

IN THE MATTER OF * **BEFORE THE MARYLAND**
CORTNEY GOLDEN, P.T.A. * **BOARD OF PHYSICAL**
RESPONDENT * **THERAPY EXAMINERS**
LICENSE NO.: A-4365 * **Case No.: PT 19-22**

* * * * *
ORDER FOR SUMMARY SUSPENSION

The Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (the “Board”) hereby **SUMMARILY SUSPENDS** the license of **CORTNEY GOLDEN, P.T.A. (the “Respondent”)**, license number **A-4365**, to practice as a physical therapy assistant (“P.T.A.”) 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. and 2018 Supp.) concluding that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action.

INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS¹

Based on information received by, and made known to the Board, and the investigatory information obtained by, received by and made known to and available to the Board, including the instances described below, the Board has reason to believe the following facts are true:

¹ The statements regarding the Respondent’s conduct are only intended to provide the Respondent with notice of the basis for 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 this matter.

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent was licensed to practice as a physical therapy assistant in the State of Maryland under License Number A-4365. The Respondent's license is currently active and scheduled to expire on May 31, 2019.

2. On or about January 16, 2019, the Respondent self-reported to the Board that on December 27, 2018, she went to "work impaired after a night of ingesting drugs." The Respondent further reported that she voluntarily submitted to a drug and alcohol screen, which tested positive resulting in her termination on January 7, 2019, from the hospital (the "Hospital")² where she was employed.

3. Thereafter, the Board initiated an investigation.

4. As part of the Board's investigation, the Board's investigator conducted an interview of the Respondent under oath on January 22, 2019. During her interview, the Respondent stated the following:

- a. On the evening of December 26, 2018, she attended a family Christmas party where she ate several brownies. When she left the party she also took several bags of cookies and brownies home with her.
- b. When she got home she took half of a Percocet³ around 7:30 p.m. for back pain. She obtained the Percocet from her grandmother approximately a year prior to the incident.
- c. At around 8:00 p.m. she developed a migraine and took an unknown medication, which she had previously received from her mother.
- d. Around midnight she took another half of a Percocet pill.
- e. At approximately 3:00 a.m. or 4:00 a.m., she took another half of a Percocet pill and ate several more brownies with it.

² For confidentiality and privacy purposes, the names of individuals and facilities involved in this case are not disclosed in this document. Upon written request, the Administrative Prosecutor will provide the information to the Respondent.

³ Percocet is a combination of a narcotic (oxycodone) and acetaminophen used to relieve moderate to severe pain. It is a Schedule II Controlled Dangerous Substance ("CDS") and requires a prescription.

- f. When she arrived at work the following morning at approximately 8:20 a.m., she started working with her first patient in the gym prior to going to see her supervisor to apologize for missing a meeting.
- g. Her supervisor noticed that her eyes appeared different from how they normally appeared, and her speech was slurred.
- h. She submitted to a drug test which came back positive for marijuana⁴ and fentanyl.⁵ She stated this was a surprise to her, and that she later discovered that a cousin had laced the brownies from the family Christmas party with marijuana. Her cousin, however, denied putting fentanyl in the brownies.
- i. She also admitted that she used marijuana in high school and college and began drinking alcohol at 18-years-old. In April 2018 she was convicted of driving while under the influence of alcohol. As a result, she was sentenced to a year of probation, a fine, alcohol classes, and an ignition interlock was ordered for her vehicle.
- j. She disclosed that prior to her arrest she would drink a significant amount of alcohol several nights a week.
- k. She admitted that she thought she had an issue with alcohol prior to her arrest, however, she stated that since her arrest she no longer believed she had an issue with alcohol.
- l. She further admitted she went to work hungover on at least four or five occasions.
- m. When the Board's investigator asked if she thought she had an issue with prescription drug use she stated, "Yea, I take them without prescriptions."
- n. She advised that aside from the medications she obtained from her mother and her grandmother, she also obtained pain pills from a friend. The last time she received pain pills from the friend was in April 2018.
- o. She stated that in 2010 or 2011 she received a prescription for a painkiller for an injury. But since 2011 or 2012, she has been self-medicating.

⁴ Marijuana is a psychoactive substance and is a Schedule I CDS. Despite some state marijuana laws permitting the use and sale of marijuana, federal law still criminalizes the possession and sale of marijuana by way of the Controlled Substances Act. Maryland law also criminalizes the possession and sale of marijuana. A Maryland patient can *only* obtain legal medical cannabis with a valid prescription and purchase from a Maryland-licensed dispensary.

⁵ Fentanyl is a narcotic analgesic opioid with an analgesic potency of about eighty times that of morphine. It is a Schedule II CDS.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing investigative findings, the Board concludes 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).

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Investigative Findings and Conclusions of Law, it is this 13TH day of FEBRUARY 2019, by a majority of the Board, hereby

ORDERED that pursuant to the authority vested in the Board by Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-226(c)(2), the Respondent's license to practice as a physical therapy assistant is **SUMMARILY SUSPENDED**; and it is further

ORDERED that on presentation of this Order, the Respondent **SHALL SURRENDER** to the Board's investigator her original Maryland license number **A-4365**; and it is further

ORDERED that this **ORDER FOR SUMMARY SUSPENSION** is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. §§ 4-101 *et seq.* (2014).

2/13/19
Date

Kimberly Rotondo PTA
Kimberly Rotondo, PTA
Chair
Maryland Board of Physical Therapy
Examiners