

**BEFORE THE MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
FOR LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS**

**IN THE MATTER OF:
LAURA PIPOLY
APPLICANT CAUSE**

NO. 2017-08

FINAL ORDER

This matter came for hearing on October 27, 2017, before the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors (Board) to provide Laura Pipoly (Applicant) with an opportunity to show cause why her application for licensure should not be denied. A quorum of Board members was present throughout the hearing and deliberation in the matter.

Ellen O'Neal, served as Administrative Hearing Officer and presided at the hearing. The Board's Executive Director, Lee Ann Mordecai, and Legal Counsel for the Board, Wm. Jeffery Jernigan, were present at the hearing. The Applicant was served with notice of the hearing and notice of her right to legal counsel. She did not appear in person but her attorney Heather Abbey was present on her behalf, and Applicant did ultimately testify by telephone. Steven Rollins Stafford served as the investigating Board member and recused himself from the deliberations in this matter.

Having been present at the hearing in this matter, and based upon the exhibits, testimony and the evidence presented, the Board makes the following Findings of Fact based on clear and convincing evidence.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Board is the duly constituted authority for licensing and regulating the counseling profession in the State of Mississippi.
2. On or about November 7, 2016, Laura Pipoly submitted her application for licensure by Comity as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), in that she was and is currently licensed in Ohio and Louisiana. On or about January 2017 the Board met and after the initial review for licensure denied her application on the basis that Ohio's licensure requirements for a licensed professional counselor are not equivalent to those of Mississippi's - thus the requirement for five years of equivalent licensure in good standing was not met.
3. Applicant thereafter requested a hearing.
4. The applicable law, Section 73-30-9 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended directs the Board to issue a license to an individual upon the individual furnishing satisfactory evidence showing that all of the criteria for licensure has been met.

5. The evidence confirms that Ohio's licensure requirements were not equivalent to Mississippi's.

6. Applicant's only avenue for licensing as a Licensed Professional Counselor in Mississippi is under the Military Occupational Licensing Statute, Mississippi Code Section 73-50-1. The Military Occupational Licensing Statute addresses the professional licensing of members of the military or their spouses who move in from other states, and requires a professional licensing board to grant a license to a member of the military or his/her spouse upon the satisfaction to the Board of certain requirements, which are in summary that the spouse:

(a) Holds a current license,from another jurisdiction, and that jurisdiction's requirements for licensure.... are substantially equivalent to or exceed the requirements for licensure..... [in Mississippi];

(b) Can demonstrate competency in the occupation through methods as determined by the board, ...;

(c) Has not committed any act in any jurisdiction that would have constituted grounds for refusal, suspension or revocation ...;

(d) Is in good standing and has not been disciplined...;

(e) Pays any fees required by the occupational licensing board...;

7. Applicant is the spouse of a member of the military.

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board issues the following Conclusions of Law.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction of this matter pursuant to Sections 73-30-7 and 73-30-11 of Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended. Venue is likewise properly placed before the Board to hear this matter in Jackson, Mississippi.

2. All substantive and procedural requirements under law have been met by the Board.

3. Applicant meets the requirements under the Military Occupational Licensing statutes, with the exception that evidence was submitted that Applicant may not have actually met the qualifications for the Louisiana LPC in that she did not have sufficient experience.

In light of the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Board hereby issues the following Order:

ADJUDICATION

IT IS ORDERED that the application of Laura Pipoly as a Licensed Professional Counselor in Mississippi be granted, with the following conditions:

(1) That she maintains supervision by a Mississippi LPC Board Qualified Supervisor until October 12, 2018 at the rate noted and in compliance with the board's supervision requirements, i.e., maintaining 1 hour of supervision for every 25 hours of direct services provided to clients and maintaining 1 hour of supervision for every 40 hours of total service, and that she report this supervision through the board's online supervision reporting portal weekly; and,

(2) That she earns 6 hours of CEU prior to October 13, 2018 by an approved NBCC provider in a face-to-face program (not-online), which should be reported to the board at that time; and,

It is further ordered that failure to meet these conditions may result in disciplinary action.

It is further ordered that, on or about October 13, 2018, upon satisfaction of the above-stated conditions, Applicant must petition the Board for removal of the conditions and granting of a full license.

Board Secretary Dr. Aretha Hargrove-Edwards voted Aye; Board Member Dr. Kimberly Sallis voted Aye; Board Member Dr. Richard Strebeck voted Aye.

Board Chair Dr. Juawice McCormick recused herself from this matter and did not participate in the deliberations. Board Vice-Chair Steven Rollins Stafford was the investigating Board Member and did not participate in the deliberations.

SO ORDERED this, the 29th day of November, 2017.

MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
FOR LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

BY: Juawice McCormick, Ph.D., LPC-S
Dr. Juawice McCormick, Board Chair NCC, NCSC