

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

MELISSA MAY SISCO

CAUSE NO. 2023-4

CONSENT ORDER

This matter comes before the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors (Board) concerning an entry of a consent order regarding Melissa May Sisco (Respondent).

Upon recommendation of the Board's representative in this matter, and with consent of 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. Respondent is a Licensed Professional Counselor holding license Number 1891 issued by the Board. This license was initially issued on or about May 23, 2014, and is set to expire June 30, 2024.
3. By entering this Consent 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 her choice. No coercion has been exerted upon Respondent nor have any promises been made other than those reflected in this Consent Order. Respondent has freely and voluntarily entered this Consent 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 Respondent that this Consent 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 Consent Order to the Board for consideration of the terms provided herein. Respondent further understands and agrees that, to decide regarding approval of this Consent Order, discussions must take place between Board members, staff, and legal counsel. Should this

Consent Order not be accepted by the Board, Respondent agrees that the presentation to and consideration of the Consent 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 Respondent by having considered this matter. Similarly, if this Consent 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 this Consent Order.

6. Respondent is fully aware of her right to contest charges made against her in a formal hearing. These rights include representation by an attorney at 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 Consent Order and/or the stipulated Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and penalty imposed by the Consent Order.
8. The clear and convincing evidence establishes the following:
 - a. Respondent made electronic posts on social media (Facebook®) which identified a current client and disclosed a potentially personal relationship with the client.
9. Accordingly, Respondent has violated the following American Counseling Association (ACA) Codes of Ethics:
 - a. A.1.a – Primary Responsibility
 - b. A.5.d. – Friends or Family Members
 - c. A.5.e. – Personal Virtual Relationships with Current Clients
 - d. A.6.a. – Previous Relationships
 - e. A.6.b. – Extending Counseling Boundaries
 - f. A.6.c. – Documenting Boundary Extensions
 - g. B.1.b. – Respect for Privacy
 - h. B.1.c. – Respect for Confidentiality
 - i. I.1.b. – Ethical Decision Making
10. Respondent has also violated Board Rules 3.2.J.2 & 7
 - a. Engaging in the conduct of professional counseling in a grossly negligent or incompetent manner; and
 - b. Violating the American Counselling Association Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice adopted by the Board.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction over the subject matter and 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 Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Board makes the following:

ADJUDICATION

1. Respondent's LPC license shall be placed on "Restricted Status" for a minimum of eighteen (18) months from the date the order is signed by the Board.
2. The restriction Restricted Status shall require the Respondent to practice counseling under the supervision of an LPC-S. The terms of supervision are as follows:
 - a. The LPC-S shall be approved by the investigating Board member or his designee.
 - b. One (1) hour of Individual supervision hour to forty (40) hours of total services provided OR one (1) hour of individual supervision to twenty-five (25) hours of Direct Services.
 - c. One (1) hour of Individual supervision should occur no less frequently than every other week.
 - d. Supervised experience must be documented using the Board's online portal with personal backup copies. The online supervision agreement shall include a Declaration of Practice and a supervision contract.
 - e. Once supervision is completed, the LPC-S shall submit a Supervision Form B documenting the experience with recommendations regarding licensure.
3. Respondent shall inform current and future clients of her Restricted Status license.
4. Respondent shall assist her supervisees (P-LPCs) in securing another LPC-S.
5. Within **60 days** from the signing of the Consent Order and in collaboration with the LPC-S, the Respondent shall conduct a case review of clients to address (1) the items listed in #9 in the Findings of Fact section of this document and (2) any additional ethical concerns that may arise as part of this review, such as but not limited to abandonment.
 - a. For each client (current and prior) the Respondent has a relationship with outside of the counseling setting/office in person or online, the Respondent shall complete an ethical decision-making process to resolve the ethical issues identified. The

- documentation for the ethical decision-making model and evidence of implementing the decision shall be submitted to the investigating Board member.
- b. The documentation shall be signed by the Respondent and the LPC-S.
 - c. Failure to complete the review within the 60-day timeframe, the Respondent's license shall be suspended.
 - i. In order to return to Restricted Status, the Respondent must make a request in writing to the Board.
 - ii. Once the Respondent is returned to Restricted Status, she must restart the 18-months.
6. Respondent must maintain her LPC as pursuant to the rules and regulations of the Board.
 7. Once Respondent completes the sanctioning, she may request in writing to the Board to remove the restrictions and return her to Active Status as an LPC.
 8. Respondent's supervision endorsement is subject to Rule 4.4.E, "No person shall serve as a supervisor if his/her/their license is expired or lapsed or subject to probation, suspension, or revocation." ~~If Respondent does not reach suspension level, then she may request supervision status be reinstated.~~
 9. Respondent shall take six (6) Continuing Education Hours (CEH) in Professional Boundaries or Ethics as approved in advance by the investigating Board member or his designee. These CEHs are in addition to the LPC renewal requirements. All CEH requirements must be NBCC approved and at least three (3) CEHs must be attended in person onsite. These Continuing Education Requirements are not included as part of the licensing renewal process.
 10. Respondent has until October 3, 2026, to complete the terms and conditions herein.
 11. Respondent is aware that if she 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 disciplinary action against Respondent, up to and including suspension and revocation of her license.

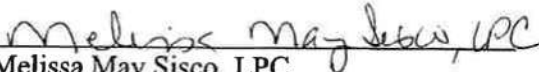
SO ORDERED this the 10 day of October 2023.

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

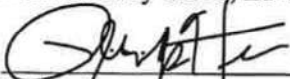
By: 

For and on behalf of the Board

AGREED AS TO FORM AND CONSENT:



Melissa May Sisco, LPC



Philip Hearn, Esq.