

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

CAUSE NO. 2021-02

RAVEN S. FARMER

FINAL DECISION

THIS MATTER came before the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors (“Board”) on April 16, 2021, pursuant to a Notice to Show Cause issued to Raven Farmer (“Applicant”). Board Member Richard Strebeck, Ph.D., LPC-S, NCC, CSAT recused himself and did not participate in the Board’s consideration and deliberation in this matter. A quorum of the remaining Board members was present throughout the hearing and deliberation in the matter.

Special Assistant Attorney General Alexis Morris, Legal Counsel for the Board, presented the charges regarding the application for licensure. The Applicant, having been served with the Notice to Show Cause and being fully informed of her rights to a formal hearing before the Board, elected to proceed in the matter and to represent herself. The Board called this case for hearing without objection from any party.

Erin Meyer served as Administrative Hearing Officer, presided at the hearing and the Board directed her to prepare the Board’s written decision in accordance with its deliberations. The Board, having held the hearing and considering the evidence presented, makes the following findings, conclusions and order based on clear and convincing evidence:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Board is established pursuant to Title 73, Chapter 30 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, and is charged with the duty of licensing and regulating the practice of Licensed Professional Counselors in the State of Mississippi.
2. On November 8, 2020, the Board received an Application for Professional Licensure from the Applicant.
3. On or about December 7, 2020, the Board denied the application for licensure in response to the LPC’s detailed description on Form B.
4. In January 2021, Applicant requested a show cause hearing before the Board to present evidence and testimony to the Board as to why her application for licensure conversion from a P-LPC to an LPC Candidate should not be denied.

5. In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 73-30-11, on March 1, 2021, the Board issued a Notice to the Applicant to provide her with the opportunity to show cause why her Application should not be denied. The Notice advised the Applicant of the time, place, and nature of the hearing to be held before the Board.
6. Kari Rusnak, testified before the Board, acknowledging that she supervised the Applicant from December 2018 until the end of March 2020, when she terminated supervision with the Applicant. Ms. Rusnak explained that she completed two Form Bs for the Applicant based on the Applicant changing job locations in February 2020. Ms. Rusnak stated that in the Form B from December 2018 through February 9, 2020, she marked the recommendation of licensure “with reservations” because the Applicant had instances of showing up late and had concerns that the Applicant failed to accurately report her hours at her job.
7. Ms. Rusnak testified that in the second Form B, for the period February 9, 2020, through March 24, 2020, she did not recommend the Applicant for licensure and the basis for that recommendation dealt with alleged violations of the Board’s proclamation as it related to telehealth services, proper informed consent for telehealth, and inadequate communication between the Applicant and Ms. Rusnak.
8. The Applicant testified on her own behalf and indicated that from December 5, 2018, until February 9, 2020, she worked at Specialized Treatment Facility in Gulfport, and since February 10, 2020, she has been working a Building Behaviors Counseling Services in Biloxi. She further indicated that Ms. Rusnak served as her supervisor from December 5, 2018 through March 24, 2020, and since March 24, 2020, Debra Traugher has provided her supervision hours.
9. Applicant acknowledged she text Ms. Rusnak on several occasions when she was running late for their meetings but did not receive any reprimands or negative repercussions for those instances.
10. Applicant further acknowledged that between February 10, 2020, and March 24, 2020, she went through the Board’s proclamation regarding telehealth with Ms. Rusnak and accepts responsibility for not speaking candidly with Ms. Rusnak about her employer’s position regarding potential proprietary information on informed consent forms and not being responsive to all of Ms. Rusnak’s inquiries.
11. Applicant provided the Board with several evaluations from Ms. Rusnak in which she rated the Applicant as Good or Superior, meaning the counselor is either (1) able to demonstrate a satisfactory degree of competence in performing a given task or skill or (2) proficient and shows a high degree of expertness in performing a given task or skill.
12. The Applicant admitted that if the Board excludes the Form B documentation for the period of February 9, 2020, through March 24, 2020, she has not met the individual supervision hours required for conversion of her P-LPC license to an LPC Candidate.

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board makes the following:

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. §§ 73-30-7 and 73-30-11, as amended. Venue is likewise properly placed before the Board to hear this matter in Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi.
2. The Applicant received due, proper, and timely notice of the charges against her application and of the time and place of the hearing.
3. These proceedings were duly and properly convened and all substantive and procedural requirements under law have been satisfied. This matter is, therefore, properly before the Board.
4. Mississippi Code Ann. § 73-30-7 authorizes the Board to adopt such rules and regulations as it finds necessary to conduct the business of the Board and to carry out its licensure and regulatory functions.
5. Mississippi Code Ann § 73-30-9 provides that an applicant must furnish the Board with satisfactory evidence he or she meets the requirements for licensure.
6. As of April 16, 2021, the Applicant has not fulfilled the required supervision hours necessary for converting a P-LPC license into an LPC Candidate.

Given the entire evidence produced in the record, the Board issues the following order:

FINAL DECISION

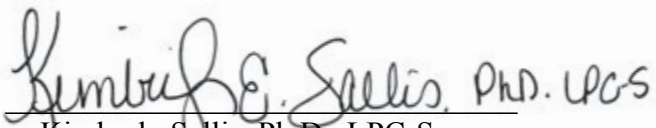
Based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Board unanimously finds that the following is appropriate under the circumstances:

1. By clear and convincing evidence, the Board finds that the Applicant has not yet satisfied the required supervision hours necessary for converting a P-LPC license into a LPC Candidate for under Miss. Code Ann. § 73-30-9(2) and Miss. Admin. Code 30-2201: 4.3.
2. The Board accepts the Applicant's Form B Documentation for the period December 5, 2018, through February 9, 2020, and the total hours of supervision documented therein. The Board shall include this when considering the Applicant's request for licensure.
3. The Board will exclude the Form B Documentation for the period from February 10, 2020, to March 24, 2020, when considering the Applicant's request for licensure.
4. The Applicant shall submit additional documentation to satisfy the required supervision hours via the website portal, including Form B Documentation for the period from and after March 30, 2020.

5. Pursuant to Miss. Admin. Code 30-2201: 5.3, the Applicant must wait a period of a least one (1) year before resubmitting a new, complete application packet.
6. Upon submission of the required documentation, the Board will reconsider the application for LPC Candidate.
7. This action and order of the Board shall be public record and may be shared with other licensing boards (in- and out-of-state) and the public. This action shall be spread upon the Minutes of the Board as its official act and deed.
8. Upon execution of this Final Order by affixing the Board authorized signature below, the provisions of this Final Order shall become the final order of the Board.

SO ORDERED AND ADJUDGED, this the 16th day of April, 2021

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

BY: 
Kimberly Sallis, Ph.D., LPC-S
Vice Chair for and on behalf of the Board