

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

MATTHEW WADE WICHT

CAUSE NOS. 2022-11 & 2022-12

AGREED ORDER

This matter comes before the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed professional counselors concerning an entry of an agreed order regarding Matthew Wade Wicht.

Upon recommendation of the Board's representative in this matter, and with consent of the respondent, the parties stipulate and agree to the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Board is a duly constituted authority existing within the executive branch of the government of the State of Mississippi and is charged with licensure and regulation of the practice of licensed professional counseling under Title 73, Chapter 30, of the Mississippi code of 1972, as amended. The main executive offices are located at 239 North Lamar Street, Suite 402, Jackson, MS 39201.
2. Matthew Wade Wicht, the Respondent, is a Licensed Professional Counselor holding license Number 2239 issued by the Board. This license was initially issued on or about January 23, 2018 and is set to expire June 30, 2023.
3. By entering into this Agreed Order, Respondent waives any defect in proceedings before the Board and any further right to notice and hearing under Title 73, Chapter 30 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, or any other governing laws, rules and regulations at this time.
4. Respondent had the opportunity at all times to seek advice from competent counsel of his choice. No coercion has been exerted upon the Respondent nor have any promises been made other than those reflected in this Agreed Order. The Respondent has freely and voluntarily entered into this Agreed Order after the opportunity to consult with legal counsel and being motivated only by the desire to resolve the issues addressed herein and for the purpose of avoiding further administrative or judicial action with respect to this cause.
5. It is expressly understood by the Respondent that this Agreed Order is subject to the approval of the Board and shall have no force and effect unless and until signed by the Board. Respondent agrees and authorizes the Board staff and/or legal counsel to present this Agreed Order to the Board for consideration of the terms provided herein. Respondent further understands and agrees that, in order to make a decision regarding approval of this Agreed Order, discussions must take place between Board members,

staff and legal counsel. Should this Agreed Order not be accepted by the Board, Respondent agrees that the presentation to and consideration of the Agreed Order shall not unfairly or illegally prejudice the Board or any of its members from further participation in or resolution of these proceedings, including serving as arbiter in any hearing regarding the Respondent by having considered this matter. Similarly, if this Agreed Order is not accepted, Respondent will be free to defend himself in a formal hearing before the Board and no admissions or inferences will be made from Respondent's willingness to have entered into this Agreed Order.

6. Respondent is fully aware of his right to contest charges made against him in a formal hearing. These rights include: representation by an attorney at the Respondent's expense, the right to a public hearing on the charges filed, the right to confront and cross examine witnesses, to receive written findings of fact and conclusions of law supporting the decision of the merits of the accusations, and the right to obtain judicial review of the Board's decision.
7. Respondent expressly waives all further procedural steps, and expressly waives all rights to seek judicial review of or to otherwise challenge or contest the validity of any action taken by the Board and/or its representative(s) in this matter, the Agreed Order and/or the stipulated Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and penalty imposed by this Agreed Order.
8. Cause numbers 2022-11 and 2022-12 have been consolidated.
9. **Cause No. 2022-11:** On or about April 15, 2022, Respondent confessed to Wendy Celoria that he had engaged in a sexual relationship with a former client. Respondent confirmed that the inappropriate relationship had been ongoing for some time.
10. **Cause No. 2022-12:** On or about April 13, 2022, Respondent informed complainant, Cari Gaunt, that he had been engaging in an unethical, inappropriate sexual relationship with a former client. The sexual relationship between Respondent and client had been within the five (5) year prohibited period. The relationship lasted for two years, ending recently.
11. **Cause No. 2022-12:** Respondent engaged in an inappropriate sexual relationship that occurred six (6) or seven (7) years ago with a client.
12. **Cause No. 2022-11 and 2022-12:** On or about April 17, 2022, Respondent wrote a letter to the Board to self-report ethical violations in his professional life. After a counselor/client relationship ended, he began a romantic and eventually sexual relationship with a former client without waiting the required period of time prescribed in the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics.
13. Clear and convincing evidence establishes that Respondent is guilty of violating ACA Code of Section A.5.c. Sexual and/or Romantic Relationships with Former Clients in both cause numbers.

14. Clear and convincing evidence establishes that Respondent is guilty of violating Board Rule 7.1: Standards of Practice in both cause numbers. "Persons licensed by the Board shall adhere to all parts of the current American Counseling Association Code of Ethics and Standards of practice with the exception of any parts superseded by state law, policy, or rules and regulations adopted by the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors."

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

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction over the subject matter and the Respondent under Section 73-30-7 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended. Venue is likewise properly placed before this Board to hear this matter in Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi.
2. The Board gave Respondent due, proper and timely notice of the charges against him and has fulfilled all relevant procedural legal requirements.
3. Under Section and 73-30-21, the Board is authorized to revoke, suspend, assess a civil penalty (fine), place a license holder on probation, refuse to renew a license and/or take other appropriate action with respect to any license for a violation of the laws, rules and regulations governing licensed professional counselors.

Based upon the foregoing Conclusions of Law, the Board makes the following:

ADJUDICATION

1. Respondent shall surrender his license with disciplinary action under Board Rule 1.4.EE and 5.4.H and is not allowed to practice professional counseling in the State of Mississippi.
2. Respondent is aware that if he violates the terms of this Agreed Order or further violates the laws, rules, regulations, and code of ethics governing practice as a licensed professional counselor, the Board may take further action against Respondent.
3. Respondent must adhere to the current rules and regulations at the time he submits his application if he chooses to reapply for licensure.
4. Respondent agrees to wait a period of no less than twelve (12) months from the date of the Board's signature on this order before he reapplies for licensure.

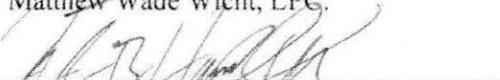
SO ORDERED this the 9th day of June 2022.

MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF
EXAMINERS FOR LICENSED
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

By: 
For and on behalf of the Board

AGREED AS TO FORM AND CONSENT:


Matthew Wade Wicht, LPC.


John Howell, Attorney for Respondent