

IN THE MATTER OF

MONICA L. BACHABI NUNEZ, LMSW

RESPONDENT

License Number: 24650

\* BEFORE THE MARYLAND

\* STATE BOARD OF

\* SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

\* Case Number: 2021-2934

\* \* \* \* \*

**CONSENT ORDER**

In January, 2021, the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners (the “Board”) initiated an investigation of Monica L. Bachabi Nunez, LMSW (“Respondent”), License Number 24650. Based on its investigation, the Board believes it has grounds to issue disciplinary charges against the Respondent for violating the Maryland Social Workers Act (the “Act”) codified at Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. (“Health Occ.”) §§ 19-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. and 2020 Supp.).

The pertinent provisions of the Act provide the following:

**§19-311. – Denials, reprimands, suspensions, and revocations – Grounds**

Subject to the hearing provisions of § 19-312 of this subtitle, the Board may deny a license to any applicant, fine a licensee, reprimand any licensee, place any licensee on probation, or suspend or revoke a license if the applicant or licensee:

- (6) Violates any provision of this title or regulations governing the practice of social work adopted and published by the Board[.]

**§19-302. – Qualifications of applicants**

(a) To obtain a license, an applicant shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board that the applicant:...

- (5) Has paid all applicable fees specified by the Board.

**§19-401. – Practicing without license**

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this title, a person may not practice, attempt to practice, or offer to practice social work in this State while representing oneself to be a social worker unless licensed by the Board.

Prior to the issuance of disciplinary charges, the Respondent and the Board agreed to resolve this matter consisting of Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. The Respondent was issued a license to practice as a licensed masters social worker (“LMSW”) in Maryland on February 13, 2019, under license number 24650. The Respondent’s license is currently active and is scheduled to expire on October 31, 2021.
2. On or about January 26, 2021, the Board received a self-report from the Respondent. The Respondent reported she has been working as a social worker at a Child Protective Services Agency from August 6, 2018 to the present. In the self-report, the Respondent disclosed she recently learned her license to practice social work was issued on February 13, 2019 when she paid the required \$75.00 initial licensing fee, and not on July 24, 2018 when she passed the Association of Social Work Masters Examination.
3. Based on this self-report, the Board initiated an investigation. In furtherance of the investigation, the Board’s investigator subpoenaed documents and conducted interviews with the Respondent, the Director of the Board’s Licensing and

Certification Unit (the “Director”), and the Respondent’s former supervisor at the Child Protective Services Agency (the “Supervisor”).

4. In July, 2018, the Respondent obtained a master’s degree in Social Work, after which the Respondent submitted an Application for Licensure to the Board.
5. On July 24, 2018, the Respondent received email notification she passed her Association of Social Work Masters Examination.
6. On August 3, 2018, the Board sent an email reminder to the Respondent that the initial licensing fee still needed to be submitted. It is the routine process of the Board to send this reminder notice to all applicants who pass the Masters Examination. The Board will not issue a license to practice social work if the initial licensing fee is not paid.
7. On August 6, 2018, the Respondent began full-time employment as a social worker with the Child Protective Services Agency. In August, 2018, the Respondent signed a Supervision Contract with the Supervisor.
8. The Respondent was under the misimpression her social work license was issued upon notification she passed the Association of Social Work Masters Examination. While she was preparing an application to obtain her clinical license, the Respondent discovered her social work license in fact was not issued until February 13, 2019.
9. On October 23, 2020, the Respondent first contacted the Board by email inquiring why her social work license was not issued until February 13, 2019. In the email, the Respondent wrote: “I was getting ready to apply for my clinical license and

when I looked up my name it said that I obtained my license in 2/2019. This is not true I have proof that I obtained my license 7/2018. This is the month I passed my LMSW and I also have supervision paperwork from 8/2018. I am unsure what happened with my paperwork and where the mix up occurred.”

10. The Respondent was informed by the Director via email the required \$75.00 initial licensing fee was paid by check dated January 28, 2019 that posted February 11, 2019. The Board thereafter issued the Respondent a license on February 13, 2019.
11. Additionally, the Director recommended that because the Respondent practiced social work without a license, she should self-report this fact to the Board's compliance and investigations unit, which the Respondent did.
12. The Respondent admitted from August 6, 2018 to February 13, 2019, she practiced social work without a license.

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board concludes as a matter of law that the Respondent violated Health Occ. § 19-302(a)(5), § 19-311(6) and § 19-401(a).

### ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is this 16<sup>th</sup> day of August, <sup>2022</sup>2021, by a majority of the Board considering this case hereby:

**ORDERED** that the Respondent is **REPRIMANDED**; and it is further

**ORDERED** that the Respondent shall not serve or continue to serve as: a Board Authorized Sponsor, presenter and/or trainer of social work continuing education learning

activities, an Ethics tutor, an evaluator for the Board, or a Board Approved Supervisor for a period of 5 years from the effective date of this Consent Order; and it is further

**ORDERED** that the Consent Order is Final Order of the Board and as such is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. §§ 4-101 et seq. (2014) and Health Occ. § 1-607.



08/16/2022

Date

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Sondra Petty, LCSW-C  
Vice Chair  
Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners

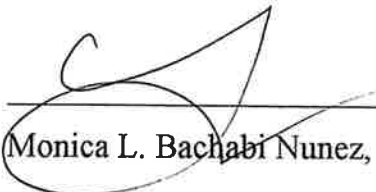
CONSENT

I, Monica L. Bachabi Nunez, LMSW, acknowledge that I have been made aware of my right to consult with counsel before signing this document. By this Consent, I accept a *Reprimand in lieu of a formal evidentiary hearing on violations of the Act contained in this Consent Order.*

I acknowledge the validity of this Consent Order as if entered into after the conclusion of a formal evidentiary hearing in which I would have had the right to counsel, to confront witnesses, to give testimony, to call witnesses on my own behalf, and to all other substantive and procedural protections provided by law. I waive any rights I may have had to consent the Findings of Facts and Conclusion of Law. I acknowledge the legal authority and the jurisdiction of the Board to initiate these proceedings and to issue and enforce this Consent Order. I also affirm that I waive my right to appeal any adverse ruling of the Board that might have followed any such hearing.

I sign this Consent Order after having had the opportunity to consult with counsel, without reservation, and I fully understand and comprehend the language, meaning and terms of this Consent Order. I voluntarily sign this Consent Order and I understand its meaning and effect.

8/12/2022  
Date

  
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Monica L. Bachabi Nunez, LMSW