

**IN THE MATTER OF** \* **BEFORE THE MARYLAND STATE**  
**FREDERICK HAMILTON, CAC-AD** \* **BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL**  
**Respondent** \* **COUNSELORS AND THERAPISTS**  
**Certificate Number: AC2984** \* **Case Number: 2022-097**

\* \* \* \* \*

**ORDER FOR SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

The Maryland State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists (the “Board”) hereby **SUMMARILY SUSPENDS** the certificate of **FREDERICK HAMILTON, CAC-AD** (the “Respondent”), Certificate Number AC2984, to practice as a Certified Associate Counselor-Alcohol and Drug (“CAC-AD”) in the State of Maryland. The Board takes such action pursuant to its authority under Md. Code Ann., State Gov’t § 10-226(c) (2021 Repl. Vol.), concluding that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action. In addition, the Board takes such action pursuant to its authority under Md. Code Regs. (“COMAR”) 10.58.04.10, concluding that there is substantial likelihood that the Respondent poses a risk of harm to the public health, safety, or welfare.

**INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS**

The Board bases its action on the following findings: <sup>1</sup>

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. At all times relevant, the Respondent was authorized to practice certified associate counseling – alcohol and drug in the State of Maryland. The Respondent was

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<sup>1</sup> The statements regarding the Board’s investigative findings are intended to provide the Respondent with notice of the basis of the summary suspension. They are not intended as, and do not necessarily represent,

originally certified to practice as a CAC-AD in the State of Maryland on August 24, 2021, under Certificate Number AC2984. The Respondent's certificate is scheduled to expire on January 31, 2023.

## **II. COMPLAINT**

2. On or about February 11, 2022, the Board received a complaint from the director of the facility (the "Facility")<sup>2</sup> where the Respondent was employed, alleging that an unidentified client from the Facility notified staff that she had engaged in a relationship with the Respondent during his employment. The complaint further alleged the client had participated in the Respondent's group therapy sessions but was not assigned to the Respondent's personal caseload.

3. After receiving the complaint, the Board initiated an investigation of the Respondent under Case Number 2022-097.

## **III. BOARD INVESTIGATION**

4. As part of its investigation, the Board obtained personnel records from the Facility and conducted interviews, including an interview of the Respondent.

5. The Board's investigation revealed that the Respondent practiced as a therapist at the Facility from on or about August 2, 2021 until February 8, 2022, when he

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a complete description of the evidence, either documentary or testimonial, to be offered against the Respondent in connection with this matter.

<sup>2</sup> For confidentiality and privacy purposes, the names of individuals and facilities involved in this case are not disclosed in this document. The Respondent may obtain the names of all individuals and facilities referenced in this document by contacting the administrative prosecutor.

resigned. According to his letter of resignation, the Respondent resigned “due to personal reasons, which caused an inability to do my job as assigned.”

6. On or about April 11, 2022, the Board’s investigator interviewed the Respondent under oath, at which time, the Respondent stated the following:

- a. As part of his job at the Facility he had an active caseload and ran group sessions every day.
- b. “I resigned from the [Facility] because, A, I was completely burned out, B, I just had finished -- I've been in school full time since January 2015 and working full time. . . . There was so many things occurring within my personal life and professional life that I felt like I couldn't do my job, and . . . I couldn't provide the care that the clients needed that I was assigned to.”
- c. Another “catalyst” of why he resigned was because there was an incident where he had a dual relationship with a client. “I felt that before I crossed any lines, that I needed to take a step back . . . . I felt that there were things in the emails that I would not – and here’s how I gauged it, am I communicating with every client as much as I’m communicating with this person? And the truth was, no, I was not communicating with other clients as much.”
- d. He admitted he sent “a lot of emails” to the client while he was employed at the Facility.
- e. The communication with the client began “very gradual.”

f. “I told this to one of the owners, that it was very odd when somebody begins to make you feel good about yourself, or you’re like, wow, I really like talking to this person, and I don’t know why. And once I began to really notice this has literally gone – this is literally a dual relationship. This is what it is, and before it goes any further . . . because it’s a colossal deal, because there’s someone else involved in all this . . . that’s in early recovery and trying to navigate their own life.”

7. On July 20, 2022, at 6:49 a.m. the Board’s Compliance Manager received an email from the Respondent’s email address<sup>3</sup> with the subject line “FW: Hamilton, Frederick Walter.” The email included a transcript of correspondence between the Respondent and a computer hacker (“Hacker #1”), which showed that the Respondent attempted to engage the services of Hacker #1 to hack into the Board’s website and change information on the Board’s license verification portal. The email conversation between the Respondent and Hacker #1 included the following:

a. On July 17, 2022 at 16:21 the Respondent wrote:

I guess I will get right into it and then we can go from there. I’m a certified counselor through the MD Board of Professional Counselors and therapists, however I found out my certification is going to be suspended for a year. Nowadays the only way individuals know about their licenses and certifications is to check the Boards website. I know it’s crazy probably, but I’m trying to find a skilled hacker who can keep my certification

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<sup>3</sup> This is the same email address that the Board utilized to communicate with the Respondent.

active at least for another several months while I figure out my next career move. If this is too much, I understand, if you can't assist maybe you know someone who can. I appreciate your discretion and assistance.

- b. Hacker #1 responded to the Respondent on July 17, 2022, at 11:30 a.m. stating, "What's the board website We will need your details same way it is on the website."
- c. On July 17, 2022, at 17:13 hour the Respondent responded to Hacker #1 and stated the following:

<https://mdbnc.health.maryland.gov/pctverification/Details.aspx?ID=23962>

They haven't actually suspended it yet per the website, but it will be indefinitely changed some time this week. They haven't updated the board site yet because the decision was just made Friday afternoon. But they absolutely will.

