

IN THE MATTER OF	*	BEFORE THE STATE
WHITNEY N. HUNT,	*	BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK
LMSW		
Respondent	*	EXAMINERS
License Number: 21302	*	Case Number: 2020-2769

CONSENT ORDER

The Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners (the “Board”) charged **Whitney Hunt**, License Master Social Worker (**LMSW**), (**the “Respondent”**), **License Number 21302**, with violating various provisions of the Maryland Social Workers Act (the “Act”), codified at Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. §§ 19-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. and 2020 Supp.).

The pertinent provisions of the Act provide the following:

§ 19-311. Grounds for license denials, discipline

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 of 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[.]

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;

...

- (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.

COMAR 10.42.06.07 – Consequences of Failure to Comply with Continuing Education Requirements.

The Board shall notify a social worker by first class mail that the license has not been renewed if the following has occurred:

...

D. The social worker has not responded to audit requirements within the time required.

COMAR 10.42.06.02 - Definitions.

...

(4) "Category I" means activities that are formally organized face-to-face learning experiences provided by Board-approved sponsors.

(5) "Category II" means activities that are independent, less structured learning experiences.

...

(7) "Continuing education" means completing approved programs designed to provide:

(a) Enhancement of social work practice, values, skills, and knowledge; and

(b) Enrichment of social work services and competence.

(8) "Continuing education unit" means 1 hour (60 minutes) of an approved program as set forth in Regulation .04 of this chapter.

...

(12) "Renewal period" means the period from the date the license was issued or November 1 of the renewal year to October 31 of the expiration year.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board finds that:

1. The Respondent was initially licensed to practice as a Licensed Master Social Worker (“LMSW”) by the Board on September 21, 2015. Her license expires on October 31, 2021.
2. On or about October 18, 2019, the Respondent renewed her LMSW license for the period of November 1, 2019, through October 31, 2021.
3. On or about January 4, 2018, the Association of Social Work Boards (“ASWB”) mailed a letter to the Respondent on behalf of the Board notifying her that she had been randomly selected for inclusion in a 2017 Post-Renewal Continuing Education Audit and requesting that she submit copies of all training certificates to the Board by February 5, 2018. The Board did not receive a response.
4. On or about February 5, 2018, a second post-renewal audit notice was sent to the Respondent requesting that the outstanding documents be provided within 15 business days. The Board did not receive a response.
5. On or about June 6, 2018, the Board sent a final notice to the Respondent via regular and certified mail, requesting that all documentation of her continuing education credits for the renewal period of November 1, 2015, through October 31, 2017, be received by the Board within fifteen (15) calendar days. On or about June 25, 2018, the certified letter was returned to the Board marked “Return to Sender, Unable to Forward.” The requested materials were not received by the Board.

6. The Board's audit revealed that the Board never received continuing education unit documentation from the Respondent. The Respondent held an active license during the period of this audit and did not meet the Board's continuing education requirement.
7. On or about March 6, 2020, a pre-charge Consent Order was mailed to the Respondent, but no reply was received by the Board.
8. On or about March 27, 2020, the pre-charge Consent Order was emailed to the Respondent.
9. On or about June 5, 2020, the Respondent responded to the Board's email and asked for further clarification.
10. On or about June 11, 2020, the Respondent faxed a request for continuance of these proceedings to the Board.
11. The requested documentation was not received by the Board as of April 10, 2020, the date of the vote to charge the Respondent.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board concludes as a matter of law that the Respondent violated:

§ 19-311. Grounds for license denials, discipline

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[.]

COMAR 10.42.06.03 – Continuing Education Requirements

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

- (4) 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;

...

- (5) Submits an application as set forth in COMAR 10.42.01 attesting to completion of the required continuing education units in approved programs; and
- (6) Completes the required continuing education units within a 2-year period as set forth in §B of this regulation.

D. Time Frame.

- (3) 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.
- (4) Continuing education units obtained in one renewal period may not be carried over to the next renewal period.

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is this 12th day of November, 2021, by a majority of the quorum of the Board considering this case hereby:

ORDERED that the Respondent shall be **REPRIMANDED**; and it is further

ORDERED the Respondent's license to practice social work shall be placed on **PROBATION** for a **minimum of ONE (1) YEAR**, and continuing until the Respondent has successfully completed the following probationary conditions:

- i. During the probationary period, the Respondent will be required to complete the 40.0 outstanding Category I and Category II CEUs which include 3.0 Category I or Category II ethics within 180 days.
- iv. The Respondent shall comply with the Maryland Social Workers Act and all laws, statutes and regulations pertaining thereof.

ORDERED that the Respondent shall pay a monetary fine of **ONE-THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$1500)** within 180 days; and it is further

ORDERED that the Respondent shall be automatically audited during the next licensing renewal cycles (2022 and 2024); 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 before the Board otherwise, may impose any sanction that the Board may have imposed in this case, including additional 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 this Consent Order; and

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

11/12/2021

Date

John Richards, LCSW-C

~~Gerard Farrell~~
Board Chair

State Board of Social Work Examiners

SP

CONSENT

I, Whitney Hunt, LMSW, License No. 21302, by affixing my signature hereto acknowledge that:

1. I am represented by and have consulted with legal counsel in this matter. I have knowingly and voluntarily agreed to enter into this Consent Order. By this Consent 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.
2. I am aware that I am entitled to a formal evidentiary hearing, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 19-312 (2014 Repl. Vol. and 2020 Supp.) and Md. Code Ann., State Gov't, §§ 10-210 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. and 2020 Supp.).
3. I acknowledge the validity and enforceability of this Consent Order as if entered into after the conclusion of a formal evidentiary hearing in which I would have 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 as provided by law. I am waiving those procedural and substantive protections.
4. I voluntarily enter into and agree to abide by the terms and conditions set forth herein as a resolution of the charges against me. I waive any right to contest the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and I waive my right

to a full evidentiary hearing, as set forth above, and any right to appeal this Consent Order or any adverse ruling of the Board that might have followed any such hearing.

5. I acknowledge that by failing to abide by the conditions set forth in this Consent Order, I may be subject to disciplinary actions, which may include revocation of my license to practice as a social worker.
6. I sign this Consent Order voluntarily, without reservation, and I fully understand and comprehend the language, meaning and terms of this Consent Order.

10/19/21

Date



Whitney Hunt, LMSW
Respondent

NOTARY

STATE OF MARYLAND

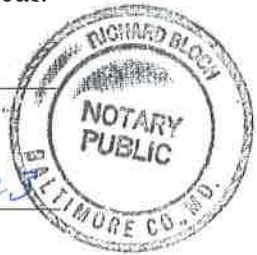
CITY/COUNTY OF:

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 19th day of October 2021, before me, a Notary Public of the state and County aforesaid, personally appeared Whitney Hunt, LMSW, and gave an oath in due form of law that the foregoing Consent Order was her voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESS, my hand and Notary Seal.



Notary Public



My commission expires: 11/14/25