

BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

YANELY ANAHI ROCHA PEREZ,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6327513.

Comm. No. 2025PR00061

ANSWER

NOW COMES Respondent, Yanely Anahi Rocha Perez, by and through her attorney, James A. Doppke, Jr., Robinson, Stewart, Montgomery & Doppke, LLC, admitting the accuracy of her date of licensure in Illinois as alleged in the prefatory paragraph of the Administrator's Complaint but denying all other allegations of that paragraph, and for his answer to the Administrator's Complaint in this matter, states as follows:

COUNT I

(Conversion of \$820 Belonging to R.C. and Lack of Diligence)

1. On or about November 2019, Respondent began working for a not-for-profit organization called the Refugee and Immigration Center for Education and Legal Services ("RAICES") in Fort Worth, Texas, which primarily handled immigration-related matters on behalf of low-income clients. Respondent continued to work for RAICES until June of 2024.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 1.

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2. At all times alleged in this complaint, Respondent maintained two personal checking accounts at J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, one ending in 9015 (“9015 Account”) and the other ending in 7579 (“7579 Account”). Respondent used those personal checking accounts to pay for her personal expenses.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 2.

A. Conversion of filing fees meant for a filing on behalf of O.C.

3. On or about April 14, 2023, an individual with the initials R.C., contacted RAICES seeking legal services for adjustment of her and her son’s (“O.C.”) immigration status. Those clients’ matters were assigned to Respondent. Specifically, R.C. was seeking representation with respect to the filing of an I-765 Application for Employment Authorization document for O.C., R.C.’s minor child, as well as an Application for Adjustment of Status.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 3.

4. At the time of their initial meeting, on or about April 14, 2023, R.C. provided Respondent with a money order in the amount of \$410 to cover the filing fee for the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization. The payee portion of the money order was left blank. R.C. gave the money order to Respondent with the understanding that it would be sent directly to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (“USCIS”) to pay the \$410 filing fee for the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 4.

5. As of April 14, 2023, Respondent had not received any authorization from R.C. to utilize the funds for purposes other than filing the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization with USCIS.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 5.

6. On April 14, 2023, Respondent wrote her own name in the payee portion of the \$410 money order and cashed it at a PLS Check Cashers in Irving, Texas.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 6.

7. After cashing the money order on April 14, 2023, Respondent used those funds for her own business or personal purposes. Respondent's use of those funds constitutes conversion.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 7.

8. At the time Respondent engaged in conversion of those funds, Respondent knew that she was using the funds for her own personal or business purposes, and, in doing so, she acted dishonestly because she knew that R.C. intended those funds to be paid directly to USCIS.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 8.

9. After receiving the \$410 money order in April 2023, Respondent never filed the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization on O.C.'s behalf, nor did she tell R.C. that she had not filed the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that the records maintained by RAICES in connection with O.C. would indicate that the I-765 Application for Employment

Authorization was not filed. Respondent lacks sufficient knowledge on which to base an admission or denial of the remaining allegations contained in paragraph 9.

B. Conversion of filing fees meant for a filing on behalf of R.C.'s daughter

10. In or about February 2024, R.C. contacted Respondent and asked her to re-file an I-765 Application for Employment Authorization document on behalf of R.C.'s daughter due to a change in R.C.'s daughter's last name.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 10, except the allegation that the initials of the client involved are "R.C.," as to which allegation Respondent lacks sufficient knowledge upon which to base an admission or denial.

11. In or about February 2024, R.C. provided Respondent with a money order in the amount of \$410 for the filing fee for the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization to be paid directly to USCIS. The payee portion of the money order was left blank.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 11.

12. R.C. gave the money order to Respondent with the understanding that it would be sent directly to USCIS in accordance with the associated \$410 filing fee for the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization. As of February 16, 2024, Respondent had not received any authorization from R.C. to utilize the funds for purposes other than filing the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 12.

13. On February 16, 2024, Respondent added her name as payee on the \$410 money order and deposited it into her 9015 Account.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 13.

14. On February 16, 2024, the opening balance of Respondent's 9015 account was \$328.51. After depositing the funds into her personal checking account, Respondent used those funds for her own business or personal purposes. On February 20, 2024, Respondent withdrew \$500 from the 9105 account at an automatic teller machine ("ATM").

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 14.

15. On March 14, 2025, Respondent drew the balance of the 9105 account to \$9.62. Respondent's use of those funds constitutes conversion.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 15.

16. At the time Respondent engaged in conversion of those funds, Respondent knew that she was using the funds for her own personal or business purposes, and, in doing so, she acted dishonestly because she knew the funds were intended to be paid directly to USCIS.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 16.

17. After receiving the \$410 money order in February 2024, Respondent never filed an I-765 Application for Employment Authorization on R.C.'s daughter's behalf, nor did she tell R.C that she had not filed the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that the records maintained by RAICES in connection with R.C. would indicate that the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization was not filed. Respondent lacks sufficient knowledge on which to base an admission or denial of the remaining allegations contained in paragraph 17.

