

People v. Robert L. Hunt. 16PDJo80. November 2, 2016.

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' conditional admission of misconduct and disbarred Robert L. Hunt (attorney registration number 25088). His disbarment takes effect on December 7, 2016.

Hunt's misconduct stems from two separate client matters. The first matter involves Hunt's representation of a woman with whom he had a lengthy intimate relationship beginning in 2009. In 2012, she hired Hunt's law firm for representation in her divorce case. She later asked Hunt to take over her case. Hunt filed a petition for dissolution on her behalf. In 2015, while the intimate relationship continued, Hunt represented his client in her effort to secure a restraining order against her ex-husband.

In September 2015, the ex-husband was arraigned in a criminal theft matter. During the arraignment, Hunt tried unsuccessfully to influence the court to increase the ex-husband's bond. Two days later, opposing counsel asked Hunt to withdraw from the case, but he refused, stating that he did not have an inappropriate relationship with his client. He was fired from his firm but continued to represent his client. In the criminal theft case, Hunt was identified as a witness. Opposing counsel then moved to disqualify him, both in the criminal case and in the civil protection matter. In response, Hunt disclosed his relationship with his client but contended that he did not need to withdraw. Hunt eventually agreed to withdraw in November 2015. While representing his client in her divorce case, Hunt admitted to driving her marital vehicle, the subject of a property dispute, on three occasions.

In the second matter, Hunt was retained by a client in March 2016 in a paternity case. Because he failed to pay registration fees, Hunt was placed on administrative suspension on May 2, 2016. While suspended, Hunt participated in a telephone conference with the court and set a status conference for June 2016. Hunt did not appear at the status conference, and his client informed the court that he was unaware of Hunt's suspension. Hunt produced to the Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel a fabricated letter that he claimed to have sent to his client on May 3, 2016, notifying him of the suspension. Hunt did not move to withdraw in his client's paternity case, never notified his client of his suspension, and never refunded his client's unearned fees of \$2,500.00. Hunt admitted that he deposited these funds into his personal account and that his ex-wife consumed those funds.

Hunt's conduct violated Colo. RPC 1.7 (a lawyer shall not represent a client if the representation involves a concurrent conflict of interest); Colo. RPC 1.15A (a lawyer shall hold client property separate from the lawyer's own property); Colo. RPC 1.16(d) (a lawyer shall protect a client's interests upon termination of the representation); Colo. RPC 3.7(a) (a lawyer shall not act as advocate at a trial in which the lawyer is likely to be a necessary witness); Colo. RPC 5.5(a)(1) (a lawyer shall not practice law without a law license or other specific authorization); Colo. RPC 8.1(a) (a lawyer shall not knowingly make a false statement of material fact in connection with a disciplinary matter); Colo. RPC 8.1(b) (a lawyer shall not knowingly fail to respond to a lawful demand for information from a disciplinary authority); Colo. RPC 8.4(c) (a lawyer shall not engage in conduct involving

dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation); and Colo. RPC 8.4(d) (a lawyer shall not engage in conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice).