FILED BY THE BOARD OF
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS
April 9, 2015
J. Michael Walker

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

IN THE MATTER OF THE SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF THE LICENSE OF: **Dennis J. Cheteyan, EdD, LCSW** License No. 44SC00199200 TO PRACTICE SOCIAL WORK IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY	Administrative Action **CONSENT ORDER**

This matter was most recently opened to the New Jersey State Board of Social Work Examiners (the "Board") upon the Acting Attorney General's filing of an Administrative Complaint on June 6, 2014. Thereafter, on June 30, 2014, Respondent Dennis J. Cheteyan ("Respondent"), through counsel Michael Gannaio, Esq. filed an Answer admitting a portion of the alleged conduct but denying that his conduct violated Board statutes and regulations.

The complaint in this matter pertains to Respondent's dual role as a family therapist and court ordered visitation supervisor for the child S.R. and her father. In an admittedly difficult and contentious situation, Respondent endeavored to engage in

father/daughter reunification therapy with S.R. However, the Acting Attorney General alleges that in his performance of his dual role, Respondent failed to employ adequate professional safeguards and failed to adhere to accepted standards of care resulting in multiple violations of the applicable statutes and regulations.

It is undisputed that in February 2007, Respondent was appointed by Honorable Thomas P. Zampino, J.S.C., Superior Court of New Jersey, Essex County, Chancery Division - Family Part, to serve as the visitation supervisor for D.R. (father) and S.R. (daughter). At the time of the assignment, S.R. was approximately seven years old. Respondent was required to accompany D.R. and S.R. on weekly visits, observe the interactions between D.R. and S.R., provide feedback and guidance to D.R. regarding his observations of the visit, and provide progress reports to the Court regarding visits. In July 2008, Respondent accepted assignment by Judge Zampino to act as a father-daughter therapist for D.R. and S.R. The dual relationship was terminated in or about July 2009.

The Board finds that Respondent's dual roles created a potential impermissible conflict of interest arising from the incompatible obligations of a visitation supervisor as compared with a therapist. Respondent failed to manage these roles in accordance with accepted standards of care and thus his conduct evidenced violations of both Board regulations and N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h). The Board acknowledges Respondent's representation that his failure was unintentional. Additionally, Respondent maintained

inadequate records that failed to adhere to Board requirements and thus the Board is unable to assess whether the necessary comprehensive clinical assessment was performed at the outset of the father-daughter therapy.

Finally, the Board is concerned that Respondent did not maintain appropriate physical and professional boundaries with S.R. and that he was not forthcoming about his behavior in his testimony before the Board during an investigative inquiry. Respondent maintains that any lack of forthcomingness by him was merely unclear communication with the Board. Although the Board has no evidence of sexual misconduct and accepts that under some circumstances physical contact may be necessary for the safety of a child it has remaining concerns about Respondent's conduct and testimony. Therefore, the Board finds not only that Respondent failed to maintain appropriate boundaries but also that he was not completely truthful in his sworn testimony before the Board.

The parties desiring to resolve this matter without recourse to formal proceedings, the Board noting that Respondent has voluntarily limited his professional practice and ceased treating children and the Board finding that entry of this Order adequately protects the public health, safety, and welfare, and for good cause shown:

IT IS ON THIS 9th DAY OF April, 2015

HEREBY ORDERED AND AGREED THAT:

1. Contemporaneously with the signing of this Order, Respondent shall commence a sixty (60) day wind down period during

which he shall take appropriate steps to transfer care of his clients and during which he shall take on no new clients. At the conclusion of the sixty (60) days, Respondent shall voluntarily and permanently surrender his license and retire from the practice of social work in the State of New Jersey, to be deemed an indefinite suspension of his license. Respondent agrees that he shall not seek to reinstate his license to practice social work in New Jersey.

2. Sixty (60) days from the entry of the within order, Respondent shall permanently cease and desist from advertising, offering to engage in or engaging in the practice of social work, mental health therapy or counseling, personal or life coaching, or the provision of all social work services in New Jersey in any setting, including exempt settings as defined by N.J.S.A. 45:15BB-5.

3. Respondent shall, at the conclusion of the wind down period, surrender his wall certificate, wallet certificate, and his most recent renewal card of his license to practice as a social worker by mailing them to J. Michael Walker, Executive Director, Board of Social Work Examiners, P.O. Box 45033, Newark, New Jersey 07101.

4. Any practice in this State in violation of the above provisions shall constitute unlicensed practice and/or grounds for

discipline for violation of an Order of the Board as well as professional misconduct.

5. Respondent shall be assessed the costs of the State's investigation in this matter in the amount of $11,600 and the board shall immediately file a Certificate of Debt in that amount. Payment of costs shall be made by certified check, attorney's check or money order, in 35 monthly installment payments of $322.00 and a final payment of $330.00. Payment shall commence on May 1, 2015 and shall be due on the first day of each month thereafter. Failure to make a payment within one week of the due date shall trigger acceleration of the debt and render the entire balance due and owning. Checks and/or money orders shall be made payable to the State of New Jersey, and submitted to J. Michael Walker, Executive Director, State Board of Social Work Examiners, P.O. Box 45033, New Jersey 07101. Any other form of payment other than those noted above will be rejected and returned to the Respondent.

6. Respondent shall be assessed a civil penalty in the amount of $6,000 which penalty shall be indefinitely stayed. In the event that Respondent moves to set aside this Order, or is found to have practiced in violation of this Order, the parties agree that this amount shall immediately be due and owing.

NEW JERSEY BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

By: Dawn Apgar

Dawn Apgar, Ph.D., LSW, ACSW
Board President

I have read and understand the within Consent Order and agree to be bound by its terms. Consent is hereby given to the Board to enter this Order.

Dennis J. Cheteyan, EdD, LCSW

Date

Consent is given as to form and entry of this Order.

Michael Gannaio, Esq.
Attorney for Dennis J. Cheteyan

Date

I have read and understand the within Consent Order and agree to be bound by its terms. Consent is hereby given to the Board to enter this Order.

Dennis J. Cheteyan, EdD, LCSW

APRIL 1, 2015
Date

Consent is given as to form and entry of this Order.

Michael Gannaio, Esq.
Attorney for Dennis J. Cheteyan

Date 4/1/15