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SEP 04 2026

Maryland Board of
Social Work Examiners

IN THE MATTER OF

SHARONDA L. SAUNDERS, LMSW

Respondent

License Number: 23321

BEFORE THE MARYLAND
STATE BOARD OF
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

Case Number: 2024-3499

CONSENT ORDER

On May 29, 2026, the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners (the “Board”) charged **SHARONDA L. SAUNDERS, LMSW** (the “Respondent”), License Number **23321**, with violating the Maryland Social Workers Practice Act (the “Act”), Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. (“Health Occ.”) §§ 19-101 *et seq.* (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2025 Supp.).

Specifically, the Board charged the Respondent with violating the following provisions of the Act:

§ 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:

....

- (2) Fraudulently or deceptively uses a license;

....

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

Pursuant to Health Occ. § 19-311(6), the Board charged the Respondent with violating the pertinent provisions of the Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”):

COMAR 10.42.03.03 Responsibilities to Clients.

B. The licensee may not:

- (1) Participate or condone dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation[.]

On July 23, 2026, a Case Resolution Conference ("CRC") was held before a committee of the Board. As a resolution of this matter, the Respondent agreed to enter this public Consent Order consisting of Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board makes the following Findings of Fact:

I. BACKGROUND

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent was licensed to practice master social work in the State of Maryland. The Respondent was originally licensed to practice master social work as a Licensed Master Social Worker (“LMSW”) on or about September 21, 2017. The Respondent’s LMSW license expires on October 31, 2027, subject to renewal.

2. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent practiced social work full-time for the Maryland State Department of Social Services (“DSS”) and as needed, or *pro re nata* (“PRN”), for a hospital (the “Hospital”).¹

¹ For confidentiality and privacy reasons, the names of individuals and private health care facilities are not disclosed in this document. The Respondent may obtain the undisclosed names by contacting the Administrative Prosecutor.

3. On or about March 1, 2024, the Board received a complaint (the “Complaint”) from a colleague (the “Complainant”) of the Respondent. The Complaint alleged that on or about February 24, 2024, the Respondent disclosed to the Complainant that on or about February 4, 2024, the Respondent impersonated the Complainant when she submitted a substance-exposed newborn (“SEN”) report² to DSS. Specifically, the Respondent first called DSS, claiming to be the Complainant, and then sent the corresponding written report in the Complainant’s name.

4. After receipt of the Complaint, the Board conducted an investigation of the Respondent.

II. BOARD INVESTIGATION

5. On or about May 22, 2025, the Board issued a *subpoena duces tecum* to the Respondent, directing the Respondent to provide a letter of response to the Complaint. In the Respondent’s letter of response, she stated that she and the Complainant “worked out ways to send SEN reports from each other’s emails when we were working alone.” The Respondent stated that, on or about February 4, 2024, the Respondent asked the

² Md. Code Ann., Fam. Law § 5-704(c) provides, in pertinent part:

[A] health care practitioner involved in the delivery or care of a substance-exposed newborn shall:

- (1) make an oral report to the local department as soon as possible; and
- (2) make a written report to the local department not later than 48 hours after the contact, examination, attention, treatment, or testing that prompted the report.

Complainant for permission to send an SEN report from the Complainant's email, to which the Complainant agreed.³

6. The Respondent provided the Board with copies of text messages between the Respondent and the Complainant. On or about January 30, 2024, the Complainant requested, and the Respondent provided, the Respondent's login credentials. On or about February 4, 2024, the Respondent asked the Complainant for permission to send an SEN report using the Complainant's email, to which the Complainant replied affirmatively.

7. On or about August 12, 2025, the Board conducted an under-oath interview with the Complainant. The Complainant stated that she worked full-time as a social worker for the Hospital and that she and the Respondent were coworkers on the same unit. The Complainant stated that the Respondent called the Complainant on or about February 24, 2024, and informed the Complainant that the Respondent made a SEN report in the Complainant's name. On or about February 26, 2026, the Complainant received a call from DSS, inquiring whether the Complainant made a SEN report on February 4, 2024. The Complainant reviewed her work schedule and found that she did not work on February 4, 2024. The Complainant stated that, prior to February 4, 2024, on one occasion, the Respondent impersonated the Complainant during a phone call with DSS, but the Complainant took no action.

