Ellena Grewe. 22PDJ037. December 27, 2022.

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' stipulation to discipline and publicly suspended Stephanie Ellena Grewe (attorney registration number 47029) for six months, with thirty days to be served and the remainder to be stayed upon Grewe's successful completion of a two-year period of probation, with conditions. The suspension takes effect January 31, 2023.

Beginning in December 2019, Grewe assisted a married couple with their immigration matter, which included applying for adjustment of status and I-131 travel documents. In January 2020, Grewe's clients paid her \$575.00 for the form I-131 filing fee. Grewe deposited the funds, including the government filing fees, directly into her operating account instead of her trust account. According to Grewe, she submitted the form I-131 to immigration authorities in December 2019 or January 2020. But no evidence shows that immigration authorities received the filing at that time.

Under the benchmarks set forth in Grewe's flat fee agreement with her clients, Grewe was to earn fifty percent of her fee upon applying for the I-131 documents. In September 2020, Grewe sent her clients an invoice that showed a balance due of \$2,000.00 of the \$4,000.00 flat fee. Two months later, the clients contacted immigration authorities and learned that their I-131 application had not been received. The clients informed Grewe, who told them that she would seek to address the matter by filing a petition for writ of mandamus in federal court. But Grewe never filed the writ.

In December 2020, Grewe submitted the form I-131 to immigration authorities. The next month, Grewe's clients twice requested an update but received no response. Grewe also failed to respond to the clients' requests for updates in late January and February 2021.

Through this conduct, Grewe violated Colo. RPC 1.3 (a lawyer must act with reasonable diligence and promptness when representing a client); Colo. RPC 1.4(a)(3) (a lawyer must keep a client reasonably informed about the status of the matter); Colo. RPC 1.5(f) (lawyer does not earn fees until a benefit is conferred on the client or the lawyer performs a legal service); and Colo. RPC 1.15A(a) (a lawyer must hold client property separate from the lawyer's own property).

The case file is public per C.R.C.P. 242.41(a).