

IN THE MATTER OF	*	BEFORE THE
VONTINA M. HALL, LCSW-C	*	MARYLAND STATE BOARD
Respondent	*	OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS
License Number: 17512 12997	*	Board Case Number 07-1215
* * * * *	*	* * * * *

FINAL DECISION AND ORDER OF DISMISSAL

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On November 9, 2012, the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners (the "Board") charged Respondent Vontina Hall, LCSW-C, with pleading guilty to a felony or a crime of moral turpitude, in violation of Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 19-311(8).

The Board sent notice of the charges, including a scheduled date of a case resolution conference ("CRC") on October 25, 2012, to Respondent's address of record, by certified and regular mail. The charges were returned to the Board stamped "Return to Sender." The regular mail copy of the charges was not returned. The CRC was canceled since Respondent failed to confirm her attendance. On January 22, 2013, the Board sent, by Regular mail, a notice that her case was being referred to the Office of Administrative Hearings ("OAH") for a hearing. This letter was not returned to the Board.

On January 28, 2013, OAH sent a notice of a pre-hearing conference to the Respondent. The pre-hearing conference was scheduled for 9:30am on March 7, 2013 at OAH. A separate notice was sent in the same envelope on January 28, 2013 advising the Respondent that a hearing on the merits of the Board's charges was scheduled for 9:30am on April 9, 2013. These notices were not returned by the United States Postal Service.

On February 21, 2013, the Administrative Prosecutor, Tracee Orlove Fruman, Assistant Attorney General, mailed the Respondent a copy of the State's Pre-Hearing Conference Statement with other materials attached, as well. The documents were mailed to the Respondent's address of record and were not returned as undelivered.

On March 7, 2013, a pre-hearing conference was held at OAH in Hunt Valley, Maryland at which neither the Respondent nor anyone authorized to represent her appeared. However, the Administrative Prosecutor appeared and, after waiting twenty minutes for Respondent to appear, made a Motion for Default, which was supported by a written Motion for Proposed Default which included documentation in support, against the Respondent. The Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ") granted the Motion for Default.

On March 11, 2013, the ALJ issued a Proposed Default Order proposing that (1) Respondent be found in default; (2) the Board's charges of violating H.O. §§ 19-311(8) be upheld, (3) all further proceedings be terminated; and (4) Ms. Hall's license be revoked. Neither Ms. Hall nor the Administrative Prosecutor filed exceptions, and the case came before the Board for final disposition. After considering the entire record, the Board issues this Final Decision and Order as the Board's final decision on this case.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board affirms the ALJ's proposed decision of default as set forth in the ALJ's Proposed Default Order, as well as the ALJ's proposed decision that the Board's charges for violations of H.O. §§ 19-311(8) are uncontested, and the termination of all further proceedings in this case. (The ALJ's Proposed Default Order is incorporated into this decision and appended as Attachment A). Ms. Hall was duly notified of the Board's investigation, of the charges, of

~~the CRC, of the prehearing conference, and of the evidentiary hearing scheduled in her case.~~
Ms. Hall failed to respond to the notice of the complaint or to cooperate with the Board's investigation, and failed to appear in person or through counsel for the CRC or the prehearing conference scheduled on March 7, 2013.

The Board also adopts as findings of fact all of the Allegations of Fact, numbered 1-4 in the Board's charging document issued in this case. (The Board's charging document is incorporated into this Final Decision and Order and appended as Attachment B). Due to Ms. Hall's default, the Board finds that the factual allegations and charges are unrefuted.

In the Board's view, the totality of Ms. Hall's conduct involved unprofessional conduct in the practice of social work, and failure to cooperate with the lawful investigation conducted by the Board. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, the Board adopts these charging allegations as factual findings, and further adopts the ALJ's proposed sanction of revocation.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Board concludes that Ms. Hall (1) plead guilty to a felony or to a crime involving moral turpitude, in violation of H.O. §§ 19-311(8). Further, the Board concludes that Ms. Hall was in default with respect to answering the charges, thus she has lost the right to contest them.

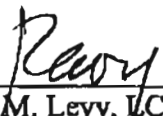
ORDER

It is hereby **ORDERED** by the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners that the Charges Under The Maryland Social Work Practice Act issued on November 9, 2012 against Vontina M. Hall, LCSW-C, License No. 12997, be **UPHELD**; and it is further

ORDERED that the social work license of Vontina M. Hall, LCSW-C, License No. 12997, be **REVOKED**; and it is further

ORDERED that this is a Final Decision and Order of the Board, and as such, is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** pursuant to Md. State Gov't Code Ann. § 10-611 *et seq* (Repl. Vol. 2009).

6/14/2013
Date



Judith M. Levy, LCSWC-C, Board Chair
Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

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

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

**Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners
c/o James Merrow, Executive Director
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215**

In addition, Ms. Hall should send a copy to the Board's counsel:

**Ari S. Elbaum, Esquire
Office of the Attorney General
300 W. Preston Street, Suite 302
Baltimore, Maryland 21201**

~~The Administrative Prosecutor is no longer a party to this case and need not be served or copied.~~