

**BEFORE THE STATE COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL WORKERS
STATE OF MISSOURI**

**In the Matter of the Application of:
HEATHER ELIZABETH WALKER-SHEPHERD**

**ORDER ISSUING A PROBATED CLINICAL
SOCIAL WORKER LICENSE**

The State Committee for Social Workers (the “Committee”), pursuant to Section 324.038, RSMo¹, issues this order granting a **PROBATED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER LICENSE, license number 2024014294**, to Heather Elizabeth Walker-Shepherd (“Applicant”).

As set forth in Section 324.038, RSMo, Applicant may submit a written request for hearing to the Administrative Hearing Commission seeking review of the Committee’s decision set forth in this Order. Such written request must be filed with the Administrative Hearing Commission within 30 days of the date the Committee mails this Order to Licensee. The written request should be addressed to the **Administrative Hearing Commission, United States Post Office Building, 131 W. High Street, P.O. Box 1557, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-1557**. Any such request should set forth that the applicant is qualified for nonprobated licensure pursuant to the laws and administrative regulations relating to Applicant’s profession. If such review is requested, a hearing shall be held pursuant to Chapter 621, RSMo. A Commissioner of the Administrative Hearing Commission will preside over the hearing. The hearing will be on the record and recorded by a court reporter. At the hearing, Applicant shall have the right to present testimony, call witnesses on her behalf, introduce evidence, cross-

¹ All statutory references are to the Revised Statutes of Missouri, as supplemented, unless otherwise indicated.

examine any witnesses called by the Committee, and object to any evidence introduced by the Committee and make legal argument to the Administrative Hearing Commission. Following the hearing, the Administrative Hearing Commission will issue an order including findings of fact, conclusions of law and a decision based on the evidence admitted at the hearing. A copy of the Administrative Hearing Commission's order will be delivered to the parties. Chapter 536, RSMo, sets forth the procedures for review of the order of the Administrative Hearing Commission.

If no written request for review is filed with the Administrative Hearing Commission within the 30-day period, the right to seek review of the Committee's decision shall be considered waived. Section 324.038.2, RSMo. Should Applicant make written request for review of this Order, the terms and conditions of this Order shall remain in full force and effect unless and until such time as the Administrative Hearing Commission or reviewing court orders otherwise.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Committee is an agency of the State of Missouri created and existing pursuant to Section 337.622, RSMo, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of Sections 337.600 through 337.689, RSMo.

2. Applicant, is a natural person who has registered her address with the Committee at 600 Market Street, Apt. 8, Sheldon, Missouri 64784².

3. On or about October 13, 2023, Applicant submitted an application for licensure as clinical social worker .

4. On the Application, Applicant answered "yes" to the question that stated:

Have you ever applied for a license as a social worker and been denied?

5. On the Application, Applicant answered “yes” to the question of:

Has your license or social work privileges ever been revoked, restricted, or have you ever been the subject of disciplinary action by any licensing agency, institution or any other entity?

6. Along with the Application, Applicant provided a written explanation of the charges filed against her and her subsequent conduct.

7. On or about December 28, 2018, the State Committee for Social Workers revoked Applicant’s previous clinical social workers license, number 2011040366, based upon Applicant’s failure to comply with the terms and conditions of a Settlement Agreement which became effective May 2, 2018, between the Applicant and the Committee.

8. Applicant had received three years’ probation on her license from the Committee pursuant to a Settlement Agreement, the discipline related to Applicant’s commission of billing errors to MoHealthNet that resulted in a finding that Applicant owed MoHealthNet \$18,531.05.

9. Applicant’s above noted revocation reasonably related to the qualifications, functions, and duties of a licensed clinical social worker.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

10. Section 324.038, RSMo, authorizes the Committee to issue a license subject to probation in lieu of denial and states:

1. Whenever a board within or assigned to the division of professional registration, including the division itself when so empowered, may refuse to issue a license for reasons which also serve as a basis for filing a complaint with the administrative hearing commission seeking

disciplinary action against a holder of a license, the board, as an alternative to refusing to issue a license, may, at its discretion, issue to an applicant a license subject to probation.

