

People v. Lucette Brenna Laffoon. 25PDJ42. June 6, 2025.

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' stipulation to discipline and suspended Lucette Brenna Laffoon (attorney registration number 46261) for two years. The suspension takes effect June 6, 2025. To be reinstated to the practice of law in Colorado after her suspension, Laffoon 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.

In March 2021, a client hired Laffoon to file an I-130 petition to help the client's family member obtain lawful permanent residency. Laffoon took more than fourteen months to complete the petition, even though the petition was not exceptionally complicated. Laffoon withdrew her client's funds from her trust account before earning them; in June 2023, her trust account should have held at least \$3,200.00 of the client's funds, but the account's balance was only \$1,117.45. After Laffoon submitted the petition, she did not timely respond to a request for evidence from immigration authorities, nor did she inform her client that she did not respond. In August 2023, the client requested an update about her case from Laffoon's office but never received a response.

In another matter, in 2017 Laffoon failed to timely file an asylum application for a client and the client's son. During the representation, Laffoon transferred her client's funds from her trust account to her operating account before earning them in full.

In a third matter, Laffoon indicated on a client's asylum application that the client sought asylum based on membership in a particular social group but did not file a brief that the immigration court required for such applications. In addition, Laffoon waited to file a prehearing brief until just two days before the hearing on her client's application, even though the brief and other prehearing materials were due sixty days before the hearing. Though Laffoon had agreed to charge the client a \$10,000.00 flat fee to complete the asylum application and perform related services, the client ultimately paid her \$14,440.00. Laffoon never communicating to the client in writing any changes in the basis or rate of her fee, however. During the representation, she transferred portions of her client's funds from her trust account to her operating account before filing the client's application or attending the hearing on the application's merits.

In each matter, Laffoon failed to maintain a ledger or other recordkeeping system related to the clients' funds. She also failed to timely surrender the clients' files in each case to successor counsel.

Through this conduct, Laffoon 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 1.5(b) (a lawyer must inform a client in writing about the lawyer's fees and expenses within a reasonable time after being retained, if the lawyer has not regularly represented the client); Colo. RPC 1.15A(a) (a lawyer must hold client property separate from the lawyer's own property); Colo. RPC 1.15D(a)(1)(A) (a lawyer must maintain an appropriate record-keeping system to track funds or other property held for others); and Colo. RPC 1.16(d) (a lawyer must protect a client's interests upon termination of the

representation, including by returning any papers and property to which the client is entitled). The case file is public per C.R.C.P. 242.41(a).