

People v. Ryan Richard Call. 21PDJ032. September 9, 2021.

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' amended conditional admission of misconduct and disbarred Ryan Richard Call (attorney registration number 37207). The disbarment takes effect on October 14, 2021.

In June 2016, Call's law firm entered into an agreement to represent a political action committee ("PAC"); as part of that agreement, Call agreed to act as the PAC's treasurer. In January 2017, Call contracted with the PAC in his personal capacity to provide strategy and fundraising services for a monthly flat fee of \$5,000.00. Call authorized the contract on behalf of the PAC and signed for both parties. He did not obtain the PAC's written informed consent concerning possible conflicts of interest arising from transacting with the organization for personal business while acting as its treasurer, nor did he advise the PAC in writing that the advice of independent counsel would be desirable. Call also did not obtain the PAC's written informed consent to the essential terms of the contract, including whether he was representing the organization in the matter. He never disclosed the contract to his law firm.

In October 2016, the PAC received a \$1,000,000.00 contribution from a donor who had previously contributed the same amount. A fundraising consultant deposited the money directly into the PAC's account. Call did not include the donation in federal reports in 2016 and 2017. He says that he realized he had made a mistake in 2018 during a review of the PAC's federal reports, after which he submitted an amended federal report that included the donation. From September 2016 to January 2019, Call withdrew or wired to himself PAC funds, some of which he mistakenly withdrew and later reimbursed. He also disbursed to himself PAC funds and reported to federal authorities that the funds were paid to his firm, even though the firm did not receive the payments. In June 2019, the PAC fired Call after discovering the discrepancies between its disbursements and the federal reports he filed. Afterward, Call did not return all of the PAC's papers and property in his possession. In addition, he misled his law firm about the disbursements and concealed from its partners and the PAC's counsel information about the disbursements he had made to himself. He resigned from the law firm in August 2019.

Through this conduct, Call violated Colo. RPC 1.7(a)(2) (a lawyer shall not represent a client if the representation involves a concurrent conflict of interest); Colo. RPC 1.8(a) (a lawyer shall not enter into a business transaction with a client unless the client is advised to seek independent legal counsel and the client gives written informed consent to the transaction); Colo. RPC 1.16(d) (a lawyer shall protect a client's interests upon termination of the representation, including by giving reasonable notice to the client and returning any papers and property to which the client is entitled); Colo. RPC 4.1(a) (a lawyer shall not knowingly make a false statement of material law or fact to a third person in the course of representing a client); and Colo. RPC 8.4(c) (a lawyer shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation).

The case file is public per C.R.C.P. 251.31.