

**IN THE MATTER OF**  
**KERI A. JONES, L.Ac.,**

**Respondent**

**License No.: U02269**

**\* BEFORE THE**  
**\* MARYLAND**  
**\* BOARD OF ACUPUNCTURE**  
**\* OAG Case No. 23-10**

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**ORDER FOR SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

The Maryland Board of Acupuncture (the “Board”) hereby **SUMMARILY SUSPENDS** the license of **KERI A. JONES, L.Ac.** (the “Respondent”), License Number **U02269**, pursuant to its authority under Md. Code Ann., State Gov’t § 10-226(c)(2) (2021 Repl. Vol.), concluding that the public health, safety, or welfare imperatively requires emergency action. In addition, the Board takes such action pursuant to its authority under Md. Code Regs. (“COMAR”) 10.26.04.07, concluding that there is substantial likelihood that the Respondent poses a risk of harm to the public health, safety, or welfare.

**INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS**

The Board bases its action on the following findings:<sup>1</sup>

**BACKGROUND**

1. At all times relevant to the charges herein the Respondent was licensed to practice acupuncture in the State of Maryland. The Respondent was originally certified to practice acupuncture medicine on September 8, 2015, under License Number U02269. The Respondent’s license has a status of “active” and is scheduled to expire on November 23, 2023.

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<sup>1</sup>The statements regarding the Respondent’s conduct identified herein are intended to provide the Respondent with reasonable notice of the asserted facts. They are not intended as, and do not necessarily represent, a complete description of the evidence, either documentary or testimonial, to be offered against the Respondent.

2. At all times relevant to the charges herein the Respondent practiced acupuncture at a private practice located in Catonsville, Maryland.

### COMPLAINT

3. On or about November 2, 2022, the Board received a complaint from Patient 1<sup>2</sup> regarding an appointment he had with the Respondent on October 19, 2022, at the Respondent's private practice in Catonsville, Maryland.
4. Patient 1's complaint alleged that on October 19, 2022, the Respondent's treatment room was filthy and in disarray. The complaint alleged that in the treatment room there were a dozen or more used needles lying around in different places. Patient 1's complaint alleged that the Respondent showed the tools she would use, and they were not clean. Patient 1's complaint also alleged that the Respondent was going to insert needles in his legs through his pants; however, Patient 1 pulled his pant leg up first.

### INVESTIGATION

5. On November 29, 2022, the Board's Investigator made an unannounced visit to the Respondent's private practice in Catonsville, Maryland.
6. The Board Investigator arrived at the private practice at the same time as the Respondent. He observed the following conditions in the treatment rooms:
  - a. Used filiform needles kept in non-biohazard containers, unsecure and overflowing out of the top of the containers.
  - b. Open containers of partly used filiform needles and unsanitized medical equipment on the windowsill above the treatment beds;
  - c. Open, used containers of Moxa<sup>3</sup> sitting on the sink and floors;

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<sup>2</sup> To maintain patient confidentiality, patient names will not be disclosed in this document but will be provided to the Respondent upon request.

<sup>3</sup> Moxa is mugwort or other Chinese herbs used in the traditional Chinese medicine therapy called Moxibustion, which consists of burning dried mugwort on particular points on the body.

- d. Used facial masks lying on the sink and floor;
  - e. Rolls of exam paper laying on the floor; and
  - f. Overflowing trash cans .
7. On January 9, 2023, the Board's Investigator made a subsequent unannounced visit to the Respondent's private practice in Catonsville, Maryland. The office was closed at that time.
8. The Board Investigator arrived at the private practice at the same time as the Respondent. He observed the following conditions in the treatment rooms:
- a. Non-biohazard containers with used filiform needles overflowing out of the top of the containers;
  - b. Opened filiform needle packaging, partly used and unsanitized Gua Sha stones;
  - c. A roll of exam paper on the floor; and
  - d. A bin of used cupping tools, also known as pulling jars<sup>4</sup> sitting in the trash can in one of the treatment rooms.
9. On or about December 2, 2022, the Respondent was interviewed by the Board's Investigator. During the interview, the Board's Investigator asked the Respondent, "And so, it's not unusual in your practice to needle through a pair of pants, let's say?" The Respondent answered, "Correct, and not in any practice. I have a physical therapist friend who dry needles through my pants. So, that's very common."
10. The Board's Investigator asked the Respondent about the used cupping tools. He asked, "Can those cups be reused?" The Respondent stated, "Yeah, I mean, they're reused, but

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<sup>4</sup>Cupping is a commonly used therapeutic procedure used in acupuncture and oriental medicine and other healthcare practitioners - CCAOM Clean Needle Technique Manual, 7th edition 2017. Also known as pulling jars or cupping tools.

