

**LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF  
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS**

**IN THE MATTER OF  
LEIGH ANN O'BRIEN  
LICENSE NO. 4459**

**COMPLAINT NO. 2022-99**

**CONSENT AGREEMENT AND ORDER**

**WHEREAS**, Leigh Ann O'Brien ("Ms. O'Brien") is a credentialed social worker subject to the jurisdiction and the rules and regulations of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners ("Board" or "LABSWE");

**WHEREAS**, on May 25, 2022, a complaint against Ms. O'Brien was filed with the Board by an individual who was involved in a custody evaluation with Ms. O'Brien as the mental health evaluator. The complaint described concerns about Ms. O'Brien engaging in unprofessional and/or unethical conduct, including (1) failing to submit accurate evaluation reports; (2) failing to timely submit evaluation reports; and (3) failing to complete necessary forms related to an evaluation;

**WHEREAS**, by letter dated June 13, 2022, the Board notified Ms. O'Brien of the complaint filed against her, provided Ms. O'Brien with a summary of the nature of the complaint, and requested that Ms. O'Brien, within fifteen (15) days, provide a written response giving her review of the allegations raised in the complaint;

**WHEREAS**, by correspondence dated June 30, 2022, Ms. O'Brien responded to the complaint, giving her response to the allegations contained therein;

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**WHEREAS**, by correspondence dated September 12, 2022, Emily DeAngelo, Board Administrator, notified Ms. O'Brien of an amendment to the original complaint and requested that Ms. O'Brien submit additional documentation to support her statement that the Board recommended she should not testify in the judicial proceeding between complainant and complainant's husband regarding custody of their minor daughter because of a conflict of interest within ten (10) days;


**WHEREAS**, by correspondence dated September 27, 2022, Ms. O'Brien responded to the Board Administrator's request for additional documentation to support Ms. O'Brien's statement that the Board recommended she should not testify due to a conflict of interest;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to a complaint and an administrative investigation, Ms. O'Brien 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;

**WHEREAS**, Ms. O'Brien has admitted to the following:

1. Ms. O'Brien 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 Number 4459.
2. Ms. O'Brien was appointed as the mental health evaluator in the case between complainant and complainant's former husband to make a recommendation regarding custody of their minor child.
3. Ms. O'Brien did not follow up with complainant to ensure that various forms related to the custody evaluation were completed and signed.

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4. Ms. O'Brien did not submit her evaluation report in a timely manner, which she alleged was due to COVID-19.
5. Emily DeAngelo, Board Administrator, informed Ms. O'Brien that Ms. O'Brien could decide whether to testify and that no statute or rule prevented her from doing so.

**WHEREAS**, by (1) failing to timely submit evaluation reports; and (2) failing to complete necessary forms related to an evaluation, Ms. O'Brien violated La. R.S. 37:2717(A)(5) and La. Admin. Code tit. 46:XXV §111(G)(5).

**WHEREAS**, undersigned counsel has confirmed Ms. O'Brien's desire to resolve this matter through a Consent Agreement and Order;

**WHEREAS**, Ms. O'Brien agrees not to repeat the misconduct mentioned in this Consent Agreement and Order, and acknowledges that any further misconduct mentioned in this Consent Agreement and Order will be considered a violation of the terms of this Consent Agreement and Order and shall be cause for further disciplinary action;

**WHEREAS**, Ms. O'Brien recognizes her right to have an administrative adjudication of the charges outlined in the complaint and notice letter, at which time Ms. O'Brien would be entitled to be represented by legal counsel, to call witnesses, and to present witnesses on her behalf in defense or in mitigation of the charges made, and to a decision thereon by the Board based upon written findings of fact and conclusions of law in accordance with the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act. Ms. O'Brien nonetheless waives her right to formal adjudication and, pursuant to La. R.S. 49:955(D), consents to the entry of the Consent Agreement and Order set forth hereinafter. Ms. O'Brien also acknowledges that she waives any rights to which she may be entitled pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, La. R.S. 49:951, et seq., or which she otherwise

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may be afforded by any law, to contest her agreement to, or the force and effect of this Consent Agreement and Order, in any Court or other forum.

