

People v. Brianna Lee Schaefer. 23PDJ052. October 13, 2023.

The Presiding Disciplinary Judge approved the parties' stipulation to discipline and publicly censure Brianna Lee Schaefer (attorney registration number 34078), effective October 13, 2023.

Shortly after joining a law firm in 2016, Schaefer began moonlighting as local counsel in Colorado for a different law firm based in Kansas. Schaefer later purchased the first law firm with three other lawyers and executed a partnership agreement with them in July 2019. The partnership agreement required that all money they received for legal work must be paid or credited to the partnership and that all clients were clients of the partnership rather than clients of any individual lawyer, unless otherwise approved by the partners. Schaefer did not inform the other partners of her work with the Kansas law firm even though the work violated the terms of the partnership agreement. Later, in August 2020, when providing information for the first firm's malpractice insurance renewal, Schaefer replied "No" when asked if any covered lawyer was an employee of any organization, entity, or government body other than the firm. Then, in February 2022, a court clerk sent a docket sheet to the first firm regarding one of Schaefer's cases with the Kansas firm. The lawyer who received the clerk's email—and who earlier had received a similar email from the same clerk's office—forwarded it to Schaefer and a paralegal, and then followed up with another email that stated, "Never mind, wrong Bri Schaefer again! I'll let the clerk know AGAIN!" A few minutes later, the lawyer emailed Schaefer and the paralegal again, asking, "Unless this is [Schaefer's] case?" Schaefer did not reply to the email. Lawyers with the first firm eventually searched the court dockets in the Denver metro area and discovered that Schaefer had filed tens, if not hundreds, of cases for the Kansas firm's clients during the preceding few years.

Through this conduct, Schaefer violated Colo. RPC 8.4(c) (it is professional misconduct for a lawyer to engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation).

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