- you can - - you clean them between usage.” The Board’s Investigator asked, “How do you clean them?” The Respondent stated, “Lysol wipes.”<sup>5</sup>
11. The Board Investigator asked, “Okay. And then in a corner you had a shelf - - a stainless steel shelf and you had two Lysol - - looked like Lysol containers, - - and there were I assume these are needles sticking out of these containers?” The Respondent replied, “Mm-hmm.” The Board Investigator asked, “Yeah, are these - -” The Respondent stated, “Because I hadn’t shaken down the needles to kind of settle it to make room for more yet.” The Board Investigator asked, “Okay. And are - - these are used needles?” The Respondent stated, “Those are used needles. Those are my sharps containers.”
12. The Board Investigator asked, “So, if you have open needle containers that are spread around the room between patients, you’re saying that - - or these moxa sticks that are in the room on the floor, or on the sink, or wherever they are, you’re saying that that really doesn’t have anything to do with sanitary conditions? The Respondent answered, “That’s correct...” The Board Investigator asked, “And - -” The Respondent continued her answer stating, “Sanitation is independent of the wrappers and moxa.”
13. The Board Investigator asked, “Okay. And then there are also some - - it looks like some wrapping - - some wrap - - wrapping material. It looks like maybe the needles go in these - - looks like it’s a sealed kind of plastic.” The Respondent said, “Mm-hmm.” The Board Investigator asked, “What is that?” The Respondent continued, “Like, you mean just like the empty plastic - - that would have been lying around?” The Board Investigator asked, “Yeah. Ok. So, that’s the empty plastic. That plastic contains the needles, is that right?” The Respondent stated, “That’s correct and I use a lot of three

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<sup>5</sup> According to the Clean Needle Technique Manual, 7th Edition, published by the Counsel of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, cups are “non-critical reusable medical devices that need to be cleaned with soap and water, and then disinfected in an inappropriate intermediate-level disinfectant in an accordance with label instructions. Cups should be rinsed and dried with clean towels, and placed in a clean, closed container.”

inch needles for my sports medicine acupuncture and they are single wrapped. So, you know, I'm unwrapping one needle at a time and that's why they can kind of fly about the room or be seated there, you know."

14. The Board Investigator asked, "Okay. And then I noticed here in the window on the windowsill you had a couple of the wrappings for needles - - open wrappings on the windowsill, and then you had a pair of tweezers. What do you use those tweezers for?"

The Respondent stated, "So the tweezers I haven't actually used. I'm trying to figure out why the heck they would have been in there. I mean - - originally, the intent for them would be to take the Moxa off the skin without, you know, burning yourself."

15. The Board Investigator asked, "So, I mean, these open containers on the windowsill, I assume - they're different lengths, so, I guess, they're different needles? The Respondent replied, "Correct." The Board Investigator asked, "So, you've opened them and just kind of left them and used the needles or maybe hadn't used the needles, but just - - they're just there at this point?" The Respondent stated, "Mm-hmm." The Board Investigator asked, "Okay. And then you have like toenail clippers on a shelf, some more of the cups -- the little black shelf over the sink? The Respondent answered, "Right."

16. The Board Investigator asked, "Okay. And the other room - - the paper that I saw in the trash, you have a roll of that paper kind of laying on the ground by that blue chair?" The Respondent answered, "Mm-hmm." The Board Investigator asked "How - - what -- " The Respondent answered, "It must've fallen over."

17. The Board Investigator asked, "Okay. And so, talk to me a little bit about your sanitary practices? I mean - are you - - I don't - - are you ok with the way these rooms look - - at least how they looked when I came in to inspect the offices or the - -" The Respondent answered, "No."

## CONCLUSION OF LAW

Based on the foregoing investigative findings and reasons, the Board finds that the public health, safety, or welfare imperatively requires emergency action in this case pursuant to Md. Code Ann., State Govt. § 10-226 (c)(2) (2021 Repl. Vol.).

In addition, the Board concludes as a matter of law that there is a substantial likelihood that the Respondent poses a risk of harm to the public health, safety, or welfare, pursuant to COMAR 10.26.04.07.

## ORDER

Based on the foregoing, it is by a majority of the Board considering this case:

**ORDERED** that pursuant to the authority vested by Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-226 (c)(2) (2021 Repl. Vol.), the Respondent's license to practice as a Licensed Acupuncturist in the State of Maryland License Number **U02269**, is hereby **SUMMARILY SUSPENDED**; and be it further

**ORDERED** that in accordance with Md. Code Reg. 10.26.04.07, a post-deprivation initial hearing on the summary suspension will be held on **March 14, 2023, at 2:30 PM** via Google Meet; and it is further

**ORDERED** that the Respondent may request an evidentiary hearing before the Board within ten (10) days of the date of this Order of **Summary Suspension**, and such hearing will be set within forty-five (45) days of the request, before the Board; and it is further

**ORDERED** that on presentation of this Order, the Respondent **SHALL SURRENDER** to the Board, the following items:

- (1) The Respondent's original Maryland Licensed Acupuncture License **U02269**; and
- (2) Any other proof of licensure that the Respondent possess such as a wall certificate, wallet card and/or wallet license; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this Order for Summary Suspension shall remain in effect and the

summary suspension of the Respondent's license to practice as a Licensed Acupuncturist in the State of Maryland License Number **U02269** shall continue until further Order of the Board; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this is an Order of the Board and as such is a **PUBLIC RECORD** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., General Provisions § 4-101 *et seq.* (2021 Repl. Vol.).

2/27/2023  
Date

Brandie Armijo  
Brandie Armijo, DACM, Dipl. Ac.  
(NCCAOM), L.Ac, LPN, BSN, Clinical  
Acupuncturist, Chair  
Maryland State Acupuncture Board