18. In June 2024, Respondent concluded her employment with RAICES, subsequently terminating her representation of R.C., O.C., and R.C.'s daughter. At the time of the termination of her representation, she had still not filed either of the corresponding I-765 Application[s] for Employment Authorization.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that the records maintained by RAICES in connection with O.C. and R.C. would indicate that the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization was not filed as of June 2024. Respondent lacks sufficient knowledge on which to base an admission or denial of the remaining allegations contained in paragraph 18.

19. By reason of the conduct described above, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. failure to hold property belonging to a client or third party separate from Respondent's own property by cashing \$410 which was to be used for filing fees with USCIS and depositing \$410 which was to be used for filing fees with USCIS in Respondent's personal account ending in 9105 rather than a client trust account or directly paid to USCIS, in violation of Rule 1.15(a) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);
- b. failure to act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client, by conduct including not filing a client's application for employment authorization for over 3 months in violation of Rule 1.3 of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010); and
- c. conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, by holding herself out as a lawyer authorized to practice law and knowingly converting \$820 in immigration filing fees received on behalf of a

client for Respondent's own use without authority, in violation of Rule 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 19.

COUNT II

(Practicing Law After Removal from the Roll of Attorneys)

20. The Administrator realleges and incorporates paragraphs one through 19 of Count I, above.

ANSWER: Respondent restates and incorporates her answers to paragraphs one through 19 of Count I, above.

21. At all times alleged in this complaint, Supreme Court Rule 794 required that, subject to certain exceptions that do not apply to Respondent in this matter, every Illinois attorney was required to complete 30 hours of continuing legal education ("CLE") activity during the attorney's two-year reporting period ending on June 30. For attorneys whose last names started with the letter "R," including Respondent, the applicable two-year reporting requirement ran from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 21.

22. Certain attorneys, including Respondent, who were required to comply with the 2021-2023 CLE reporting period were eligible to obtain a grace period extension until October 31, 2023, to complete their CLE requirements. To obtain the grace period extension, a qualifying attorney would need to enter certain information online and pay a \$100 fee to the Minimum Continuing Legal Education Board of the Supreme Court of

Illinois (“MCLE Board”) no later than July 31, 2023. On or about June 30, 2023, Respondent made a \$100 payment to the MCLE Board to obtain a grace period extension.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 22.

23. Respondent initially registered to practice law in Illinois in 2017 and therefore was familiar with the registration process as of 2023.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 23.

24. At all times set forth in this complaint, Supreme Court Rule 796(e) required the Administrator to remove from the Roll of Attorneys authorized to practice law in Illinois the name of any attorney who had not complied with their CLE requirement.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 24.

25. Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 756(h), “any person whose name is not on the master roll and who practices law or who holds himself or herself out as being authorized to practice law pursuant to the attorney’s Illinois law license is engaged in the unauthorized practice of law may also be held in contempt of the Court.”

26. Respondent received at least the following messages from the MCLE Board concerning her compliance with Supreme Court Rules 794 and 796 during the 2021-2023 MCLE reporting period [...].

ANSWER: Respondent incorporates the table contained in paragraph 26 of the Administrator’s Complaint into her answer to paragraph 26. Respondent admits, upon information and belief, that the MCLE Board caused the messages referred to in the table contained in paragraph 26 were sent to an email address she maintained on or about the

dates referred to in the table. Respondent lacks sufficient knowledge on which to base an admission or denial of the remaining allegations contained in paragraph 26.

27. On December 1, 2023, the Administrator removed Respondent's name from the Roll of Attorneys authorized to practice law in Illinois based on her failure to complete the requisite CLE courses.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 27 upon information and belief.

28. On or about December 1, 2023, Respondent received a notice of her removal from the Roll of Attorneys from the MCLE Board which resulted from Respondent's failure to complete the requisite CLE courses during the 2021-2023 period.

ANSWER: Respondent admits, upon information and belief, that the MCLE Board caused the notice referred to in paragraph 28 to be sent to an email address she maintained on or about December 1, 2023. Respondent lacks sufficient knowledge on which to base an admission or denial of the remaining allegations contained in paragraph 28.

29. As of December 1, 2023, and at all times described in the balance of this complaint, Respondent had actual knowledge that she had been removed from the Roll of Attorneys and that she was not authorized to provide legal services in Illinois.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that she became aware of her removal from the Roll of Attorneys as of approximately Thanksgiving 2024. Respondent denies the remaining allegations contained in paragraph 29.

30. Since being removed from the Roll of Attorneys and knowing that she was not authorized to practice law in Illinois, Respondent represented clients in no less than three (3) matters, mainly in the area of immigration law.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that she represented clients in immigration matters after she was removed from the Roll of Attorneys. Respondent lacks sufficient knowledge on which to base an admission or denial of the remaining allegations contained in paragraph 30.

31. Between December 1, 2023, and the date of the filing of this complaint, Respondent appeared in court and/or filed documents with the court on her clients' behalf, including in the following matters and on the following dates [...].

