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Maryland Board of
Social Work Examiners

MELANIE R. DIDOMIZIO, LMSW
License Number: 28429

Date: 05/19/2025

Susan Coppage, LCSW-C
MD State Board of Social Work Examiners
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

RE: Surrender of License to Practice as a Licensed Master Social Worker
License Number: 28429
Case Number: 2022-3209

Dear Ms. Coppage and Members of the Board:

Please be advised that pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 19-310 (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2024 Supp.) I have decided to **PERMANENTLY SURRENDER** my license to practice social work in the State of Maryland, License Number 28429, effective immediately. I understand that upon the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiner's (the "Board's") acceptance of this letter of surrender, I may not represent to the public by title, description of services, methods, procedures, or otherwise that I am a licensed master social worker. Moreover, I understand that I may not practice social work, engage in the practice of social work, clinical or otherwise, with or without compensation, in the State of Maryland as it is defined in the Maryland Social Workers Act (the "Act"), Md. Code Ann., Health Occupations ("Health Occ.") §§ 19-101 et. seq., (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2024 Supp.) and other applicable laws. In other words, as of the effective date of this Letter of Surrender, I understand that I am in the same position as an unlicensed individual in the State of Maryland.

I understand that upon the Board's acceptance, this Permanent Letter of Surrender becomes a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** and a **FINAL ORDER** of the Board. I understand that the permanent surrender of my license means that I am in the same position as an unlicensed individual.

My decision to surrender my license to practice social work in the State of Maryland was prompted by the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners (the

“Board”) and its subsequent issuance of Charges Under the Maryland Social Workers Act (“Charges”) under the following provisions of the Act, 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:

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- (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; [and/or]
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- (20) Fails to maintain adequate patient records[.]

The pertinent provisions of Md. Code Regs. (“COMAR”), the Code of Ethics, provide the following:

COMAR 10.42.03.02 Definitions.

....
B. Terms Defined.
....

- (2) "Client" means the individual, couple, family, group, or organization to whom the licensee is rendering professional service.
- (3) "Dual relationship" means a relationship in which a licensee is involved with a client professionally and in any other capacity.
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- (5) "Inappropriate sexual language" means:
 - (a) An eroticized or sexually provocative comment; or
 - (b) An inappropriate discussion of a sexual matter unrelated to client treatment.
- (6) "Sexual behavior" means:
 - (a) A sexual act as specified in Criminal Law Article, §3-301(e) and (g), Annotated Code of Maryland; and
 - (b) Sexual contact as specified in Criminal Law Article, §3-301(f), Annotated Code of Maryland.
-
- (9) "Sexual misconduct" means:
 - (a) Inappropriate sexual language; [or
 -
 - (d) Sexual behavior[.]

10.42.03.03. Code of Maryland Regulations - Responsibilities to Clients.

A. The licensee shall:

....

- (5) Maintain documentation in the client's record which:

....

- (b) Accurately reflects the services provided, including treatment plans, treatment goals, and contact notes;
- (c) Indicates the time and date the services were provided;

....

- (e) Is sufficient and timely to facilitate the delivery and continuity of future services; [and]
- (f) Is reasonably accessible for the period required in Health General Article, §4-403, Annotated Code of Maryland, after termination of services[.]

B. The licensee may not:

....

- (3) Exploit a relationship with a client for personal advantage or satisfaction[.]

10.42.03.05. Code of Maryland Regulations - Relationships.

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- C. The licensee may enter into a nonsexual relationship with an individual with whom the licensee's prior professional contact:
 - (1) Was of a brief, peripheral, or indirect nature; and
 - (2) Did not constitute a therapeutic relationship.
 - D. The licensee may not engage in sexual misconduct with either current or former clients.
 - E. The licensee may not engage in sexual misconduct with a client, supervisee, student, trainee, or colleague over whom the licensee exercises professional authority[.]

