

**LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS**

**IN THE MATTER OF
KRISTIN RICHARDS
LICENSE NO. 11001**

COMPLAINT NUMBER 2012-128

CONSENT AGREEMENT AND ORDER

WHEREAS, Kristin Richards, (“Ms. Richards”) is a credentialed social worker subject to the jurisdiction and rules and regulations of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners (the “Board”); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to a complaint and an administrative investigation, Ms. Richards has indicated her desire to resolve this matter through a Consent Agreement and Order as provided for in Rule No. 907 of the Board’s Rules, Standards and Procedures and La. R.S. 49:955(D) of the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Richards, has admitted the following:

1. Ms. Richards is, and was at all times pertinent to the facts and matters alleged herein, a Licensed Master Social Worker (“LMSW”), licensed by the Board to engage in the practice of social work in the State of Louisiana pursuant to the Social Work Practice Act, La. R.S. 37:2701 *et seq.*, as evidenced by License No. 11001.
2. At all times pertinent to the facts and matters alleged herein, Ms. Richards was engaged in the practice of social work as a clinician at the O’Brien House.

3. While serving as a clinician at the O'Brien House, Ms. Richards was the social worker for a client, AM, who was admitted to the O'Brien House for substance abuse treatment.
4. Ms. Richards served as AM's substance abuse counselor while he was at O'Brien House. In that capacity, she created AM's treatment plan and provided individual counseling on a weekly basis.
5. While Ms. Richards was still providing therapy to AM, and AM was still a client of O'Brien House, she engaged in personal text messages with AM.
6. AM graduated from the O'Brien House program on, or around, September 29, 2011; however, part of the aftercare treatment plan that Ms. Richards set up for AM included reporting back to the O'Brien House with updates.
7. After AM graduated from the O'Brien House program, Ms. Richards and AM met, and communicated, in a personal capacity. Ms. Richards brought AM to her house, where he would spend the night. In late October, or early November of 2011, a personal and sexual relationship began between Ms. Richards and AM, which lasted until early January 2012.
8. Ms. Richards resigned from her position with O'Brien House on March 29, 2012, after her employer became aware of her personal relationship with AM.

WHEREAS, by engaging in a prohibited personal relationship with a client, Ms. Richards has violated Rule 113(A) of the Board's Rules, Standards and Procedures which is cause for disciplinary action pursuant to La. R.S. 37:2717(A)(5).

WHEREAS, by engaging in a sexual relationship with a former client, Ms. Richards has violated Rule 113(B)(4) of the Board's Rules, Standards and Procedures which is cause for the Board to take disciplinary action pursuant to La. R.S. 37:2717(A)(5).

WHEREAS, by engaging in a personal relationship and sexual relationship with a former client, Ms. Richards has engaged in unprofessional or unethical conduct as defined in the rules and regulations adopted by the Board, such action which is cause for disciplinary action pursuant to La. R.S. 37:2717(A)(11).

WHEREAS, by engaging in a personal and sexual relationship with former client, Ms. Richards has engaged in conduct which demonstrates she has failed to maintain the qualification of good moral character, which is cause for disciplinary action pursuant to La. R.S. 37:2717(A)(12).

WHEREAS, Ms. Richards has indicated her desire to resolve this matter through a Consent Agreement and Order;

WHEREAS, the undersigned Assistant Attorney General has conducted an interview with the respondent who has indicated her desire to resolve this matter through a Consent Agreement and Order;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that in consideration of the foregoing and pursuant to the authority vested in the Board by La. R.S. 49:955(D), the Board orders and Ms. Richards accepts the following administrative action which is a final decision pursuant to La. R.S. 49:958:

1. Ms. Richards' credential shall be revoked for a period of four years.
2. If, at the end of the four year revocation period, Ms. Richards wishes to apply for her LMSW, she shall be required to meet any requirements a new applicant would have to meet for becoming a LMSW, as described in the Louisiana Social Work Practice Act and the Rules, Standards and Procedures. In the event of reinstatement, the Board reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to place conditions on the Ms. Richards' practice.
3. Upon re-entering the workforce and once again practicing social work, Ms. Richards shall complete one (1) hour of supervision of her social work practice every other week for a period of twenty-four (24) months by a LCSW-BACS pre-approved by the Board. Ms. Richards shall submit to the Board the name of the potential supervisor and his/her resume within fifteen (15) days of resuming the practice of social work. The potential supervisor shall submit a letter to the Board stating his/her acceptance of the provision of said supervision and stating he/she is not, nor previously has been, professionally or personally affiliated with Ms.

Richards prior to this request for supervision. The supervisor shall submit quarterly supervision reports to the Board documenting dates met for supervision, topics addressed and progress made in supervision. Ms. Richards is responsible for all costs associated with supervision.

4. Ms. Richards shall pass the Board's Open Book Examination on the Social Work Practice Act and Rules, Standards & Procedures within ninety (90) days of applying for her license.
5. Ms. Richards shall pay a fine for the above-referenced violations in the amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) prior to reapplication for a social work credential. Such fine is authorized by La. R.S. 37:2717(B)(5). Installment payments by certified check, money order or credit card are allowable. There shall be no pre-payment penalty.
6. Ms. Richards shall pay the investigative and legal costs associated with Complaint 2012-128 in the amount of ONE THOUSAND, EIGHT HUNDRED, NINETY NINE DOLLARS AND 75/100 (\$1,899.75) prior to reapplication for a social work credential. There shall be no pre-payment penalty.

Waiver of Rights. Licensee is aware that she has the right to consult with an attorney of her choice and understands she has the right to an administrative hearing on the facts in this case. She understands and agrees that by signing this Agreement, she is waiving her rights to a hearing. Further, she understands and agrees that she is relieving the prosecutor of any burden it has of proving the facts admitted above. Licensee further understands and agrees that by signing this Agreement she is voluntarily and knowingly

giving up her right to present oral and documentary evidence, to present rebuttal evidence, to cross-examine witnesses against her, and to appeal the Board's decision.

Effect of Non Acceptance of Agreement. Licensee and the prosecutor agree that this Consent Agreement and Order is subject to the approval of the Board. They agree that, if the Board rejects this agreement, it will be void, and an Administrative Complaint may be filed. If this agreement is rejected by the Board it will not constitute a waiver of licensee's right to a hearing on the matters alleged in an administrative complaint and the admissions contained herein will have no effect. Licensee agrees that, if the Board rejects this agreement, the Board may decide the matter after a hearing, and its consideration of this agreement shall not alone be grounds for claiming that the Board is biased against her, that it cannot fairly decide the case, or that it has received ex parte communication.

Address of Board. All payments ordered and any reports required by this Consent Agreement and Order shall be addressed to: Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, 18550 Highland Road, Suite B, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809.

IT IS HEREBY FURTHER ORDERED that this Consent Agreement and Order shall take effect immediately upon its adoption by the Board and is a public record of the Board. The terms of this Consent Agreement and Order may be published and reported, including but not limited to, the LABSWE Newsletter, the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB), and the National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB).

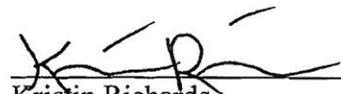
The prosecutor acknowledges negotiation and preparation of this Consent Agreement and Order in order to resolve, with prejudice, all matters for which the social worker could be charged under Complaint 2012-128, and further certifies that this Consent Agreement and Order is consistent with the evidence, adequately addresses the complaint, and represents a true and correct statement of that which could be proven at a hearing of this matter.

DATED: 3/20/13


Emily Andrews
Assistant Attorney General
Prosecutor

I, Kristin Richards, have read the Consent Agreement and Order, understand it, and agree to be bound by its terms and conditions. I specifically acknowledge that failure to comply with the terms of the Consent Agreement and Order may result in further revocation or suspension of my license. The admissions contained herein will be considered proven and the only issue will be failure to follow the terms of the Consent Agreement and Order.

DATED: 2.11.13


Kristin Richards

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 11th day or February, 2013, at Lake Charles, Louisiana.

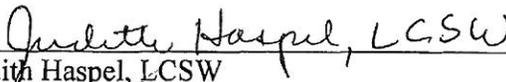

Notary Public # 8337
Print Name: W. Landon Richard
My commission expires: upon death

ORDER

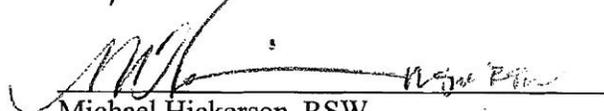
The Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, having examined the Consent Agreement and Order, Case No. 2012-128, adopted the Consent Agreement and Order in this matter.

DATED this 22nd day of March, 2013 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

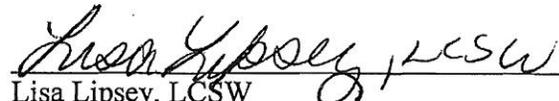
LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK
EXAMINERS



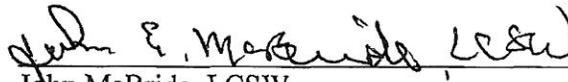
Judith Haspel, LCSW



Michael Hickerson, RSW



Lisa Lipsey, LCSW



John McBride, LCSW



Carla Moore, LMSW

Parker Sternbergh, LCSW