

People v. Michelle Noel Israel, 26PDJ19, June 4, 2026.

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' stipulation to discipline and suspended Michelle Noel Israel (attorney registration number 50525) for eighteen months. To be reinstated to the practice of law, Israel must prove by clear and convincing evidence that she has been rehabilitated, has complied with all disciplinary orders and rules, and is fit to practice law. Israel's suspension took effect on June 4, 2026.

In one immigration matter, Israel represented clients for \$2,500.00 total. The clients paid her \$4,000.00 in February 2023 to cover the flat fee and estimated expenses. Israel withdrew from trust \$500.00 prematurely, about a month before she performed benchmarked tasks that permitted the withdrawal. After May 2023, Israel failed to communicate with her clients, respond to their messages, or file any other documents on their behalf. Even so, she did not refund their money or withdraw from the representation. By November 2023, Israel had almost entirely depleted her trust account, which held \$3,428.49 less than she should have kept for the clients. In several transactions, she then deposited personal funds in her trust account. She failed to maintain or produce required accounting records to show when and how she earned the clients' funds.

In another immigration matter, Israel represented a client on a flat-fee basis, with four milestones, for \$1,500.00. The client paid the full amount in late October 2022. By February 2024, Israel had abandoned her client, and she never completed the last three milestones. Nevertheless, Israel drew down her trust account; by August 2023, she held in trust for her client \$222.19 less than she should have. She later deposited personal funds into her trust account. The client grieved Israel. When Israel responded to disciplinary authorities' inquiries, she did not include trust account or billing statements for the matter, even though she was required to keep those records.

In a third immigration matter, Israel agreed in January 2021 to represent a client for a \$5,000.00 flat fee, with four benchmarks for earning fees. Between January 2021 and March 2023, the client paid Israel a total of \$6,787.40, \$4,027.40 of which was to pay for legal services. Israel abandoned the representation around July 2022 after completing just two benchmarks, earning only \$2,500.00 of the flat fee. Thirteen months after abandoning the representation, Israel had withdrawn all but \$977.81 from her trust account, even though should have been safeguarding for the client \$1,527.40 in unearned funds. When disciplinary authorities asked Israel to account for the funds, she failed to provide requested financial documents. She also knowingly failed to respond to disciplinary authorities' requests for an interview concerning all three client matters.

Through the conduct described above, Israel 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 1.4(a)(4) (a lawyer must promptly comply with reasonable requests for information); Colo. RPC 1.15A(a) (a lawyer must hold client property separate from the lawyer's own property); Colo. RPC 1.15D (a lawyer must maintain trust account records); Colo. RPC 1.16(d) (a lawyer must protect a client's interests upon termination of the representation, including by returning unearned funds); and Colo. RPC 8.1(b) (a lawyer must not knowingly fail to respond to a lawful demand for information from a disciplinary authority). The case file is public per C.R.C.P. 242.41(a).