

IN THE MATTER OF

REBECCA J. BURRETT, LCSW-C

RESPONDENT

LICENSE NUMBER: 16244

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BEFORE THE MARYLAND

BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK

EXAMINERS

CASE NUMBER: 19-2646

\* \* \* \* \*

FINAL CONSENT ORDER

The Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners (the "Board") charged **Rebecca J. Burrett, LCSW-C**, License Number: **16244** (the "Respondent"), under the Maryland Social Workers Act (the "Act"), Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. ("Heath. Occ.") §§ 19-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. & 2020 Supp.). Specifically, the Board charged the Respondent with violating the following:

**Health Occ. § 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:

- (4) Commits any act of gross negligence, incompetence, or misconduct in the practice of social work;
- (5) Engages in a course of conduct that is inconsistent with generally accepted professional standards in the practice of social work;
- (6) Violates any provision of this title or regulations governing the practice of social work adopted and published by the Board;

.....

(20) Fails to maintain adequate patient records[.]

Pursuant to Health Occ. § 19-311(6), the pertinent provisions of Md. Code Regs.

(“COMAR”), provide the following:

**COMAR 10.42.03.03 Responsibilities to Clients.**

B. The licensee may not:

.....

(7) Share with another individual a confidence revealed by a client without a client's consent, except if there is danger to self or to another individual, or for a compelling professional reason[.]

**COMAR 10.42.03.06 Standards of Practice.**

A. Professional Competence. The licensee shall:

.....

(7) Document and maintain appropriate and accurate records of professional service, supervision, and research work[.]

B. A licensee may not:

.....

(2) Engage in other relationships that could limit the licensee’s objectivity or create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. The Respondent was licensed to practice as a licensed clinical social worker (“LCSW-C”) in Maryland on or about October 29, 2014. The Respondent’s license expires on October 31, 2022.

2. On or about May 10, 2019, the Board received a complaint from a former client (“Client A”) regarding the Respondent’s conduct.

3. The complaint alleged that the Respondent inappropriately disclosed Client A’s mental health information to Client A’s spouse.

4. An investigation by Board staff revealed the following:

- a. In or around August 2017 Client A and her spouse (“Client B”) entered into couples therapy with the Respondent.<sup>1</sup>
- b. The Respondent performed an initial intake assessment during the couple’s initial meeting.
- c. In February 2018, Client A learned after viewing Client B’s emails, that the Respondent and Client B were having telephone and e-mail conversations outside of the couple’s scheduled therapy sessions. Client A also learned that the Respondent had separate in-person therapy sessions with Client B without informing Client A.
- d. During these telephone conversations, email correspondence, and in-person therapy sessions, the Respondent discussed with Client B information regarding Client A’s behavior at home; provided recommendations on how Client B should interact with Client A; and disclosed that Client A was suffering from a mental health condition.
- e. During one e-mail conversation, the Respondent told Client B that Client A was struggling with “BPD or TMI”. The Respondent further stated, “The most dominant marker for [Client A’s] condition is called ‘emotional dysregulation,’ or an inability to grasp/respond to emotional states (and/or respond to those states in others) in a manner that falls within the bounds of conventional social behavior. In other words, it is an inability to recognize normative boundaries in what might be conventionally considered even a mild or moderately emotionally charged interaction. The only way [Client A] can

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<sup>1</sup> The names of Client A and Client B have been omitted to protect privacy.

identify a feeling of yours is if it mirrors a feeling she would have... all other feelings are illogical and therefore invalid..."

- f. The Respondent never rendered a mental health diagnosis to Client B.
  - g. Client B admitted to Client A that he was in frequent contact with the Respondent outside of couple's therapy.
  - h. On or about March 2, 2018, Client A emailed the Respondent. Client A asked the Respondent if she would move up the couples therapy session that was scheduled for March 7, 2019. Client A also expressed in the email her concerns about the Respondent's relationship with Client B.
  - i. In response to Client A's March 2, 2018 e-mail, the Respondent suggested that Client A meet with the Respondent for a one-on-one therapy session, before any group conversation took place. Client A told the Respondent that she would not visit the Respondent without Client B.
  - j. Client A did not return to couples therapy after her March 2, 2018 email conversations with the Respondent. However, the Respondent continued to see Client B for therapy after the March 2, 2018 email conversation with Client A.
  - k. In May 2018, Client A requested her client records from the Respondent. After receiving and reviewing her client records, Client A discovered that the Respondent had diagnosed her with a mental health disorder after the couple's first therapy session.
  - l. The Respondent never discussed her diagnosis with Client A.
5. During a November 20, 2019, interview conducted by Board staff, the

Respondent admitted under oath that she:

- a. Communicated with Client B outside of the couple's scheduled therapy sessions.
- b. Diagnosed Client A with a mental illness after their first couple's therapy session.
- c. Did not assign a diagnosis to Client B.

d. Did not have written documentation in either clients' record that authorized the Respondent to disclose one client's mental health information to the other.

