People v. William Thomas Griffin. 26PDJ36. September 28, 2026.

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' stipulation to discipline and disbarred William Thomas Griffin (attorney registration number 28650). Griffin's disbarment takes effect November 2, 2026.

In March 2023, Griffin's client was offered $45,000.00 to settle a civil case the client had litigated pro se. The client hired Griffin to negotiate a larger settlement, agreeing to pay Griffin half of any additional funds above the already-negotiated figure. Griffin did not provide the client with a fee agreement or any written basis for his fee. In May 2023, Griffin negotiated a $50,000.00 settlement in the matter. Griffin deposited the settlement check into his trust account, intending to keep $25,000.00 of the proceeds under the premise that he was entitled to half of the entire renegotiated amount. Even so, Griffin disbursed only $21,500.00 from the settlement check to his client. In June 2023, Griffin paid $15,000.00 in additional funds to his client from his trust account. But the money included funds belonging to other clients or third-parties.

In another matter, a client hired Griffin in August 2025 to appeal an order suspending the client's driver's license. That month, the client paid Griffin a total of $6,000.00, even though Griffin's fee agreement for the matter called for a $5,000.00 flat fee. Although the fee agreement did not identify any basis, short of completing the representation, for Griffin to earn his client's fee, Griffin did not deposit any of the client's funds into his trust account.

The client understood that Griffin filed a pleading on his behalf in late August 2025, and the client exchanged some texts with Griffin about the case during the following four months. The client received a final text from Griffin in December 2025, informing the client that the case was "in a waiting status" and was "out of our hands at this point." The next month, the client's appeal was dismissed with prejudice for failure to prosecute. In March 2026, the client requested an update from Griffin. Griffin never refunded any portion of the client's $6,000.00. On December 31, 2025, Griffin's business account held only $19.05.

Through this conduct, Griffin violated Colo. RPC 1.3 (a lawyer must act with reasonable diligence and promptness when representing a client); Colo. RPC 1.4 (a lawyer must reasonably communicate with a client and explain a matter so as to permit the client to make informed decisions regarding the representation); Colo. RPC 1.5(b) (a lawyer must communicate to the client in writing the basis or rate of the fee and expenses for which the client will be responsible); Colo. RPC 1.5(c) (a lawyer's contingent fee agreement must conform to the requirements of Chapter 23.3 of the Colorado Rules of Civil Procedure); Colo. RPC 1.15A(a) (a lawyer must hold client property separate from the lawyer's own property); Colo. RPC 1.16(d) (a lawyer must protect a client's interests upon termination of

the representation, including by returning any property to which the client is entitled); and Colo. RPC 8.4(c) (it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation).

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