11. Section 337.603, RSMo, states in part “[n]o person shall use the title of “licensed clinical social worker” or “clinical social worker”, or engage in the practice of clinical social work in this state, unless the person is licensed as required by the provisions of sections 337.600 to 337.689.

12. Section 337.630, RSMo, authorizes the Committee to deny an application for a licensed clinical social worker license and states, in relevant portion:

1. The committee may refuse to issue or renew any license required by the provisions of sections 337.600 to 337.689 for one or any combination of causes stated in subsection 2 of this section. The committee shall notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for the refusal and shall advise the applicant of the applicant's right to file a complaint with the administrative hearing commission as provided by chapter 621.

2. The committee may cause a complaint to be filed with the administrative hearing commission as provided by chapter 621 against any holder of any license required by sections 337.600 to 337.689 or any person who has failed to renew or has surrendered the person's license for any one or any combination of the following causes:

...

(5) Incompetency, misconduct, fraud, misrepresentation or dishonesty in the performance of the functions or duties of a social worker licensed pursuant to this chapter;

(6) Violation of, or assisting or enabling any person to violate, any provision of sections 337.600 to 337.689, or of any lawful rule or regulation adopted pursuant to sections 337.600 to 337.689;

...

(13) Violation of any professional trust or confidence;

...

(15) Being guilty of unethical conduct as defined in the ethical standards for clinical social workers adopted by the committee by rule and filed with the secretary of state.

13. The Committee has cause to deny Applicant's application for a clinical social worker license pursuant to Section 337.330.2 (5), (6), (13) and (15), RSMo.

14. The Committee finds that issuance of a probated licensed clinical social worker license, subject to certain terms and conditions, in lieu of denial, will ensure protection of the public.

Terms and Conditions

15. The Committee, in lieu of denial, hereby issues a clinical social worker license, license number 2024014294, to Heather Elisabeth Walker-Shepherd, on **PROBATION** for a period of **3 YEARS** (the "Disciplinary Period") subject to the terms and conditions contained in this Order and set forth below. During the Disciplinary Period, Applicant shall be entitled to practice as a licensed clinical social worker, subject to compliance with this Order.

Terms and Conditions of the Disciplinary Period

16. Applicant shall comply with the following terms and conditions of probation during the Disciplinary Period:

- a. Applicant shall keep the Committee informed of Applicant's current work and home telephone numbers and addresses. Applicant shall notify the Committee in writing within ten (10) business days of any change in this information. If Applicant utilizes e-mail, Licensee shall provide the Committee with her current and active e-mail address;

- b. Applicant shall submit written reports of compliance on or before January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 of each calendar year of the Disciplinary Period, but no report shall be submitted no more than two weeks prior to each reports due date. Each written report of compliance shall state truthfully whether Applicant has complied with all conditions of the Disciplinary Period and, if not, shall provide full disclosure of the failure to comply. If Applicant has completed any continuing education during the reporting period, Applicant shall attach to her written compliance report, copies of documentation of completion of the continuing education. Each written report of compliance shall be due regardless of whether Applicant is engaging in the practice of social work;
- c. Applicant shall meet with the Committee or its representatives at such times and places as required by the Committee after notification of a required meeting;
- d. Applicant shall comply with all provisions of Chapter 337, RSMO, and its regulations, and all state and federal criminal laws and all state and federal laws related to the practice of clinical social work, including compliance with state revenue laws;
- e. Applicant shall engage in no conduct that would give the Committee cause to seek authority to discipline from the Administrative Hearing Commission as set forth in Section 337.630, RSMo;

- f. Upon the request of the Committee or its representative, Applicant shall immediately submit any and all records requested to show compliance with these terms and conditions;
- g. Applicant shall renew timely all licenses, shall pay timely all fees required for licensure and shall meet all other requirements necessary to maintain all licenses issued by the Committee current and active including timely completion of all required continuing professional education and not allowing her license to be suspended for failure to comply with the revenue laws of the state;
- h. Applicant shall accept and comply with unannounced visits from the Committee or its representatives to monitor Applicant's compliance with these terms and conditions.