6. The Respondent's conduct as set forth above is a violation of Health. Occ. § 19-311(4), (5), (6), and (20); and COMAR 10.42.03.03B (7); COMAR 10.42.03.06A (7) and B (2).

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board concludes that the Respondent violated Health Occ. §19-311 (4), (5), (6), (20); COMAR10.42.03.03B (7); COMAR 10.42.03.06 A(7) and B(2).

### ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is, by a majority of the Board considering this case:

**ORDERED** that the Respondent's license shall be placed **PROBATION** for a period of **TWO (2) YEARS** and until the following terms and conditions are fully and satisfactorily complied with:

- (1) The Respondent shall meet with a Board Approved Supervisor once a month and the Respondent shall provide the Board approved Supervisor with a signed copy of the Final Consent Order.
- (2) The Respondent shall ensure that the Board Approved Supervisor submits quarterly to the Board during the first year of her probationary period and biannually during the second year of her probationary period.
- (3) Within **(1) YEAR** of the execution of the Consent Order, the Respondent shall pay a fine in the amount of **ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1000)**

by certified check or money order to the Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners.

- (4) The Respondent shall comply with the Maryland Social Workers Act and all laws, statutes and regulations pertaining thereto; 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 five (5) years from the effective date of this Consent Order; and it is further;

**ORDERED** that after the conclusion of the probationary period, the Respondent may submit a written petition to the Board requesting termination of probation. The Respondent must also submit proof that she has completed her continuing education requirements. After consideration of the petition, the probation may be terminated, through an order of the Board, or a designated Board committee. The Board, or designated Board committee, may grant the termination if the Respondent has fully and satisfactorily complied with all of the probationary terms and conditions and there are no pending complaints; and it is further

**ORDERED** that if the Respondent violates any of the terms and conditions of this Consent Order, the Board, in its discretion, after notice and an opportunity for an evidentiary hearing if there is a genuine dispute as to the underlying facts, or an opportunity for a show cause hearing, may impose any sanction which the Board may have imposed in

have imposed in this case, including probationary terms and conditions, a reprimand, suspension, revocation and/or a monetary penalty; and it is further

**ORDERED** that the Respondent shall be responsible for all costs incurred in fulfilling the terms and conditions of her probation and this Consent Order; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this Consent Order is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. §§ 4-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. & 2020 Supp.).



7/9/2021

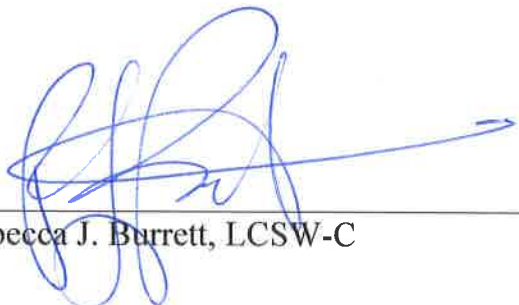
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Karen Richards, MSW, LCSW-C  
Board Chair  
Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners

**CONSENT OF REBECCA J. BURRETT, LCSW-C**

I, **REBECCA J. BURRETT** acknowledge that I have been represented by an attorney before entering into this Consent Order. By this Consent Order and for the purpose of resolving the issues raised by the Board, I agree and accept to be bound by the foregoing Consent Order and its conditions. I waive any rights I may have to contest the Findings of Fact and the Conclusions of Law. 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 the law. I acknowledge the legal authority and jurisdiction of the Board to initiate these proceedings and to issue and enforce this Consent Order. I affirm that I am waiving my right to appeal any adverse ruling of the Board that might have followed any such hearing. I sign this Consent Order, voluntarily and without reservation, after having an opportunity to consult with counsel, and I fully understand and comprehend the language, meaning and terms of this Consent Order.

6/25/21  
Date

  
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Rebecca J. Burrett, LCSW-C

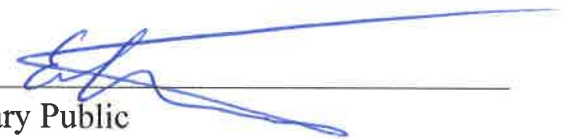


**NOTARY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 25 day of June, 2021 before me, a Notary Public of the State and City/County aforesaid, personally appeared, **REBECCA J. BURRETT, LCSW-C** and declared and affirmed under the penalties of perjury that signing the foregoing Letter of Surrender was her voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESS my hand and Notarial seal.



  
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Notary Public

My Commission expires: 10/12/22