**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. O'Brien accepts the following administrative action which is a final decision pursuant to La. R.S. 49:958:

1. The LCSW license of Leigh Ann O'Brien to be engaged in the practice of social work in the State of Louisiana, as evidenced by license number 4459 shall be, and is hereby REPRIMANDED. Accordingly, Ms. O'Brien accepts and shall maintain strict compliance with the following terms and conditions.
2. Ms. O'Brien shall complete a total of six (6) hours of continuing education on the subject of documentation. These hours are to be pre-approved by the Board prior to completion. These continuing education hours must be completed in addition to all standard renewal requirements for her LCSW licensure. Ms. O'Brien shall provide the Board with evidence of attendance within twelve (12) months after all parties sign this Consent Agreement and Order.
3. Ms. O'Brien shall pay a fine in the amount of FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND 00/100 (\$500.00) within one (1) year from the date all parties sign this Consent Agreement and Order. The payments shall be made on a quarterly basis with the first payment due within ninety (90) days from the date all parties sign this Consent Agreement and Order. Payment shall be made by credit card, certified check, or money order.
4. Ms. O'Brien shall pay all costs associated with Complaint No. 2022-99 in the amount of \$1,112.50 within twelve (12) months after the date all parties sign this

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Consent Agreement and Order. The payments shall be made on a quarterly basis with the first payment due within ninety (90) days from the date all parties sign this Consent Agreement and Order. The payments shall be made by credit card, certified check, or money order.

5. Ms. O'Brien specifically acknowledges that failure to comply with the terms of this Consent Agreement and Order may result in a denial, revocation, or suspension of any license, certificate, or registration issued by, or applied for, in accordance with La. R.S. 37:2717.
6. Ms. O'Brien shall report the terms of this Consent Agreement and Order to any board or agency with which she is licensed or registered.
7. By agreeing to the terms of this Consent Agreement and Order, Ms. O'Brien waives all rights to appeal this adjudication.

**Effect of Non-Acceptance of Agreement.** Ms. O'Brien acknowledges that this Consent Agreement and Order is subject to the approval of the Board. She further acknowledges and agrees that if the Board rejects this Consent Agreement and Order, it will be void, and an Administrative Complaint may be filed relative to the allegations contained herein. If this Consent Agreement and Order is rejected by the Board, it will not constitute a waiver of Ms. O'Brien's right to a hearing on the matters alleged in an Administrative Complaint and the admissions contained herein will have no effect. She further agrees that if the Board rejects this Consent Agreement and Order, the members of the Board may decide the matter after a hearing, and their consideration of this Consent Agreement and Order shall not alone be grounds for recusal of any member of the Board, including any claims that the Board is biased against her, that it cannot fairly decide the case, or that it has received ex parte communication.

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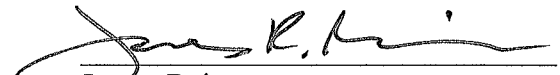
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**Address of Board.** All payments ordered and any reports required by this Consent Agreement and Order shall be addressed to: Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, 18550 Highland Road, Suite B, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809.

**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 in, 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 No. 2022-99, 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: 2/15/23

  
James Raines  
Prosecutor

I, Leigh Ann O'Brien, 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 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. I make these acknowledgements and waivers in support of a final disposition of the pending investigation of Complaint No. 2022-99 by Consent Agreement and Order pursuant to La. R.S. 49:955(D), in lieu of the institution and prosecution of formal administrative proceedings, and accordingly consent to the entirety of the

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Order set forth above and further waive any right to which I may be entitled under the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act or any other law to contest, in any court, my agreement to this Order. By my subscription hereto, I also hereby authorize the Prosecutor to present this Order to the LABSWE for its consideration and to disclose to and discuss with the LABSWE the nature and results of the investigation of this matter. I herein waive any objection to such disclosure based on due process of law under either the State or Federal Constitution or under State statutory law, including La. R.S. 49:960. I expressly acknowledge that the disclosure of such information to the LABSWE shall be without prejudice to the Prosecutor's authority to file a formal Administrative Complaint, or the LABSWE's capacity to adjudicate such Administrative Complaint, should the LABSWE decline to approve this Consent Agreement and Order. I further acknowledge my awareness that should the LABSWE approve this Consent Agreement and Order that the Consent Agreement and Order will become a matter of public record.

DATED: 2/12/23

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Leigh Ann O'Brien

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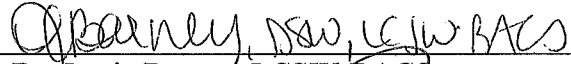
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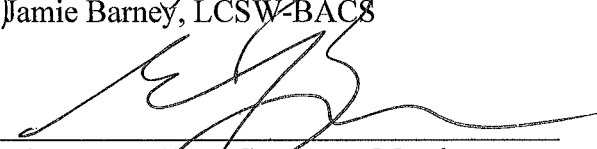
**ORDER**

The Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, having examined the Consent Agreement and Order, Case No. 2022-99, adopted the Consent Agreement and Order in this matter.

DATED this 24<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2023, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

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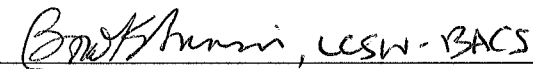
  
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Dr. Jamie Barney, LCSW-BACS

  
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Evan Bergeron, Esq., Consumer Member

  
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Dr. Hyacinth McKee, LCSW-BACS

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Melissa Smith Haley, LMSW

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Trinity George, RSW

  
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Bora Sunseri, LCSW-BACS

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Ruth Weinzettle, LCSW-BACS

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