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Final Consent Order

**FILED**

Date: September 30, 2020

New Jersey Board of Social Work  
Examiners

*India Nunez*

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE SUSPENSION  
OR REVOCATION OF THE LICENSE OF

**TARA M. CARDINALE, LCSW**  
**License No. 44SC05690900**

TO PRACTICE SOCIAL WORK  
IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Administrative Action

**FINAL CONSENT ORDER**

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Social Work Examiners ("Board") upon receipt of information that Tara Cardinale, LCSW ("Respondent") was arrested and charged with one count of criminal sexual contact, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:14-3B, and one count of endangering the welfare of a child, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:24-4(a)(1). On March 5, 2020, Respondent entered into an Interim Consent Order with the Board voluntarily

surrendering her license pending the outcome of her criminal matter.

On August 20, 2020, Respondent pleaded guilty to the 4<sup>th</sup> degree crime of Criminal Sexual Contact, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:14-3B. Respondent, as a condition of her plea, agreed to permanently surrender her social worker's license.

Respondent's guilty plea is based on the following factual basis: While Respondent served as the primary therapist for A.L., an individual under the age of eighteen, she permitted A.L. to kiss her and fondle her buttock.

The Board finds that Respondent's conduct, as admitted in her guilty plea, constitutes professional misconduct; a conviction of an offense involving moral turpitude as well as one relating adversely to the practice of social work; and a failure to comply with regulations administered by the Board, specifically N.J.A.C. 13:44G-10.7(engaging in sexual contact with a client with whom she has a social worker-client relationship), therefore providing grounds for the Board to revoke Respondent's license to practice social work in New Jersey pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e), (f) and (h).

The parties being desirous of entering into a final resolution of this matter, and it appearing that Respondent has read the terms of the within Order and understands their meaning and effect and consents to be bound by same, and the Board finding that the within

disposition is adequately protective of the public health, safety and welfare, and for good cause shown,

IT IS, therefore, on this 30th day of September, 2020,

ORDERED AND AGREED THAT:

1. Respondent, Tara Cardinale, LCSW, hereby surrenders her license to practice social work in the State of New Jersey, with such surrender to be deemed a permanent revocation.

2. Respondent is permanently barred from applying for a license to practice social work in the State of New Jersey.

3. Any practice of social work, clinical social work, or any other mental health therapy or counseling in this State in violation of the above conditions shall constitute the unlicensed practice and/or grounds for discipline for violation of an Order of the Board as well as professional misconduct.

4. Within ten days of the filing of this Final Consent Order, Respondent shall return, if she has not already done so, her original New Jersey social work license to the Acting Executive Director of the Board by mailing them to Indira Nunez, Acting Executive Director, Board of Social Work Examiners, P.O. Box 45033, Newark, New Jersey 07101, promptly upon the filing of this Order.

5. The parties hereby stipulate that entry of this Final Consent Order is without prejudice to further action or investigation by this Board, the Attorney General, the Drug

Control Unit, the Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs, and/or any other law enforcement entities resulting from Respondent's conduct prior or subsequent to the entry of this Order. This Order shall be a full and final resolution by this Board of all violations and facts expressly referenced within this Order.

STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

BY: Maureen Braun Scalera LCSW  
Maureen Braun Scalera, LCSW  
Board Chair

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

Tara Cardinale  
Tara Cardinale, LCSW

9-29-20  
Date

Consent as to form:

Robert M. Biagiotti  
Robert M. Biagiotti, Esq.  
Attorney for Respondent

9-29-20  
Date