

*People v. Cameron Joseph Baker. 25PDJ8. February 14, 2025.*

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' stipulation to discipline and suspended Cameron Joseph Baker (attorney registration number 55479) from the practice of law for one year and one day, all to be stayed pending Baker's successful completion of a two-year period of probation, with conditions. Baker's stipulation reflected mitigating factors including significant personal or emotional problems. The probation takes effect March 21, 2025.

In December 2022, Baker agreed to represent a client in a felony case for \$3,000.00. Baker continued the case multiple times, then failed to appear at a scheduled hearing. In July 2023, the client fired Baker and demanded he return any unearned funds. But Baker had not kept records of the client's payments and could not determine how much his client had paid him.

In another client's matter, Baker failed to comply with orders to schedule mediation and to file a joint trial management certificate in the client's dissolution of marriage case. Nor did Baker inform his client of those orders. The parties did not file a mediation certificate, and the trial court vacated the permanent orders hearing set for June 2023. Meanwhile, Baker moved for a contempt order against the opposing party. Baker read the notice of the contempt hearing but did not respond to his client's inquiries about the hearing. Baker and his client failed to appear at the hearing, and the court dismissed the contempt motion. Later, in August 2023, the court ordered Baker to confer with the opposing party to reset the permanent orders hearing. Baker did not comply because he did not read the order. Nor did he read an order requiring a status conference or a notice of the status conference. Neither Baker nor his client appeared at the status conference, prompting the court to order Baker to show cause why he should not be held in contempt. In January 2024, the client successfully moved to withdraw Baker from the case after pro se moving for contempt against the opposing party.

In a third matter, Baker agreed to represent a client in a felony case for a \$3,000.00 flat fee. Baker never provided a written fee agreement to the client or her mother, who first contacted him about the matter. Nor did he describe in writing how he would earn portions of the fee. In December 2023, the client's mother paid Baker \$1,000.00 via a payment app. Baker did not deposit the funds into a trust account but kept them in his account on the app. He never entered his appearance in the client's case, falsely telling the client that he sought to continue the next date in January 2024, and that the date had been moved to the next month. When the client received notice of the January appearance date, Baker advised her to tell the court that she had just hired counsel and to request a new date. In late January 2024, the client's mother demanded a refund. Baker did not respond to her request, and she renewed her demand two days later. Baker promised to refund the money within a week but did not do so until almost three months later.

Through this misconduct, Baker 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(h) (a lawyer must communicate in writing the terms of a flat fee, including specific benchmarks for earning a portion

of a flat fee, if any portion is to be earned before conclusion of the representation, and information about how the fees would be determined if the representation terminates before completion); 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 3.4(c) (a lawyer must not knowingly disobey an obligation under the rules of a tribunal); Colo. RPC 8.4(c) (it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation); and Colo. RPC 8.4(d) (it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice).

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