

**LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF  
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**COMPLAINT NO. 2017-34**

**ADA M. CRAIGE-ROBERSON, LCSW-BACS  
LICENSE NO. 4605**

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER**

The above captioned matter came before a hearing panel of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners ("Board") on August 21, 2020 in executive session pursuant to La. R.S. 37:2717 and L.A.C. 46:XXV.909 and consistent with the Board's duty to safeguard the public.

Present were:

Hearing panel members: Jennifer Burch, LCSW-BACS; LaTonya Charles, LMSW; Brent Villemarette, LCSW-BACS; John Shalett, LCSW-BACS; and Ruth Weinzettle, LCSW-BACS ("Hearing Panel");

Madeline Carbonette, Assistant Attorney General, serving as Prosecutor;

Sheri M. Morris serving as counsel to the Hearing Panel; and

Ada Craige-Roberson, LCSW-BACS represented by Arthur A. Lemann, attorney.

**PRE-HEARING MATTERS**

Ada Nelson, RSW, who was assigned to the hearing panel, was unable to attend the hearing. The parties stipulated to the substitution of Brent Villemarette, LCSW-BACS for Ada Nelson, RSW, as a hearing panel member.

Mr. Lemann moved for a dismissal of the Administrative Complaint forwarded to Respondent on June 16, 2020 on the grounds of a peremptory exception of prescription and lack of due process. Considering the arguments of counsel, the Motion to Dismiss for prescription was denied on the basis La. R.S. 37:21(B)(9) makes the time limitations in La. R.S. 37:21(A) inapplicable to the Board and no showing of lack of due process was made.

Mr. Lemann stipulated to the introduction of exhibits presented by Ms. Carbonette SWB 1 through SWB 21. Exhibits SWB 1 through SWB 21 were accepted into evidence by the Hearing Panel.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. Ada M. Craige-Roberson ("Respondent") is licensed by the Board as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Board-Approved Clinical Supervisor ("LCSW-BACS") and is authorized

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. 4605, (Answer).

2. Respondent was licensed by the Board in 1998, (Respondent's Testimony).
3. From approximately January 2009 to July 2015, Respondent was employed as a senior management officer in the capacity of Director of Programs at Alternatives Living, Inc. located in New Orleans, Louisiana. Respondent served as the Program Director and Clinical Director for the CDBG grant, (Answer).
4. Alternatives Living, Inc. was a Louisiana non-profit corporation for charitable, educational and scientific purposes, including providing housing (temporary, transitional, and permanent) for homeless, displaced, disabled, families, single females/males, women with children, youths, adolescents, elderly, individuals with mental illness and veterans, (Answer).
5. Alternatives Living, Inc. was incorporated by Respondent's mother who served as the Chief Executive Officer, when Respondent was 23 years old, (Respondent's Testimony).
6. Respondent's mother and Respondent's, Rickey Roberson, both worked for Alternatives Living, Inc. Respondent's mother and husband have Masters degrees in Business Administration. Rickey Roberson served as the Chief Financial Officer for Alternatives Living, Inc., (Respondent's Testimony).
7. In 2009, Alternatives Living, Inc., which had worked with the Office of Community Development waiver and NOW waiver programs funded through Medicaid, received an email regarding a HUD grant funded by a Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") for permanent housing support, (Respondent's Testimony).
8. Alternatives Living, Inc. was funded primarily through contracts with the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals to manage federally funded grant programs designed to provide training, supervision, and housing support services to clients with severe and complex disabilities. Alternatives Living, Inc. also received CDBG funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for the administration of the Permanent Supporting Housing program for the benefit of low-income individuals and families.
9. From January 2009 to July 2015, Respondent was an agent of Alternatives Living, Inc. authorized to use Alternatives Living, Inc.'s credit cards and sign on Alternatives Living, Inc.'s bank accounts, (Answer).
10. The Louisiana Legislative Auditor reported that from July 7, 2010 to December 20, 2013, Respondent and two other senior management officers incurred expenses totaling \$133,164 for the purchase of sports and entertainment event tickets, the lease of a

luxury vehicle, the purchase of a luxury vehicle, personal travel and college tuition payments. Alternatives Living, Inc. incurred \$18,818 for credit card late fees, over-limit fees and interest charges from July 2010 to March 2014.

