

IN THE MATTER OF

MICHELLE ANGELA BENFIELD,

APPLICANT

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BEFORE THE

MARYLAND STATE BOARD

OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

CASE NUMBER: 2016-2211

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ORDER

The Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners (the "Board") notified **Michelle Angela Benfield (the "Applicant")**, on October 13, 2017, of its intent to **DENY** her application for licensure under the Maryland Social Workers Act (the "Act"), codified at Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. II ("Health Occ. II") §§ 19-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. & 2016 Supp.).

The Board bases its action on the following provisions of the Act under § 19-311:

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;

- (3) Is mentally or physically incompetent to practice social work;

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board makes the following Findings of Fact:

1. On or about February 16, 2016, the Applicant filed an Application with the Board to become a Licensed Certified Social Worker ("LCSW") by examination.
2. The Applicant reported on her Application that she was licensed in the State of New York as a social worker in 2006. It was, however, unclear from the application whether the Applicant's New York license was current.

3. In Response to Question 2 on the Application, which asked “has any State Licensing or Disciplinary Board.... denied your application for licensure, reinstatement, renewal, or taken any action against your license, included but not limited to reprimand, suspension or revocation,” the Applicant answered “Yes.”

4. The Applicant reported that she was the subject of a disciplinary proceeding in New York, because she failed to update her address with the New York licensing board. The Applicant stated: “The only reprimand listed with the Department of Education Office of Professions is a failure to report movement in 2012,

5. The Applicant did not provide any documentation or further details regarding the New York disciplinary action and did not state whether that license is still active.

6. The Applicant also reported on her Application two misdemeanor arrests, which occurred in 2011 and 2012.

7. After reviewing the Applicant’s documentation, the Board requested that the Applicant submit to a mental fitness health evaluation.

8. On or about November 7, 2016, the evaluation was conducted by a Licensed Certified Clinical Social Worker (“LCSW-C”).

9. The Board received a report from the evaluator dated December 14, 2016, which indicated that the Applicant had certain medical conditions that would prevent her from being able to fully perform the duties of a licensed social worker.¹

¹ To maintain confidentiality, the specific findings of the evaluation will not be referenced in this Order. The Applicant may obtain this information and any substantiating documents from the assigned administrative prosecutor.

10. Based on the above facts, the Board issued Notice of Intent Deny the Applicant's Application for social work licensure. Specifically, the intent to deny is based on Health Occ. II § 19-311 (3), [the Applicant] is mentally or physically incompetent to practice social work.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing Finding of Fact, the Board concludes as a matter of law that the Applicant does not meet the requirements of Health Occ. II § 19-311 (3), and denies the Applicant's Application for licensure as a social worker.

ORDER

Based upon the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is by a majority of the Board's members then serving:

ORDERED that the Application of Michelle Angela Benfield for licensure as a Social Worker in the State of Maryland be and is hereby **DENIED**; and it is further;

ORDERED that this Final Order is a public document pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. §§ 4-101 et seq. (2014).

Date

6/8/18


Denise Capaci, LCSW-C, Board Chair
State Board of Social Work Examiners