

**People v. George Joseph Nichols III. 14PDJ096. November 26, 2014.**

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' conditional admission of misconduct and suspended George Joseph Nichols (Attorney Registration Number 05862) for one year and one day, all but four months stayed upon the successful completion of an eighteen-month period of probation. The suspension takes effect December 31, 2014.

Nichols represented a client in a personal injury matter in 2013. Toward the end of the case, the client approached him with concerns about being evicted from her apartment. Nichols advanced her \$500.00 in cash. They both signed a document acknowledging the advance, stating "To be repaid upon settlement of case." Nichols advanced the client an additional \$300.00 in cash about three weeks later. The client's case settled, and Nichols deposited the proceeds into his trust account. The same day, he wrote a check to his client for \$800.00. The client endorsed the check over to him to repay the advances she had received. In this matter, Nichols violated Colo. RPC 1.8(e), which provides that a lawyer generally shall not give a client financial assistance in connection with pending litigation.

In December 2013, Nichols anticipated that he would soon receive attorney's fees in several cases he had settled. On December 30, 2013, he wrote a check to himself for \$1,500.00 from his trust account, even though he had funds available in other accounts. On January 2, 2014, he deposited checks into his trust account to replace the funds he had removed three days earlier. Through these actions, Nichols violated Colo. RPC 1.15(a), which requires a lawyer to hold client property separate from the lawyer's own property.