ANSWER: Respondent incorporates the table contained in paragraph 31 of the Administrator's Complaint into her answer to paragraph 31. Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 31.

32. On or about August of 2024, Respondent submitted an application for employment as a document review attorney to Cobra Legal Solutions LLC (n/k/a Purpose Legal) based in Dallas, Texas. However, the position Respondent applied for was a remote position. As part of that application, Respondent submitted a resume wherein she held herself out as being authorized to practice law in Illinois as of November 2, 2024.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in the first and second sentences of paragraph 32. Respondent admits that, by entering information into software provided by the website indeed.com, she submitted information concerning her

educational and employment history to Cobra Legal Solutions LLC (n/k/a Purpose Legal), including the following information:

Certifications and Licenses

Bar

November 2017 to Present

IL

Respondent denies any remaining allegations contained in paragraph 32.

33. Cobra Legal Solutions LLC ultimately employed Respondent as a document review attorney. Between August 17, 2024, and June 1, 2025, Respondent worked approximately 30 hours per week as a document review attorney for Cobra Legal Solutions LLC.

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 33.

34. As of the filing of this complaint, the Respondent has failed to complete the requisite CLE requirements and has not been restored to the Roll of Attorneys. Since December 1, 2023, pursuant to Rule 796(e), Respondent has not been authorized to practice law in Illinois or to hold herself out as so authorized.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that she has not completed the CLE requirements referred to in Illinois Supreme Court Rule 790 et seq., and that she has not been restored to the Roll of Attorneys. Respondent admits the allegations of the second sentence of paragraph 34. Further answering, Respondent states that she has not sought to be restored to the Roll of Attorneys, and that since at least February 2025, she has been employed outside the practice of law and has not provided any legal services to anyone. Respondent denies any remaining allegations contained in paragraph 34.

35. During the period in which Respondent was removed from the Roll of Attorneys, Respondent failed to notify all of her clients, opposing counsel, and judges presiding over the matters listed above, that she was not authorized to practice law in Illinois.

ANSWER: Respondent admits that during the period in which she was removed from the Roll of Attorneys, she did not notify her clients, opposing counsel, or judges presiding over the matters referred to in the Administrator's Complaint that she was not authorized to practice law in Illinois. Respondent denies any remaining allegations contained in paragraph 35.

36. By appearing in court and/or filing documents, Respondent misrepresented to judges, opposing counsel, her clients, and others that she was authorized to practice law, despite knowing she was not.

ANSWER: Respondent denies the allegations contained in paragraph 36.

37. By reason of the conduct described above, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. practicing law in a jurisdiction in violation of the regulation of the legal profession in that jurisdiction, by conducting including appearing in court and/or filing documents with the court on client matters while her name had been removed from the Roll of Attorneys and she was not authorized to practice law, in violation of Rule 5.5(a) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);
- b. engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation, by conduct including knowingly holding herself out as being able to practice law

although unauthorized to do so, in violation of Rule 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct; and

- c. conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice, by conduct including holding herself out as authorized to practice law to clients, opposing counsel, and the court when she was not so authorized, in violation of Rule 8.4(d) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010).

ANSWER: Respondent admits the allegations contained in paragraph 37(a).

Respondent denies the allegations contained in paragraphs 37(b) and 37(c).

RESPONDENT'S DISCLOSURE PURSUANT TO COMMISSION RULE 231

1. Respondent was admitted to practice law in the State of Illinois on November 9, 2017.
2. Respondent holds no other professional licenses other than her license to practice law.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ James A. Doppke, Jr.

BY: James A. Doppke, Jr.

Counsel for Respondent

James A. Doppke, Jr.
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YANELY ANAHI ROCHA PEREZ,

Attorney-Respondent,

No. 6327513.

Comm. No. 2025PR00061

AFFIDAVIT PURSUANT TO 735 ILCS 5/2-610(b)

Yanely Anahi Rocha Perez, an attorney, under penalties as provided by law pursuant to the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, 735 ILCS 5/1-109, on oath deposes and states:

1. That she is the Respondent in this matter.
2. That this answer contains certain statements of insufficient knowledge on which to base a belief as to the truth or falsity of the allegations contained in the complaint.
3. That those allegations of insufficient knowledge are true and correct.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.

/s/ Yanely Anahi Rocha Perez
Respondent

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YANELY ANAHI ROCHA PEREZ,

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No. 6327513.

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NOTICE OF FILING

TO: Morgan B. Handwerker
mhandwerker@iardc.org

ARDC eService
ARDCeService@iardc.org

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on November 17, 2025, I filed the attached Answer with the Clerk of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, copies of which are hereby served upon you.

/s/ James A. Doppke, Jr.

BY: James A. Doppke, Jr.
Counsel for Respondent

PROOF OF SERVICE

The undersigned attorney hereby certifies that he served the above Notice of Filing, and the attached Answer, by emailing them to the email addresses listed above on November 17, 2025, before 11:59 p.m.

/s/ James A. Doppke, Jr.

James A. Doppke, Jr.

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