³ As will be discussed, *infra*, despite this agreement, the Respondent stated in her under-oath interview with the Board that she sent the report using her own email account but signed the written report with the Complainant's initials.

8. On or about September 4, 2025, the Board conducted an under-oath interview with the Respondent. The Respondent stated that she and the Complainant shared login credentials, specifically usernames and passwords, for their individual accounts at the Hospital. The Respondent stated that, on or about February 4, 2024, she sent DSS an SEN report using her email account but signed the report using the Complainant's initials.

9. On or about October 9, 2025, the Board conducted an under-oath interview with an employee (the "DSS Employee") of DSS. The DSS Employee stated that, while working at the Hospital, the Respondent called DSS to make an SEN report, impersonating a coworker. The individual who took the phone call recognized the Respondent's voice and reported the incident. The DSS Employee stated that DSS followed up with the Hospital social worker who purportedly submitted the SEN report, but the social worker stated that she had no knowledge of the SEN report and did not make the call. The DSS Employee stated that it would not be a conflict of interest for the Respondent to submit an SEN report to DSS while working at the Hospital. The DSS Employee stated that several social workers have secondary employment. If a DSS social worker submits an SEN report while working secondary employment, the DSS social worker's name is recorded so that they have no access to the file while working at DSS. The DSS Employee stated that the Respondent was no longer permitted to submit SEN reports on behalf of the Hospital due to the February 4, 2024, SEN report.⁴

⁴ During the interview, the DSS employee relayed another incident where the Respondent overheard a coworker, who was seated two cubicles away, taking a call regarding the Respondent's family. The Respondent entered the coworker's cubicle, took over the call, and refused to leave. Ultimately, security was called to escort the Respondent out of the building.

10. On or about October 23, 2025, the Board conducted an under-oath interview with the Respondent's supervisor (the "Hospital Supervisor") at the Hospital. The Hospital Supervisor stated that the Respondent worked at the Hospital from on or about April 4, 2022, to on or about February 29, 2024, inclusive. While the Respondent worked at the Hospital, the Hospital Supervisor was the Respondent's direct supervisor. The Hospital Supervisor, who is a board-approved supervisor, was also the Respondent's clinical supervisor from on or about July 1, 2023, to on or about February 29, 2024, inclusive. The Hospital Supervisor stated that, although the Respondent also worked for DSS, the Hospital did not identify a conflict of interest for the Respondent to submit an SEN report to DSS in her capacity as a social worker for the Hospital. The Hospital Supervisor stated that the Respondent was terminated due to the February 4, 2024, SEN report.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Respondent's actions, as described above, constitute, in whole or in part: fraudulently or deceptively using a license, in violation of Health Occ. § 19-311(2); committing any act of gross negligence, incompetence, or misconduct in the practice of social work, in violation of Health Occ. § 19-311(4); engaging in a course of conduct that is inconsistent with generally accepted professional standards in the practice of social work, in violation of Health Occ. § 19-311(5); and violating any provision of this title or regulations governing the practice of social work adopted and published by the Board, in violation of Health Occ. § 19-311(6), in that the Respondent violated COMAR 10.42.03.03B(1)