I acknowledge that the Board's investigation was based on a written Complaint Form (the "Complaint") received by the Board on August 1, 2022. The Complaint alleged that I was having a sexual relationship with a former client¹ (the "Client") who was a resident at the Facility where I was employed.

The Board's investigation revealed that on May 10, 2022, the Facility initiated an internal investigation based on "concern in the community from several staff members and clients" that the Client and I were "emotionally close," "frequently talking," and that the Client was "frequently in [my] office for extended periods of time for trauma sessions [when the Client] was not on [my] caseload." As a result of the internal investigation I acknowledge that I was "informed to practice appropriate boundaries in alignment with [the Facility's] expectations, as well as Code of Ethics for Substance Abuse Counselors as well as Social Work standards." Furthermore, a review of the treatment records provided indicate no record of the trauma sessions I provided to the Client.

¹ For confidentiality purposes, the patient's name has not been identified in this Letter of Surrender. The identity of the patient is known to me and the Board.

Board staff conducted an interview with the Clinical Supervisor who stated that "the only sessions that [I] had with [the Client] that [I] discussed in [her] supervision was the trauma sessions based on [the Client's] upbringing and [the Client's] background." The Clinical Supervisor stated that these trauma sessions between the Client and I would occur once or twice a week. When asked about the lack of treatment records, the Clinical Supervisor stated that there were no records or documentation and admitted that it "did get missed in reviewing our charts...."

A review of the Client's treatment records revealed that on June 1, 2022, I provided a sentence modification request with an update regarding the Client's participation in the residential treatment program at the Facility. I had sent the letter via email and requested that the Client be released from the detainer and that the Client's sentence be modified in order for the Client to proceed to the next facility.

On June 10, 2022 a hearing on the sentence modification/reconsideration was held in the District Court for Wicomico County before the Honorable David Martz. At the hearing the Client's attorney presented the letter I had signed and advised the Judge that it was signed by the "service provider therapist." On June 14, 2022, pursuant to the Judge's order to allow the sentence modification/reconsideration, the Client was discharged from the Facility and admitted to another facility.

A review of the electronic messages exchanged between the Client and I revealed that the Client began communicating with me via Facebook messenger on June 14, 2022 upon the Client's discharge from the Facility. The communications between the Client and I continued for several months and outlined a significant sexual relationship between the Client and I.

On June 20, 2022, the Client requested my telephone number via Facebook messenger and I replied, "I'm not supposed to speak to you at all." On or about June 21, 2022, I began engaging in video calls with the Client. On June 24, 2022, I sent Facebook messages to the Client asking "can I see you," "I miss you so much," "I love you," and asking the Client, "how do we meet up?"

On August 11, 2022, I submitted a letter of resignation to the Facility; however, it was not accepted until September 19, 2022. My last day with the Facility was October 19, 2022.

During the initial Board investigation I denied a patient client relationship, however I later admitted that such a relationship did exist and that I did provide

Permanent Letter of Surrender
Melanie R. DiDomizio, LMSW
License Number: 28429
Case Number: 2022-3209
Page 7 of 9

professional services to the Client even though he was not on my caseload. I also admitted to engaging in a sexual relationship with the Client and confirmed that the Client and I were still involved in a sexual relationship.

As a result of the investigation, the Board issued disciplinary charges against me on or about December 20, 2024, in Board Case Number 2022-3209. The charges were related to my committing an act of gross negligence, incompetence, or misconduct in the practice of social work; engages in a course of conduct that is inconsistent with generally accepted professional standards in the practice of social work; violating any provision of this title or regulations governing the practice of social work adopted and published by the Board; and my failure to maintain adequate patient records.

I have decided to surrender my license to practice social work in the State of Maryland to resolve this matter and avoid further prosecution of the disciplinary charges.

