

MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPY
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR
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Examiners Committee

FILED
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COMPLAINT #19425

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR EXAMINERS COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF	:	
	:	
PATRICIA SPARDEL	:	Administrative Action
<i>37 PC00117100</i>	:	
Licensed to Practice	:	CONSENT ORDER
Professional Counseling	:	
In the State of New Jersey	:	
	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey Professional Counselor Examiners Committee ("the Committee") upon receipt of a complaint from J.B. regarding the professional counseling practice of Patricia Spardel ("respondent"), a Licensed Professional Counselor ("LPC"). J.B. stated that respondent provided counseling services to his ex-wife. At the request of the ex-wife, respondent wrote a report, dated February 25, 2002, to the Superior Court Judge presiding over the child custody dispute between J.B. and his

ex-wife. According to respondent, the purpose of the report was to demonstrate that the ex-wife could not attend joint counseling with J.B. J.B. complained that the February 25, 2002 report characterized him as "volatile" and stated that J.B.'s "outbursts have become frightening". Respondent presented this as fact although she had neither seen nor spoken with J.B. Additionally, respondent's report to the court included that J.B. had "called my [respondent's] private residence in the past and was very abrasive...I find these calls to be unacceptable and will file a complaint if any more are made." Respondent did not clarify to the court that respondent had called her office which is located in her private residence, and that J.B. had called on only one occasion.

Having reviewed the entire record, it appears to the Committee that respondent engaged in professional misconduct pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21 (e) when she made observations in a letter regarding J.B.'s character and conduct without indicating that she had no first hand knowledge of J.B. The negative picture of J.B. presented to the court was further enhanced when respondent interjected her own experience into the report which may have led the court to mistakenly believe that J.B. had called her more than once and called her at her home.

It appearing that respondent desires to resolve this matter without recourse to formal proceedings and for good cause shown:

IT IS ON THIS DAY OF 2002,

HEREBY ORDERED AND AGREED THAT:

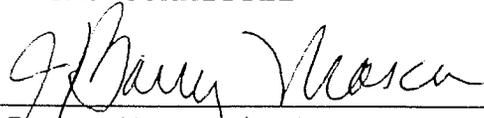
1. Respondent is hereby reprimanded for professional misconduct in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21 (e) for her February 25, 2002 letter to the court whereby she represents J.B.'s character and conduct as fact rather than as reported to her by her client, and she misrepresents J.B.'s telephone call to her.

2. Respondent is hereby assessed a civil penalty in the amount of one thousand, five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) to be paid in ten consecutive, monthly payments with each payment being in the amount of \$150.00. The first payment shall be due on or before November 15, 2002, and the remaining nine payments shall be due on or before the fifteenth day of each month until the penalty is paid in full. Payment shall be by certified check or money order, payable to the State of New Jersey, and sent to Dennis Gonzalez, Executive Director, Professional Counselor Examiners Committee, P.O. Box 45044, Newark, New Jersey 07101. If any payment is untimely, the full amount shall be immediately due and payable.

3. Respondent shall take a three credit, graduate course from an accredited institution in ethical practices in counseling. The course shall be pre-approved by the Committee, and respondent shall submit proof of full attendance at and successful completion of the course. The course shall be completed within twelve months of the

signing of the Consent Order.

NEW JERSEY PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS
EXAMINERS COMMITTEE



J. Barry Mascari, LPC
President

I have read the within Consent Order
and understand its terms. I hereby
consent to entry of the Consent Order
and to be bound by its terms.



Patricia Spardel, LPC