

IN THE MATTER OF	*	BEFORE THE STATE
DEREK CHARLES BRIDGE, LGSW	*	BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK
RESPONDENT	*	EXAMINERS
LICENSE NUMBER: 19975	*	CASE NUMBER: 2018-2440

* * * * *

ORDER OF REVOCATION OF LICENSE TO PRACTICE SOCIAL WORK

The State Board of Social Work Examiners (the "Board") notified Derek Charles Bridge, LGSW, License Number 19975, (the "Respondent"), of the Board's intent to revoke his license to practice social work under the Maryland Social Workers Act (the "Act"), Md. Code Ann, Health Occ. II. ("H.O.") §§ 19-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. & 2017 Supp.). The pertinent provisions of the Act provide:

H. O. § 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:

- (1) Obtained or attempted to obtain a license for the applicant or licensee or for another through fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation;
- (9) Is disciplined by a licensing or disciplinary authority of any state, country, or branch of the armed services, or the Veterans' Administration for an act that would-be grounds for disciplinary action under this section; [and]
- (11) Makes or files a false report or record in the practice of social work [.]

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board finds that:

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent was licensed to practice graduate social work in the State of Maryland. The Respondent was originally licensed to practice graduate social work in Maryland on or about June 5, 2014. The Respondent's license expires on October 31, 2019.

2. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent was an employee at an outpatient mental health facility ("Establishment A"), located in Maryland.

3. On or about January 3, 2018, the Board received a complaint from a social worker ("Social Worker A"), an employee at Establishment A.¹

4. In the complaint, Social Worker A informed the Board that disciplinary action had been taken against the Respondent's alcohol and training status due to an inappropriate dual relationship.

5. A subsequent investigation by Board staff revealed that on October 10, 2014, the Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists ("Board of Professional Counselors") rescinded the Respondent's drug and alcohol training status ("AD trainee").²

6. The Board of Professional Counselors indicated in its September 19, 2014 Order that it would "not accept, from the Respondent, any future application for licensure, certification, and/or registration."

¹ The names of Establishment A, Social Worker A, and Client A have been omitted to maintain confidentiality. The names will be made available to the Respondent upon request.

² The Board of Professional Counselors allows individuals to practice alcohol and drug counseling without certification, if the individual is working as a trainee under the supervision of an approved alcohol and drug supervisor while fulfilling for certifications.

7. The Board of Professional Counselors found that while the Respondent was practicing as an AD trainee, he had a sexual relationship with a female client ("Client A").³

8. Client A participated in outpatient group therapy sessions that were conducted by the Respondent.

9. The Board of Professional Counselors found that the Respondent's sexual relationship with Client A sometimes took place at the Respondent's residence where they also smoked marijuana together.

10. On or about October 13, 2017, the Respondent submitted an Application for Reactivation or Reinstatement ("Application") to the Board.

11. On his Application, the Respondent answered "NO" to the following question that pertained to character and fitness:

"1) Has any State Licensing or Disciplinary Board, or a comparable body in the Armed Services denied your application for licensure, reinstatement, renewal, or taken any action against your license, including but not limited to reprimand, suspension, revocation?"

12. The Respondent affirmed that all the statements made in this Application were true and correct. The Respondent, however, failed to indicate in his Application that he had been disciplined by the Board of Professional Counselors.

13. The Respondent's conduct as set forth above is a violation of H.O. § 19-311 (1), (9), and (11).

³ The Respondent's sexual relationship with Client A included sexual intercourse.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board concludes that the Respondent violated H. O. § 19- 311 (1), (9), and (11).

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is this 14th day of December 2018, by a majority of the full authorized membership of the of the Board, hereby,

ORDERED that the Respondent 's license to practice social work of the Board, State of Maryland, is hereby **REVOKED**; and it is further

ORDERED that Respondent shall return to the Board, all Maryland social work licenses within ten (10) days of the date of this Order; and it is further.

ORDERED that the effective date of this Order is the date that it is signed by the Board; and it is further

ORDERED that for purposes of public disclosure and as permitted by Md. General Provisions §§ 4-101 *et seq.* (2014 & 2017 Supp.), this document consists of the contents of the foregoing Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order, and is reportable to any entity to whom the Board is obligated to report; and it is further

ORDERED that this Order is final and a public document pursuant to Md. General Provisions §§ 4-104 *et seq.* (2014 & 2017 Suppl.).

12/14/18

Sherryl Silberman LCSW-C

Date

Sherryl Silberman, LCSW-C
Board Chair
State Board of Social Work Examiners

NOTICE OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by a final decision of the Board under Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 19-311 may file a petition for judicial review in the circuit court within thirty (30) days as provided by Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 19-313, Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-222, and Title 7, Chapter 200 of the Maryland Rules, including Md. Rule 7-203 ("Time for Filing Action").