11. The Louisiana Legislative Auditor reported that Respondent used an Alternatives Living, Inc. credit card to make purchases totaling more than \$1,400 while on personal travel on a Royal Caribbean Cruise.
12. The Louisiana Legislative Auditor reported that Respondent used an Alternatives Living, Inc. credit card to make purchases totaling more than \$1,300 while on personal travel on a Carnival Cruise.
13. The Louisiana Legislative Auditor reported that Alternatives Living, Inc.'s funds were used to pay college tuition for Respondent's son.
14. The Louisiana Legislative Auditor reported that from March 10, 2010 to December 27, 2013, Alternatives Living, Inc. incurred expenses of \$247,925 for which there is little or no documentation to support the business purpose of the expenses. Undocumented expenses included checks made payable to cash, fuel station purchases, meal purchases, fundraising expenses and team building expenses.
15. The Louisiana Legislative Auditor reported that Respondent and another senior management officer used approximately \$5,300 of Alternatives Living, Inc.'s funds for a fundraiser and approximately \$12,625 of Alternatives Living, Inc.'s funds for another fundraiser.
16. The Louisiana Legislative Auditor reported that Respondent and another senior management officer used more than \$9,770 of Alternatives Living, Inc.'s funds for meals at restaurants including Red Fish Grill and Copelands.
17. The Louisiana Legislative Auditor reported that from October 21, 2010 to September 28, 2011, Alternatives Living, Inc. improperly billed the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Permanent Supportive Housing program \$2,024 for administrative labor costs simultaneously billed to other programs.
18. Respondent left Alternatives Living, Inc. in 2016 to run group homes, (Respondent's Testimony).
19. On June 1, 2016, Respondent and the two other senior management officers were indicted for Conspiracy and Theft of Federal Funds in Criminal Case No. 16-109, Eastern District of Louisiana, United States District Court.
20. On September 22, 2017, the United States requested dismissal of all indictments without prejudice as to Respondent based on the guilty plea of her husband.



21. On September 25, 2017, the United States District Court dismissed the indictments against Respondent. The United States reserved the right to refile the indictments, if Respondent failed to comply with the terms of a 12-month pretrial diversion agreement.
22. Respondent completed the requirements of the pretrial diversion agreement, (Respondent's Testimony).
23. Respondent has been the Clinical Director for three inpatient hospitals for the last few months, (Respondent's Testimony).

#### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. Respondent violated La. R.S. 37:2717(A)(5) by violating L.A.C. 46:XXV.107(A) by failing to maintain the qualification of moral character by using Alternatives Living, Inc.'s funds for personal and non-business expenses and by improperly billing the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Permanent Supportive Housing program for administrative labor costs.
2. Respondent violated La. R.S. 37:2717(A)(12) by engaging in conduct which demonstrated she failed to maintain the qualification of moral character as required by La. R.S. 37:2708(A)(1) by using Alternatives Living, Inc.'s funds for personal and non-business expenses and by improperly billing the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Permanent Supportive Housing Program for administrative labor costs.
3. Respondent violated La. R.S. 37:2717(11) by engaging in unprofessional or unethical conduct by using Alternatives Living, Inc.'s funds for personal and non-business expenses and by billing the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Permanent Supportive Housing Program for administrative labor costs.

#### **ORDER**

Considering the evidence and testimony presented during the hearing in support of the Administrative Complaint;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that LCSW License No. 4650 issued to Ada M. Craige-Roberson ("Respondent") shall be placed on probation for a period of two years during which Respondent shall:

1. Not be an officer or owner of any entity which provides social work services;
2. Obtain at least one hour of supervision by a BACS per month during the probationary period;
3. Complete at least 6 hours of continuing education focusing on ethics and moral or legal implications; and

4. Shall not violate any provision of the Social Work Practice Act or any applicable rule promulgated by the Board; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED the BACS certification issued to Ada M. Craige-Roberson shall be suspended for a period of two years. After the suspension period Respondent may apply for reinstatement the BACS certification after completion of the 6.5 hour course, Board orientation and monthly supervision; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Ada M. Craige-Roberson is hereby assessed a fine of \$1,000 and with the costs of this proceeding of \$5,823.75. The fine and costs set forth herein shall be paid within 90 days from the date of this Order by certified check, credit card or money order to the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners and delivered to 18550 Highland Road, Suite B, Baton Rouge, LA 70809.

Signed this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 2020.

For the Hearing Panel,

 LCSW BACS  
John S. Shalett LCSW-BACS, Chairperson