I have voluntarily, knowingly, and freely chosen to submit this Letter of Surrender to avoid prosecution of the aforementioned charges under the Act. I acknowledge that if the case were to proceed to an evidentiary hearing, the State would be able to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that I violated the Act as charged. I understand that by executing this Letter of Surrender I am waiving any right to contest the charges in a formal evidentiary hearing at which I would have had the right to counsel, to confront the witnesses, to give testimony, to call witnesses on my own behalf, and all other substantive and procedural protections provided by law, including the right to appeal.

I acknowledge that for all purposes relevant to my licensure, the Board's investigative findings and the allegations of fact set forth in the charging document will be treated as if proven.

I understand that the Board will advise the Association of State Boards of Social Work, the National Practitioners' Data Bank, and any other required entities of this Letter of Surrender, and in any response inquiry, that I have surrendered my license in lieu of further disciplinary action under the Act as resolution of the matters pending against me. I also understand that in the event I would apply for license in any form in any other state or jurisdiction, that this Letter of Surrender and the underlying investigative documents including the Charges Under the Maryland Social Workers Act may be released or published by the Board to the same extent as a final order that would result from disciplinary action, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., State Govt., § 10-611 et seq., (2021 Repl.

Permanent Letter of Surrender
Melanie R. DiDomizio, LMSW
License Number: 28429
Case Number: 2022-3209
Page 8 of 9

Vol. & 2024 Supp.). Finally, I understand that this Letter of Surrender is considered a disciplinary action by the Board.

I affirm that on or before the date of the Board's acceptance of this Letter of Surrender, I will provide to Board staff my social work licenses. I recognize and agree that by submitting this Letter of Surrender, my license will remain surrendered unless and until the Board grants reinstatement of my license. If I apply for reinstatement of my Maryland social workers license, the Board or its successor has full discretion to grant or deny my reinstatement. If the Board does grant reinstatement, it may impose any terms and conditions the Board considers appropriate for public safety and the protection of integrity and reputation of the profession. I understand that when applying for reinstatement, I will approach the Board in the same posture as one whose license has been revoked. I also understand that if I apply for reinstatement, I will bear the burden of demonstrating my professional competence and fitness to practice social work to the satisfaction of the Board. If the Board denies my application for reinstatement of my license, I do not have the right to a hearing or to appeal the Board's decision.

I understand that I may not rescind this Letter of Surrender in part or in its entirety for any reason whatsoever. Finally, I wish to make clear that I have been advised of my right to be represented by the attorney of my choice throughout the proceedings before the Board, including the right to consult with an attorney prior to signing this Letter of Surrender. I understand both the nature of the Board's actions and this Letter of Surrender fully. I acknowledge that I understand and comprehend the language, meaning and terms and effect of this Letter of Surrender. I voluntarily choose to surrender my Maryland license to practice social work pursuant to the terms and conditions set out herein. I make this decision knowingly, voluntarily, and without duress.

Sincerely,


Melanie R. DiDomizio

Permanent Letter of Surrender
Melanie R. DiDomizio, LMSW
License Number: 28429
Case Number: 2022-3209
Page 9 of 9

NOTARY

STATE OF MARYLAND

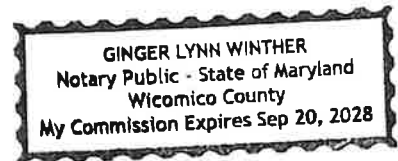
CITY/COUNTY OF Wicomico

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 19 day of May, 2025, before me, a Notary Public of the State and City/County aforesaid, personally appeared, MELANIE R. DiDOMIZIO, License Number: 28429 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.

Ginger Lynn Winther
Notary Public

My Commission Expires: Sept 20, 2028



ACCEPTANCE

On this 20th day of May, 2025, I, Susan Coppage, LCSW-C, Board Chair, on behalf of the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners, accept the **PUBLIC** and **PERMANENT SURRENDER** of the license of Melanie R. DiDomizio to practice social work in the State of Maryland pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 19-310 (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2024 Supp.).

Susan P. Coppage
Susan Coppage, LCSW-C
Board Chair
Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners