

**LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS**

IN THE MATTER OF

ANGELA LOVAS

LICENSE NUMBER 9024

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS

OF LAW AND SANCTIONS

NUMBER 2014-76

DECISION AND ORDER

This matter came before the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners (“Board”) on April 8, 2016, for a hearing on Administrative Complaint #2014-76, filed with the Board by Madeline Carbonette, Assistant Attorney General, who conducted the proceedings. Board members Judith Haspel, LCSW, Yolanda Burnom, LCSW, John Shalett, LCSW, Peggy Salley, LCSW, and Carla Moore, LMSW, served on the hearing panel. George M. Papale served the hearing panel as the Board’s Independent Legal Counsel. The hearing panel, after considering all of the evidence, renders the following unanimous decision.

COMPLAINT HISTORY

The Administrative Complaint #2014-76 allegations are against Angela Lovas, formerly a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, license number 9024. The actions in question occurred during a time that she did have her license. The LABSWE received a rap sheet from the Department of Safety and Corrections, indicating that Ms. Lovas was arrested on October 24, 2013, and charged with forgery and felony theft. Two certified letters were sent requesting a response, and were signed for by Terry Lovas, but Ms. Lovas did not respond.

THE HEARING

The hearing was held on April 8, 2016. Angela Lovas was not present. Emily DeAngelo, Administrator for the Board, was called as a witness. She explained that Exhibit One was the criminal background check results showing that Ms. Lovas had been arrested for forgery and felony theft on

October 24, 2013. Exhibit two was a written request by Ms. DeAngelo, asking Ms. Lovas to respond to the receipt of the letter within 15 days. There was documentation that the letter was sent by registered mail and was signed for by Terry Lovas. Exhibit 3 was a second letter reiterating the need for a response to the first letter, and it was also signed for by Terry Lovas. In exhibit 4, Ms. DeAngelo requests Madeline Carbonette, Assistant Attorney General, to prepare a draft administrative complaint against Ms. Lovas. Exhibit 5 was the draft administrative complaint, and exhibit 6 was the actual administrative complaint. Notices were sent within the required number of days.

RESPONDENT'S FAILURE TO APPEAR

When the case was called for a hearing at the designated time, Respondent was not present and Respondent had not notified the Board of good cause for her absence. Accordingly, the Board, pursuant to Rule §941(B), proceeded with the adjudication, notwithstanding Respondent's absence. Without regard to Respondent's failure to participate, the Board maintained the standard of proof by a preponderance of the evidence as a prerequisite to making any findings of fact, including the adequacy of notice to Respondent.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent, Angela Lovas ("Ms. Lovas") was at all times pertinent to the facts and matters alleged herein, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker ("LCSW"), 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 number 9024.
2. On December 6, 2013, the Board received a report from the Louisiana State Police that Ms. Lovas was arrested on October 24, 2013, and charged with forgery and felony theft.
3. On December 9, 2013, the Board requested from Ms. Lovas information relating to the criminal charges by certified mail to the address on file with the Board.
4. Terry Lovas signed for the mailing of the letter on December 23, 2013.

5. The letter requested that Ms. Lovas provide a response to the Board within 15 days.
6. Ms. Lovas did not respond to the Board.
7. On July 24, 2014, the Board, after receiving no response to the first letter, made a second request for information relating to the criminal charges from Ms. Lovas by certified mail to the address on file with the Board.
8. The letter requested that Ms. Lovas provide a response to the Board within 15 days.
9. As of the date of the hearing, April 8, 2016, the Board has not received a response from Ms. Lovas.
10. Administrative record documents Ms. Lovas allowed her license to lapse on August 31, 2014.

THE LAPSE OF RESPONDENT'S LICENSE

Angela Lovas' unilateral decision not to renew her license cannot control the Board's right to adjudicate a pending disciplinary action relating to Respondent's conduct which occurred while her license was active. Otherwise, social workers could avoid the disciplinary process by allowing their licenses to lapse, leaving the jurisdiction and applying for licensure in another state. Furthermore, the Board concludes that neither the Practice Act nor the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act requires the Board to wait an indefinite period of time until Respondent applies for licensure. The Board can discern no useful public purpose or benefit in suspending the disciplinary process awaiting a future license application that may never occur. Under the above circumstances, the Board has concluded that its jurisdiction to adjudicate the pending complaint is continuing, notwithstanding Respondent's lapsed license.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the evidence presented, and in accordance with the above-stated Findings of Fact, the Board concludes Ms. Lovas failed to cooperate with an investigation of the Board as required by Rule §117(C), which is cause for discipline pursuant to LA R.S. 37:2717(A)(5).

SANCTIONS

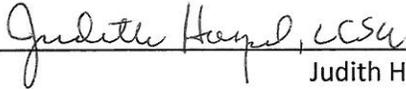
The Board determined that the following disciplinary actions are appropriate and, accordingly,

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. Ms. Lovas' license to practice social work in Louisiana as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker is hereby **revoked**; and therefore, she is not authorized to practice social work.
2. Ms. Lovas may not reapply for any form of license or credential to practice social work in Louisiana for a period of three (3) years from the date of this Decision and Order and upon such reapplication, Ms. Lovas shall meet all requirements of a new applicant.
3. In the event that Ms. Lovas applies for and obtains a license or credential to practice social work, the Board shall have the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to place restrictions on Ms. Lovas' license or credential to practice social work.
4. Ms. Lovas shall reimburse the costs to adjudicate this matter in the amount of \$944.25 within 12 months from the date this Decision and Order is signed. All payments shall be addressed to the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners and mailed to 18550 Highland Road, Suite B, Baton Rouge, LA 70809.
5. This Decision and Order is a public record of the Board. The terms shall 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).

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, this 20 Day of May, 2016



Judith Haspel, LCSW
Chairperson