<https://health.maryland.gov/bopc/Pages/index.aspx>

It's under the LICENSE VERIFICATION INFORMATION link if the link above doesn't provide the necessary information.

Please let me know if this helps and what else you may need.

- d. Hacker #1 replied to the Respondent on July 17, 2022, at 3:36 p.m. and stated, "Okay that will be all It's going to cost you \$1350."
- e. The Respondent responded to Hacker #1 on July 17, 2022, at 21:51 hour by stating "So how does this work exactly? And what assurances

will I have this is completed appropriately? The board website hasn't been updated yet, but rest assured it will be updated this week.”

- f. Hacker #1 replied to the Respondent on July 17, 2022, at 4:57 p.m. and stated:

We will have to hack into the boards website

We will make your license invisible for them to suspend

Anytime they try suspending it they will end up suspending someone else license

Your job will be done perfectly you don't need to be worried

- g. On July 18, 2022, at 00:49 hour the Respondent wrote:

I still don't quite understand that explanation, and please forgive my questions. I am new to this and am being transparent with my general ignorance towards the whole process.

If it is invisible to suspend, then will I be able to look up my own status? What if my employer randomly checks the Boards website? If it is invisible [*sic*], is it invisible to everyone? You can see how this is confusing.

Thanks for your help and patience.

- h. On July 18, 2022, at 12:24 a.m. Hacker #1 informed the Respondent “What I mean is that they won't be able to suspend your license it won't work that's why I said invisible Your license will be very visible for everyone to see on the website.”

8. On July 20, 2022, at 7:46 a.m., board staff received an email from the Respondent with the subject line “Fw: [External] Re: Seeking information about offered services.” The email included a transcript of correspondence between the Respondent and a second hacker (“Hacker #2”), which showed that the Respondent attempted to engage the services of Hacker #2 to hack the Board’s website and change information on the Board’s license verification portal. The email conversation between the Respondent and Hacker #2 included the following:

a. On July 17, 2022, at 3:59 p.m. the Respondent wrote:

I guess I will get right into it and then we can go from there. I’m a certified counselor through the MD Board of Professional Counselors and therapists, however I found out my certification is going to be suspended for a year. Nowadays the only way individuals know about their licenses and certifications is to check the Boards website. I know it’s crazy probably, but I’m trying to find a skilled hacker who can keep my certification active at least for another several months while I figure out my next career move. If this is too much, I understand, if you can’t assist maybe you know someone who can. I appreciate your discretion and assistance.

b. Hacker #2 replied to the Respondent on July 17, 2022, at 11:47 a.m.:

Yes, I can help you.

I will be able to keep your certification active for some months, I will have to purchase an access token from the darkweb to do the hack.

I will use that hack tool to get access to the boards website remotely.

It cost \$2600 To get it done and it will completed in the next 2 hours.

All you need to provide is the website and your certification details so I can identify you on the site.

- c. The Respondent replied to Hacker #2 on July 17, 2022, at 5:14 p.m.:

<https://mdbnc.health.maryland.gov/pctverification/Details.aspx?ID=23962>

They haven't actually suspended it yet per the website, but it will be indefinitely changed sometime this week. They haven't updated the board site yet because the decision was just made Friday afternoon. But they absolutely will.

<https://health.maryland.gov/bopc/Pages/index.aspx>

It's under the LICENSE VERIFICATION INFORMATION link if the link above doesn't provide the necessary information.

Please let me know if this helps and what else you may need.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

Based on the foregoing facts, the Board concludes that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively require emergency action in this case, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-226 (c)(2) (2021 Repl. Vol.).

In addition, the Board concludes as a matter of law that there is a substantial likelihood that the Respondent poses a risk of harm to the public health, safety, or welfare, and that the public health, safety, and welfare require the immediate suspension of the Respondent's certificate pursuant to COMAR 10.58.04.10.



**ORDER**

Based on the foregoing, it is by a majority of the Board considering this case:

**ORDERED** that pursuant to the authority vested by Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-226(c)(2), the Respondent's certificate to practice as a Certified Associate Counselor-Alcohol and Drug in the State of Maryland, Certificate Number AC2984, is hereby **SUMMARILY SUSPENDED**; and be it further

**ORDERED** that the Respondent has the opportunity to appear before the Board for a post-deprivation show cause hearing. A request for a post-deprivation show cause hearing must be in writing and be made **WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS** of service of this Order.

The written request should be made to:

Alexandria Langston, Interim Executive Director  
Maryland State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists  
4201 Patterson Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21215-2299  
Fax: 410-358-1610

With copies to:

Kelly Cooper, Assistant Attorney General  
Maryland Office of the Attorney General  
Health Occupations Prosecution & Litigation Division  
300 West Preston Street, Suite 201  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
Kelly.cooper@maryland.gov

and it is further

**ORDERED** that if the Respondent fails to request a post-deprivation show cause hearing in writing in a timely manner, or if the Respondent requests a post-deprivation

show cause hearing but fails to appear when scheduled, the Respondent's certificate will remain **SUSPENDED**; and it is further

**ORDERED** that on presentation of this Order, the Respondent **SHALL SURRENDER** to the Board, the following items:

- (1) the Respondent's original Maryland Certified Associate Counselor-Alcohol and Drug Certificate Number AC2984; and
- (2) the Respondent's wallet card and wall certificate; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this is an Order of the Board and, as such, is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Provisions §§ 4-101 *et seq.* (2019).

**08/09/2022**

  
Mary N. Drotleff, M.S. LCMFT