

IN THE MATTER OF \* BEFORE THE MARYLAND  
ELIZABETH A. DOONAN, LCSW-C \* STATE BOARD OF  
RESPONDENT \* SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS  
License Number: 12518 (EXPIRED) \* Case Number: 2018-2544

\* \* \* \* \*

**FINAL ORDER**

On or about August 9, 2019, the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners (the “Board”) notified **ELIZABETH A. DOONAN, LCSW-C** (the “Respondent”), License Number **12518 (EXPIRED)**, of its intent to revoke her license based on alleged violations of the Maryland Social Workers Act (the “Act”) codified at Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. (“Health Occ.”) §§ 19-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. and 2018 Supp.) and the regulations adopted by the Board.

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:

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

The pertinent provisions of COMAR, the code of ethics, provide the following:

**COMAR 10.42.06.03. Continuing Education Requirements.**

A. The Board shall renew a license for an additional 2-year period if the social worker:

- (1) Completes 40 (30 for Licensed Bachelor Social Workers) continuing education units within the renewal period, of which a minimum of:
  - (a) 20 (15 for Licensed Bachelor Social Workers) continuing education units shall be obtained from approved programs which are Category I;
  - (b) 3 of the required Category I or Category II continuing education units shall have a content area focusing on ethics and professional conduct, including boundary issues, or pertaining to the standards of practice and laws governing the profession of social work in Maryland; and
  - (c) For registered and Board-approved supervisors, 3 of the required Category I or Category II continuing education units shall have a content area focusing on supervision as stipulated in COMAR 10.42.08.04A(2)(c);
- (2) Submits an application as set forth in COMAR 10.42.01 attesting to completion of the required continuing education units in approved programs; and
- (3) Completes the required continuing education units within a 2-year period as set forth in §B of this regulation.

B. Time Frame.

- (1) Renewed licenses are valid for a 2-year period from November 1 through and including October 31, during which time continuing education units may be earned.
- (2) Continuing education units obtained in one renewal period may not be carried over to the next renewal period.

More than thirty (30) days elapsed since the Respondent was notified of the Board's intent to revoke her license, and the Respondent failed to timely request a hearing.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

The Board finds the following facts:

1. At all times relevant to these charges, the Respondent was licensed to practice clinical social work in the State of Maryland, License No. 12518 (EXPIRED). The Respondent was initially licensed to practice clinical social work in Maryland on or about September 28, 2004, and her license became non-renewed as of October 31, 2018.
2. The Respondent was included in a Post Renewal Continuing Education Audit ("Audit") conducted by the Board on licenses requiring renewal by October 31, 2016. As a condition of licensure, licensed social workers are required to obtain forty (40) credit hours of Continuing Education Units ("CEUs") every two years in programs and categories approved by the Board, in accordance with Heath Occ. § 19-309(d)(3)(ii) and COMAR 10.42.06.03. The CEUs may all be in Category I but may not consist of more than twenty CEUs in Category II. A minimum of three CEU's, of the required forty CEU's shall focus on ethics and professional conduct, including boundary issues.
3. All licensees are required to sign a statement on the renewal application attesting to having completed this requirement.

4. On or about January 4, 2017 the Respondent was mailed a letter from the Association of Social Work Boards (“ASWB”) on behalf of the Board stating that she was randomly chosen as a part of the Audit. This letter requested that the Respondent supply continuing education documentation within thirty days of the letter. The Respondent failed to respond.
5. On or about February 7, 2017, a second notice was sent to the Respondent.
6. On or about February 28, 2017, in response to the second notice, the Respondent submitted the requested documentation to ASWB using a form called “Continuing Education Report Form – 2016 Post Renewal Audit.”
7. ASWB conducted an initial review of the Respondent’s documentation and found that it was not in compliance.
8. On or about March 1, 2017, ASWB sent a letter titled “2016 Post Renewal Audit – Problem Notice” to the Respondent explaining that some of her CE activities were not in compliance and offered recommendations to become compliant. In addition, the letter required the Respondent to submit appropriate documentation proving her compliance with the CE requirements within fifteen (15) business days.
9. The Respondent failed to respond.
10. The AWSB forwarded the Respondent’s file to the Board’s staff, who reviewed the file and determined that seven of the trainings listed on the Respondent’s “Continuing Education Report Form – 2016 Post Renewal Audit” were offered by non-approved sponsors.

11. A review of the Respondent's CEU certificates by the Board's Continuing Education Office revealed that the Respondent completed 17.75 credit hours of Category I Continuing Education Units and zero credit hours of Category II Continuing Education Units, far short of the 40 CEUs required. Therefore, the Respondent did not meet the continuing education requirements and failed the Audit.
12. On or about September 25, 2018, and again on February 6, 2019, the Board sent the Respondent offers to sign a pre-charge Consent Order resolving the investigation into her failure to complete her continuing education requirements. The Respondent failed to respond.

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Respondent's conduct, as described above generally, constitutes the violations of the Act and the regulations adopted by the Board as cited above.

### ORDER

Based on the foregoing, it is this 23 day of October, 2019, by the Board hereby:

**ORDERED** that the Respondent's LCSW-C license, license number 12518 (expired), is hereby **REVOKED**; and it is further

**ORDERED** that upon service of this Order, the Respondent shall immediately surrender to the Board all indicia of licensure the Board that are in her possession, including but not limited to the original license and/or renewal certificates; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this document constitutes an Order of the Board and is therefore a public document for purposes of public disclosure, as required by Md. Code Ann., General Provisions, §§ 4-101 through 4-601 (Repl. Vol. 2014).

**NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 19-313(b), the Respondent has the right to take a direct judicial appeal. Any appeal shall be filed within thirty (30) days from the date of this Final Order and shall be made as provided for judicial review of a final decision in the Maryland Administrative Procedure Act, Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-222; and Title 7, Chapter 200 of the Maryland Rules of Procedure.

If the Respondent files an appeal, the Board is a party and should be served with the court's process at the following address:

Stanley E. Weinstein, PhD, LCSW-C  
Executive Director  
Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners  
4201 Patterson Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21215  
Telephone: (410) 764-4788  
Facsimile: (410) 358-2469

At that point, the Administrative Prosecutor is no longer a party to this case and need not be served or copied.

10/23/2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

 Sheryl L. Silberman LCSW-C

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Sheryl Silberman, LCSW-C, Board Chair  
Maryland State Board of Social Work  
Examiners