

People v. Stephanie Ellena Grewe. 24PDJ044. August 29, 2024.

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' stipulation to discipline and disbarred Stephanie Ellena Grewe (attorney registration number 47029). The disbarment took effect August 29, 2024.

In one immigration matter, Grewe agreed in August 2018 to pursue on her clients' behalf an I-130 petition for alien relative. For nearly four years, Grewe failed to file any immigration documents other than the I-130 petition and failed to keep the clients reasonably informed about the status of the matter, including the status of documents filed with USCIS. When the clients asked Grewe for a USCIS receipt notice of the I-130 petition, she replied that she lost the notice but would obtain another copy. After the clients prodded Grewe several more times for the receipt, she sent them a receipt notice that she falsified in several respects. Through this conduct, Grewe violated Colo. RPC 1.3 (A lawyer must act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client); Colo. RPC 1.4(a)(3) (a lawyer must keep a client reasonably informed about the status of a matter); and Colo. RPC 8.4(c) (it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation).

Effective January 31, 2023, Grewe was suspended for six months, with thirty days to be served and the remainder stayed on successful completion of a two-year probationary period. She was also suspended from practicing before immigration courts and other related authorities, effective February 13, 2023. Because Grewe never sought reinstatement, she remained suspended in Colorado and with immigration authorities. Even so, Grewe knowingly filed several documents with immigration authorities while her law license was suspended. In those filings, she represented that Nebraska was her "licensing authority" and that she was not subject to any order of suspension. In May 2023, Grewe also represented a client before an immigration judge without disclosing her suspension. Through this conduct, Grewe violated Colo. RPC 3.4(c) (a lawyer must not knowingly disobey the rules of a tribunal except for an open refusal based on an assertion that no valid obligation exists); Colo. RPC 5.5(a) (a lawyer must not practice law without a valid law license or other specific authorization); and Colo. RPC 8.4(c).

In another immigration matter, Respondent failed to meaningfully advance her client's case from late 2015 through 2023. She filed an I-130 petition, which was revoked due to inaction, and she failed to pursue the client's mother's residency. When Grewe's license was suspended, she did not inform her client that she could not represent him and his family after her suspension's effective date. She continued to represent the client, concealing her suspension from him and creating the impression she was permitted to do so. Later, the client's subsequent counsel requested she return the client's file; she did not comply with that request. She also failed to submit a written response or any documents related to the client when disciplinary authorities requested that information. Through this misconduct, Grewe violated Colo. RPC 1.3; Colo. RPC 1.4(a)(5) (a lawyer must consult with a client regarding limitations on the lawyer's conduct); Colo. RPC 1.16(d) (on termination of representation, a lawyer must take steps reasonably necessary to protect a client's interests); Colo. RPC 3.4(c); Colo. RPC 5.5(a); Colo. RPC 8.1(b) (a lawyer must not knowingly fail to respond to a lawful demand for information from a disciplinary authority); and Colo. RPC 8.4(c). The case file is public per C.R.C.P. 242.41(a).