

Michael Zhang Examines How Poor Attorney Timekeeping Practices Affect the Bottom Line

Column Published in the Illinois Defense Counsel's *IDC Quarterly*

In The News | 1 min read

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Hinshaw attorney Michael Zhang recently had a legal ethics column published in the latest issue of the Illinois Defense Counsel's *IDC Quarterly* publication. The column reviews the ethical rules and practical business implications of attorney billing practices.

Drawing on recent disciplinary actions and rule changes, Michael highlights how inaccurate or dishonest timekeeping can harm client relationships, lead to significant write-offs, and result in professional malpractice claims.

His article reviews two key Illinois Supreme Court Rules of Professional Conduct related to billing that lawyers must abide by:

- Rule 1.5(a) prohibits lawyers from collecting unreasonable fees or expenses;
- Rule 8.4(c) considers it professional misconduct if a lawyer engages in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.

Michael also highlights the increased enforcement by the Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (ARDC) in cases involving dishonest billing. Lastly, he surveys the California State Bar's "Arbitration Advisory" (2016-02), which offers a practical roadmap for accurate billing and partner review of pre-bills, while cautioning against block billing, recycled work, and inflated timekeeping entries.

[Read the full article \(PDF\)](#)

- ["Poor Timekeeping Practices Affect the Bottom Line,"](#) *IDC Quarterly*, Volume 35, Number 3, Illinois Defense Counsel, 2025

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