Supervision Requirements

- a. During the Disciplinary Period, Applicant's practice as a social worker shall be supervised as set forth in this Order;
- b. During the Disciplinary Period, Applicant shall practice social work only under the order, control, oversight, guidance and full professional responsibility of the approved registered supervisor at the setting(s) as approved by the Committee;
- c. Within 30 days after the effective date of this Order, or if, Applicant is not currently engaged in the practice of social work, prior to beginning the practice of social work, Applicant shall submit no

fewer than 5 names of proposed clinical social workers who will agree to serve as Applicant's supervisor. The Committee may approve one of the proposed clinical social workers, or may require additional names to be submitted, which Applicant shall submit within 30 days of the Committee's request;

- d. The Committee will provide written notice to both Applicant and the supervisor of its approval of a supervisor. Applicant must begin supervision within 7 days of the Committee's approval of the supervisor. Applicant shall immediately provide the Committee written notice of the start date of the supervision and shall, within 7 days of the start date of the supervision, provide the Committee with a copy of the supervision agreement between Applicant and the supervisor;
- e. If Applicant fails to secure a supervisor within 30 days of the effective date of this Settlement Agreement, then Applicant shall cease to practice as a social worker until a supervisor is approved, per the terms of this Settlement Agreement;
- f. Applicant shall be responsible for any payment associated with the supervision;
- g. Supervision shall consist of at least monthly, consisting of at least 4 hours per month, on site face to face review of cases and review, approval, and co-signing of written reports such as case notes,

intake assessments, test reports, treatment plans, and progress reports;

- h. Applicant's supervisor shall submit written reports to the Committee due by the 5th day of each month of the Disciplinary Period. In these reports, the supervisor shall report to the Committee whether Applicant is in compliance with the terms of this Order, to the best knowledge of the supervisor, and Applicant's understanding and adherence to approved standards of professional and ethical conduct, areas of continued growth and development and accountability of supervision hours;
- i. If Applicant's approved supervisor becomes unable or decides not to continue to serve in the capacity of a supervisor or for any other reason ceases to serve as a supervisor for Applicant, then Applicant shall provide written notice to the Committee of the date the supervisor will cease to provide services and shall provide such notice within 3 business days of being so notified;
- j. Within 30 days of being notified of the need to find a new supervisor, Applicant shall secure a new supervisor in accord with the terms of this Settlement Agreement. If Applicant does not secure a new Committee approved supervisor, per the terms of this Settlement Agreement, Applicant shall cease practice as a social

worker until such time as a Committee approved supervisor is in place;

k. Applicant shall follow all directives of her supervisor related to her practice as a social worker.

17. Applicant may ask for early release from probation if all payments have been made to MO HealthNet Debt; Applicant must remain in good standing with her repayment plan. Upon the expiration of the Disciplinary Period and successful completion of the probation, Applicant's license shall be fully restored if all other requirements of the law have been satisfied; provided however, that in the event the Committee determines that Applicant has violated any term or condition of this Order, the Committee may, in its discretion, after an evidentiary hearing, vacate and set aside the discipline imposed herein and may suspend, revoke, or otherwise lawfully discipline Applicant's license.

18. The Committee shall enter no order imposing further discipline on Applicant's license without notice and an opportunity for hearing before the Committee in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 536, RSMo.

19. If the Committee determines that Applicant has violated a term or condition of this Order, and that violation would also be actionable in a proceeding before the Administrative Hearing Commission or in a circuit court, the Committee may elect to pursue any lawful remedies or procedures afforded to it and is not bound by this Order in its determination of appropriate legal actions concerning such violation(s).

20. If any alleged violation of this Order occurs during the Disciplinary Period, the Committee may choose to conduct a hearing on the alleged violation either

during the Disciplinary Period, or as soon thereafter as a hearing can be held, to determine whether a violation of the terms and conditions of probation occurred and, if so, may impose further discipline on Applicant's license. The Committee has continuing jurisdiction to hold a hearing determine if a violation of the terms and conditions of probation occurred.

21. This Order of the Committee shall be maintained as an open and public record of the Committee as provided in Chapters 337, 610 and 324, RSMo.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: 4/19/24


Vanessa Beauchamp
Executive Director
State Committee For Social Workers