ORDER

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

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

ORDERED that the Respondent shall be placed on **PROBATION** for a minimum period of **SIX (6) MONTHS** subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Within six (6) months of the date of this Consent Order, the Respondent shall successfully complete one Board-approved course on **professional ethics** and one Board-approved course on **record keeping**. The Respondent shall be responsible for submitting written documentation to the Board of her successful completion of these courses. The Respondent understands and agrees that she may not use this coursework to fulfill any requirements mandated for licensure renewal. The Respondent shall be solely responsible for furnishing the Board with adequate written verification that she has completed the courses according to the terms set forth herein;
2. The Respondent shall be supervised her current supervisor, to whom the Board may release any portion of the investigative file as deemed necessary;
3. The Respondent shall ensure that her current supervisor contacts the Board to arrange supervision during probation;
4. The Respondent shall meet with the supervisor for a minimum of three (3) hours per month and provide the supervisor with full access to the Respondent's case files and documentation;
5. The Respondent shall ensure that the supervisor submits written quarterly reports to the Board regarding the Respondent's progress during the supervisory period;
6. The Board has sole authority to implement any changes in the supervision and retains all authority to approve any changes in the supervision;

7. In the event that the supervisor discontinues supervising the Respondent for any reason, the Respondent shall immediately notify the Board and work with the Board to find a suitable replacement;
8. The Respondent shall comply with the Maryland Social Workers Practice Act and all laws, statutes and regulations pertaining thereof; and
9. The Respondent shall be solely responsible for providing adequate written verification of full and successful compliance with the terms and conditions of probation;

AND IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that after the conclusion of the entire **SIX (6)** **MONTH** period of probation, the Respondent may submit a written petition to the Board requesting termination of probation. After consideration of the petition, the probation may be terminated through an order of the Board. The Respondent may be required to appear before the Board or a committee of the Board to discuss their petition for termination. The Board will grant the petition to terminate the probation if the Respondent has complied with all of the probationary terms and conditions and there are no pending complaints involving similar violations found in this case before the Board; and it is further

ORDERED that if the Board determines, after notice and an opportunity for an evidentiary hearing if there is a genuine dispute as to a material fact, or a show cause hearing before the Board if there is no genuine dispute as to a material fact, that the Respondent has failed to comply with any terms or condition of probation or this Consent Order, the Board may reprimand the Respondent, place the Respondent on probation with appropriate terms and conditions, impose a civil monetary fine upon the Respondent, or suspend or revoke the Respondent's license to practice social work in Maryland; and it is further

ORDERED that the Respondent shall not serve or continue to serve as: a Board authorized sponsor, presenter and/or trainer of social work continuing education learning activities, an ethics tutor, an evaluator for the Board, or a Board-approved supervisor for a period of five (5) years from the effective date of this Consent Order; and it is further

ORDERED that the Respondent is responsible for all costs incurred in fulfilling the terms and conditions of this Consent Order; and it is further

ORDERED that this Consent Order is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Provisions §§ 4-101 *et seq.* (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2025 Supp.).

9/4/2026
Date

Jamie Wilson, LCSW-C

Jamie Wilson, LCSW-C
Board Chair
Maryland State Board of
Social Work Examiners

CONSENT

I, Sharonda L. Saunders, LMSW, acknowledge that I am not represented by counsel and have knowingly and voluntarily elected not to consult with counsel prior to entering 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.

I acknowledge the validity of this Consent Order as if entered into after the conclusion of a formal evidentiary hearing in which I would have had 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 provided by the law. I agree to forego my

SEP 04 2026

Maryland Board of
Social Work Examiners

opportunity for a formal evidentiary hearing. I acknowledge the legal authority and jurisdiction of the Board to initiate these proceedings and to issue and enforce this Consent Order. I affirm that I am waiving my right to appeal any adverse ruling of the Board that might have followed after any such hearing.

I sign this Consent Order, voluntarily and without reservation, and I fully understand and comprehend the language, meaning and terms of this Consent Order.

9/3/26

Date

Sharonda L. Saunders

Sharonda L. Saunders, LMSW
Respondent

NOTARY

STATE OF MARYLAND

CITY/COUNTY OF Baltimore

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 3 day of September 2026, before me, a Notary Public of the foregoing State and City/County personally appear Sharonda L. Saunders, LMSW and made oath in due form of law that signing the foregoing Consent Order was their voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESSETH my hand and notary seal.



Khp Patel

Notary Public

My commission expires: 07/08/2029