

<b>IN THE MATTER OF</b>	*	<b>BEFORE THE MARYLAND STATE</b>
<b>CHRISTOPHER J. METZ, LCPC</b>	*	<b>BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL</b>
<b>Respondent</b>	*	<b>COUNSELORS AND THERAPISTS</b>
<b>License Number: LC9881</b>	*	<b>Case Number: 2022-006</b>

\* \* \* \* \*

**ORDER FOR SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

The Maryland State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists (the “Board”) hereby **SUMMARILY SUSPENDS** the license of **CHRISTOPHER J. METZ, LCPC** (Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor) (the “Respondent”), License Number LC9881, to practice clinical professional counseling in the State of Maryland. The Board takes such action pursuant to its authority under Md. Code Ann., State Gov’t § 10-226(c) (2014 Repl. Vol. & 2020 Supp.), 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”) 10.58.04.10, concluding that there is a substantial likelihood that the Respondent poses a risk of harm to the public health, safety, or welfare.

**INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS<sup>1</sup>**

The Board bases its action on the following findings:

---

<sup>1</sup> The statements regarding the Board’s investigative findings are intended to provide the Respondent with reasonable notice of the basis of the Board’s action. 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 in connection with this matter.

## **Background**

1. At all times relevant, the Respondent was licensed to practice clinical professional counseling in the State of Maryland. The Respondent originally was licensed by the Board to practice as a LCPC in the State of Maryland on September 12, 2019 under License Number LC9881. The Respondent's license is current and is scheduled to expire on January 31, 2023.

## **The Complaint**

2. On or about July 20, 2021, the Board received a complaint from a woman (the "Complainant") alleging that while she was a client at a counseling facility (the "Facility") in Baltimore County, Maryland where the Respondent worked as a therapist, she and the Respondent engaged in a romantic relationship. Based on the Complaint, the Board opened an investigation of the Respondent.

## **The Board Investigation**

3. In furtherance of its investigation, Board staff interviewed the Respondent and the Complainant. Board staff also subpoenaed and reviewed numerous documents including text messages and photographs, text and telephone logs, video files, personnel records of the Respondent, and treatment records of the Complainant.

4. The Board's investigation revealed that in January, 2020, the Complainant began receiving treatment for an eating disorder at the Facility where the Respondent led counseling groups she attended. The Complainant was enrolled in a partial hospital program and attended treatment programs in-person during the day.

5. Personnel files reveal that the Respondent was employed as a Primary Therapist at the Facility from January, 2020 until July, 2020.

6. Records from the Facility reflect that the Respondent had at least 17 documented treatment encounters with the Complainant from January, 2020 through June, 2020, when the Complainant ended her treatment at the Facility. From January, 2020 to March, 2020, these treatment encounters with the Respondent included in-person group counseling sessions and individual meal support. Often, the Complainant was the only person attending a group counseling session led by the Respondent. Beginning in April, 2020, these documented encounters included one-on-one virtual treatment sessions when the Respondent was assigned as her therapist. These virtual counseling sessions occurred two-to-three times per week.

7. The Complainant reported in March, 2020, that she and the Respondent began a romantic relationship. The Respondent admits he had a romantic and sexual relationship with the Complainant beginning in April, 2020. This included sexual touching, oral sex and intercourse on multiple occasions while the Complainant was a patient at the Facility. The Respondent admitted in his interview that he “early on” recognized he “was not practicing adequate and really ethical counseling....”

8. The Respondent admits that starting April 1, 2020, he and the Complainant communicated almost daily by cell phone outside of therapy sessions. Text message logs between March 21, 2020 and November 20, 2020, showed over 75,000 text messages were exchanged between the Respondent and Complainant.

9. The Respondent and Complainant also exchanged nude photographs and graphic text messages. The Respondent admits to requesting the Complainant to send him nude photographs.

10. Video files show the Respondent and Complainant kissing. The Board investigation also revealed the Respondent recorded and shared a romantic song via Google Drive with the Complainant.

11. The Complainant reported that the Respondent stressed to her that their relationship needed to remain a secret.

12. The Respondent and Complainant met multiple times outside of the Facility, including at a park, a beach, a restaurant, and a gym. The Respondent claims the relationship lasted until August, 2020.

13. In his Board interview, the Respondent admitted “there’s no justifiable explanation for any of this,...I am aware that it was not appropriate and I feel comfortable saying it...” The Respondent further admitted that he knew “that this is something that...should not have and cannot happen in the future....[and] I don’t know how I can, how I can even excuse myself given the circumstances.” The Respondent also stated, “I know that what I did was wrong...” The Respondent described his actions as “super unethical and inexcusable.”

14. Since August, 2020, the Respondent stated he works as a Clinical Director and therapist at a counseling facility located in Frederick County, Maryland. Despite not being a Board-approved supervisor by the State of Maryland, the Respondent

acknowledged he supervises a Licensed Graduate Professional Counselor. This accounts for twenty-five (25%) of his professional time.

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing investigative facts, the Board concludes as a matter of law that the public health, safety, or welfare imperatively require emergency action in this case, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-226 (c)(2) (2014 Repl. Vol. & 2020 Supp.).

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 10.58.04.10.

### 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), the Respondent's license to practice clinical professional counseling in the State of Maryland, License Number LC9881, is hereby **SUMMARILY SUSPENDED**;

**AND IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the Respondent has the opportunity to appear before the Board for a post-deprivation show cause hearing. A request for a post-deprivation show cause hearing must be in writing and be made **WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS** of service of this Order. The written request should be made to:

Tony W. Torain, J.D., D.Min, Executive Director  
Maryland State Board of Professional Counselors & Therapists  
4201 Patterson Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

With copies to:

Gregory L. Lockwood, Assistant Attorney General  
Maryland Office of the Attorney General  
Health Occupations Prosecution & Litigation Division  
300 West Preston Street, Suite 201  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

and

Rhonda Edwards, Assistant Attorney General  
Maryland Office of the Attorney General  
300 West Preston Street, Suite 302  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that if the Respondent fails to request a post-deprivation show cause hearing in writing in a timely manner, or if the Respondent requests a post-deprivation show cause hearing but fails to appear when scheduled, the Respondent's certificate will remain **SUSPENDED**; 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 Clinical Professional Counselor LC9881 license; and
- (2) the Respondent's wallet card and wall certificate; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this is an Order of the Board and, as such, is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Provisions §§ 4-101 *et seq.* (2014).

October 15, 2021

Date

*Jeffrey M. Galecki*

Jeffrey M. Galecki, MS, LCADC, LCPC, Chair  
Maryland State Board of Professional  
Counselors and Therapists

