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DEC 18 2017

Board of Social
Work Examiners

NJIKEA OKECHI ODIANA
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Date: January 12, 2018

Denise Capaci, LCSW, Board Chair
State Board of Social Work Examiners
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

RE: Surrender of Social Work License
License Number: G12721
Case Number: 2016-2097

Dear Ms. Capaci and Members of the Board:

Please be advised that I have decided to **SURRENDER** my license to practice social work in the State of Maryland, License Number: G12721, effective immediately. I understand that upon surrender of my license, I may not practice social work, with or without compensation, or otherwise engage in the practice of social work in the State of Maryland as it is defined in the Maryland Social Workers Act (the "Act"), Md. Code Ann., Health Occupations II. ("H.O.") §§ 19-101 *et seq.*, (2014 Repl. Vol.) and other applicable laws. In other words, as of the effective date of this Letter of Surrender, I understand that the surrender of my license means that I am in the same position as an unlicensed individual in the State of Maryland.

I understand that this Letter of Surrender is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** and on the Board's acceptance becomes a **FINAL ORDER** of the Board.

My decision to surrender my license to practice social work in the State of Maryland has been prompted by an investigation of my license by the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners (the "Board"). The results of the investigation led the Board to issue disciplinary charges against me on or about October 13, 2017, under Case Number 2016-2197.

I have decided to surrender my license to practice social work in the State of Maryland to avoid further prosecution of the disciplinary charges now pending before the Board. I acknowledge that the Board initiated an investigation of this matter and issued disciplinary charges against me under the Act.

After its investigation the Board charged me with violating the following provisions of **H.O. §§ 19-311**:

- (1) Obtained or attempted to obtain a license for the applicant or licensee or for another through fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation;
- (6) Violates any provision of this title or regulations governing the practice of social work adopted and published by the Board;

The Board also charged the me with violating:

Code of Md. Regs tit. 10, §42.03.

06. Standards of Practice.

A. Professional Competence. The licensee shall:

(5) Maintain and enhance professional competence by meeting the requirements of continuing education as set forth in COMAR 10.42.06;

Code of Md. Regs tit. 10, §42.06.

04. Continuing Education Activities.

- A. The social worker shall complete continuing education units relating to the practice of social work that foster improvement, advancement, and extension of the social worker's professional skill, knowledge, and competence.
- B. Documentation shall be provided for the continuing education units listed in §§C—F of this regulation as set forth in Regulation .07 of this chapter.

07. Reporting, Documenting, and Auditing Compliance with Continuing Education Requirements.

- C. On request by the Board, a social worker shall provide full documentation of the continuing education units completed in accordance with the requirements of §D of this regulation.

1. D. Documentation. A social worker shall provide to the Board:

- (1) An official transcript for continuing education units earned in a course taken for credit;
- (2) A certificate of completion for approved programs;
- (3) If a certificate of completion is not available:
 - (a) Dates on which the program was presented;
 - (b) Names of the presenters;
 - (c) Topics presented; and
 - (d) An outline of the presentation;
- (4) A reprint of the social worker's completed publication;
- (5) If a certificate of completion is not available for an audiovisual instructional program or a home study course, proof of completion of the program or course, such as a post-test passing score or other satisfactory proof as determined by the Board;
- (6) Proof of presentations made; and
- (7) Topics, dates, times, and names of participants in structured peer-case conferences and journal club activities.

E. Record Retention for Active, Expired, or Inactive License.

- (1) Active Licenses.
 - (a) A social worker with an active license shall retain records documenting completion of continuing education requirements for 3 years after the licensing renewal date for which the report of continuing education was submitted to the Board.
 - (b) The documentation required in §E(1)(a) of this regulation may be requested by the Board at any time within that 3-year period.
- (2) Expired Licenses. A social worker with an expired, non-renewed license shall:

- (a) Retain records documenting completion of continuing education requirements for each 2-year period that the license was expired, up to a maximum of 40 (30 for Licensed Bachelor Social Workers) continuing education units[.]

I wish to make clear that 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 Board would be able to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that I violated the Act as charged. I acknowledge that for all purposes relevant to social work licensure, those investigative findings will be treated as if proven.

I further acknowledge that the State can prove that I made misrepresentations on my renewal application and that I did not complete the continuing education requirements for the November 1, 2012-October 31, 2014 renewal period.

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 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 understand that the Board will advise the National Practitioners' Data Bank of this Letter of Surrender, and in any response to any inquiry, that I have surrendered my license in lieu of further disciplinary action under the Act. 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 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., § 10-611 *et seq.*, (2014 Repl. Vol.), and that this Letter of Surrender is considered a disciplinary action by the Board.

I acknowledge that upon the Board's acceptance of this Letter of Surrender, I shall present to the Board any license documents that I have in my possession.

I further recognize and agree that by submitting this Letter of Surrender, my social work license in Maryland will remain surrendered ~~PERMANENTLY~~. I understand that I am in the same posture as someone whose license has been revoked.

I acknowledge 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 proceedings before the Board, including the right to counsel with an attorney prior to signing this Letter of Surrender. I have knowingly, willfully and intelligently waived my

right to be represented by an attorney before signing this letter surrendering my license to practice social work in Maryland. 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 and voluntarily.

Very truly yours,


Njikea Okechi Odiana, LGSW

NOTARY

STATE OF MARYLAND

CITY/COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 6th day of DECEMBER 2017,

before me, a Notary Public of the State and City/County aforesaid, personally appeared **NJIDEKA OKECHI ODIANA, LGSW**, 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.


Notary Public

My Commission expires: 12/19/2020.



ACCEPTANCE

On this 12th day of January, ²⁰¹⁸~~2017~~, Denise Capaci,
LCSW-C, on behalf of the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners, accept the
SURRENDER of the license of **NJIDEKA OKECHI ODIANA, LGSW** to practice social
work in the State of Maryland.



Denise Capaci, LCSW-C
Board Chair, Maryland State Board of Social
Work Examiners