

**LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF  
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS**

**IN THE MATTER OF  
COURTNEY LACAZE GRIFFITH  
LICENSE NO. 9416**

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS  
OF LAW AND SANCTIONS  
NUMBER 2015-121**

This matter came before the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners (“Board”) on April 8, 2016, for a hearing on Administrative Complaint #2015-121, 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.

**COMPLAINT HISTORY**

Administrative Complaint #2015-121 alleges that Courtney Griffith, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (“LCSW”) number 9418, was randomly selected for a continuing education audit for the time period from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. On her renewal application she had documented that she had completed all required continuing education for the period. Her continuing education documentation was to be submitted to the Board office by August 31, 2014; however by the date of this hearing, April 8, 2016, despite repeated notification, Ms. Griffith has not complied with this requirement.

**THE HEARING**

The hearing was held on April 8, 2016. Ms. Griffith was not present. Ms. Carbonette called Ms. DeAngelo as a witness. She testified to the following: Exhibit 1 is the renewal form that Ms. Griffith completed on 8/27/14, where she checked the box indicating that she had completed all of her

continuing education requirements. Exhibit 2 is the form that shows that Ms. Griffith's license has lapsed. Exhibit 3 is notification dated September 3, 2014, that Ms. Griffith was selected for a random audit of her continuing education, that her documentation had been due on August 31, 2014, it was not received, and that she must submit it no later than September 26, 2014. This was sent by regular mail. Exhibit 4 is a letter sent by certified mail on January 23, 2015 advising again that her documentation of continuing education had not been received, and that the LABSWE ("Board") would be notified and may initiate complaint proceedings. Included in Exhibit 4 is documentation that the letter was received and signed for by Courtney Griffith. Exhibit 5 is a letter dated March 9, 2015 from Ms. DeAngelo to Ms. Carbonette, stating that a complaint was being filed against Ms. Griffith. Exhibit 6 is the draft Administrative Complaint dated September 15, 2015. It was sent by certified mail only and it was unclaimed. Exhibit 7 is a letter to Ms. Griffith sent by certified and registered mail to the address that the Board has on file for her. The one sent by registered mail was returned and the one sent by certified mail was unclaimed. In that letter, Ms. Griffith was notified of the date of the hearing, and that her evidence of continuing education was never received. Ms. DeAngelo also testified that at some point Ms. Griffith called the office, stated that she completed her continuing education, and she did not know why she was receiving the notice. According to rule 911 (C), Ms. Griffith received sufficient service.

#### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. Respondent, Courtney Griffith (M. Griffith) is 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 No. 9418.

2. As a condition of her practice as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Ms. Griffith was required to complete continuing education hours in accordance with Rule 317 (L) between the time periods of July 1, 2013 through June 20, 2014.
3. Ms. Griffith filed her renewal application online on August 27, 2014, which documented that she completed all required continuing education for the July 1, 2013 and June 20, 2014 collection period.
4. Ms. Griffith was randomly selected for a continuing education audit for this time period.
5. Notice of the audit was sent to Ms. Griffith by certified mail and Ms. Griffith was requested to submit a completed audit form and proof of attendance for continuing education events no later than August 31, 2014. (There is no record that Ms. Griffith received the notice.)
6. On or about September 2, 2014, the Administrator notified Ms. Griffith by regular mail that her continuing education documents must be submitted no later than September 26, 2014.
7. Ms. Griffith failed to submit the requested documents.
8. On January 23, 2015, the Administrator notified Ms. Griffith by certified mail that the board would be notified that her continuing education documents had not been received and that a complaint may be filed against her for non-compliance.
9. Ms. Griffith signed for the certified letter dated January 23, 2015 on February 9, 2015.
10. To date, Ms. Griffith has not submitted her continuing education documents.

#### **Conclusions of Law**

Based on the evidence presented, and in accord with the above-stated findings of Fact, the Board concludes:

1. Ms. Griffith failed to complete the continuing education required for her practice as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, thus violating Rule 317(L) which is cause for disciplinary action pursuant to La. R.S. 37:2717 (A)(5).
2. By documenting that she had completed her continuing education hours on her renewal online on August 27, 2014, Ms. Griffith's actions constitute a willful violation of the Social Work Practice Act which is cause for disciplinary action pursuant to La. R.S. 37:2727 (A)(3).
3. In accordance with La. R.S. 37:2717 (D), the requirements of due process have been met, and based on sufficient cause, the Board is authorized to enter an order suspending or revoking the license, certificate or registration or imposing probationary conditions for Ms. Griffith.

#### **Sanctions**

The Board determined that the following disciplinary actions be taken:

1. Ms. Griffith's license is revoked; therefore, she is not authorized to practice social work.
2. Ms. Griffith may reapply for a license after a period of three years. Ms. Griffith shall meet all requirements of a new applicant.
3. In the event of reinstatement, the Board reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to place restrictions on Licensee's practice of social work.
4. Ms. Griffith shall reimburse the costs to adjudicate this matter in the amount of \$1,021.15 within twelve (12) months from the date this decision is signed. All payments shall be remitted by certified check, money order, or credit card, and addressed to: Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, 18550 Highland Road, Suite B, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809.

5. This decision 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).

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Date

  
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Judith Haspel, LCSW  
Chairperson