

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

**In the Matter of:**

**ARDRENA RENEE POWELL  
1701 WEST HAZELWOOD ROAD  
WEST POINT, MISSISSIPPI 39773**

**CAUSE NO. 2024-15**

**RESPONDENT**

**FINAL ORDER**

THIS MATTER came before the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors (“Board”) on August 14, 2024, upon Notice to Show Cause for Ardrena Renee Powell, 1701 West Hazelwood Road, West Point, Mississippi 39773 (“Respondent”) to give good cause why her application for licensure should not be denied. A quorum of the Board members was present throughout the hearing and deliberations in this matter.

Respondent, having been properly served, called on the day of the hearing and being fully informed of her rights to a hearing before the Board, did appear at the hearing and was not represented by an attorney. Special Assistant Attorney General Alexis E. Morris served as legal counsel for the Board. The Board’s Executive Director, Leeann P. Mordecai, was called to testify, and the Board’s exhibits were introduced into evidence. Respondent appeared without legal representation, provided testimony and introduced one exhibit. The case was called for hearing without objection from any party. A court reporter made a record of the proceedings.

Special Assistant Attorney General Kristen N. Love, designated by the Board to serve as its Administrative Hearing Officer, presided over the proceeding and was directed by the Board to prepare its written decision in accordance with its deliberations. The hearing was held pursuant to Title 73, Chapter 30 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, and pursuant to any and all other applicable Mississippi laws and regulations.

Having conducted the hearing in this matter and based upon the exhibits, testimony and the evidence presented, the Board makes the following findings of fact, conclusions of law, and orders based on clear and convincing evidence:

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. The Board is established pursuant to Sections 73-30-1 *et seq.*, of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended<sup>1</sup> and is statutorily charged to regulate the practice of counseling as well as the use of the titles of “Provisional Licensed Professional Counselor” and “Licensed Professional Counselor” for those who offer counseling services to the public for fees.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all statutory reference is to the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended.

2. Section 73-30-7 authorizes the Board to adopt such rules and regulations it finds necessary to conduct the business of the Board and to carry out its licensure and regulatory functions.

3. Pursuant to Section 73-30-21 and Board Rule 4.2(G), the Board may, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, refuse to issue a license, upon a determination by the Board that such applicant has failed to meet all requirements for licensure.

4. Upon such determination, an applicant may request a hearing, pursuant to Section 73-30-11 and Board Rules and Regulations, at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board to show cause why the application for licensure should not be denied.

5. The Board finds this matter was duly and properly convened and all substantive and procedural requirements under law have been satisfied.

6. The Board finds Respondent was properly noticed of the Complaint and the date and time of the hearing.

7. The Board finds Respondent appeared at the hearing without legal representation.

8. Respondent applied for licensure as a Provisional-Licensed Professional Counselor (P-LPC) on or about December 15, 2015. She was awarded a PLPC on or about October 16, 2018.<sup>2</sup> Under Board Rules and Regulations, namely 30 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 2201, R. 4.2, a P-LPC license is renewable yearly but for not more than four (4) years without a Board-approved extension. Respondent submitted her renewal application via online without requesting a Board-approved extension, and the Board's online system automatically processed the renewal outside of the Board's Rules and Regulations. The Board's Executive Director discovered the technical mistake and issued Respondent correspondence via email that informed Respondent of the mistake including the insufficiency of her online renewal. Respondent acknowledged receipt of this email and testified that the Board's Executive Director had also informed her about the ineligibility of her educational degree. Notwithstanding the same, Respondent submitted her new application for provisional licensure on October 2, 2023, with a Master of Science in Continuing Education (MSCE): Counseling/Psych as support for the educational requirements of her application.

9. The Board denied this application on January 31, 2024, for three reasons as follows:

The LPC Board's findings, based on the data presented, and in reference to appropriate statutes and relevant Rules and Regulations, including the following:

1. Degree: MS in Adult Continuing Education is not a qualifying degree for the P-LPC/LPC.

Educational Requirements: As per the University of West Alabama website:

“M.S. Adult Continuing Education: Counseling and Psychology

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<sup>2</sup> All applicants are required to apply under the current rules and regulations. The rules and regulations were updated in 2023.

The program does not prepare graduates for licensure. The program is designed for:

Individuals seeking to expand their knowledge of counseling psychology.

Individuals who do not plan on immediately pursuing licensing as a licensed professional counselor.

Individuals who are already licensed in a related field, such as licensed marriage and family counselors.”

2. LPC-S Contract: was not reviewed and thus may be missing or not detailed enough in areas.
3. Declaration of Practice: was not reviewed and thus may be missing or not detailed enough in areas.

Respondent requested an administrative hearing on February 20, 2024, to show cause why her October 2, 2023 Application for Provisional Licensure should not be denied. Respondent’s request for appeal argued as follows:

I am requesting a hearing due to my P-LPC application being denied. Upon received the date of renewal for my P-LPC continuing to June 2024, I thought everything was in good standing. Then I received a letter/email to re-apply for the P-LPC with my degree, LPC-S Contract and Declaration of Practice by October 31, 2023, in August/September 2023. I had to complete fingerprinting also. During this time, I completed everything in by the due date and received another renewal to Oct. 2024.

At this time, I still have years left on my supervision hours which I applied for my P-LPC in 2018/2019 under that law with my degree from UWA. My 3500 supervision hours expire seven years from 2019. I am requesting to remain under any previous law that will let me continue to study to pass the counseling test. I am approved (with a window opening) to take the counseling test from February 2024-August 2024 with CCE board/organization. Is their any way I can become a candidate for LPC. I am no longer working since my P-LPC is in lapse status. I need to be working. Please help.

During the hearing, Respondent maintained her arguments for licensure and emphasized that her Master of Science in Continuing Education (MSCE): Counseling/Psych should be considered a qualifying degree under her new P-LPC application because the Board had previously deemed it a qualifying degree when her application for provisional licensure was approved by the Board in 2018, along with subsequent renewals. The Board received correspondence dated July 21, 2024, from the University of West Alabama’s Graduate Director of Counseling Psychology in support of Respondent’s October 3, 2023 Application that stated as follows:

Thank you for the privilege of advocating for my Student, Ms. Adriana Powell. She completed the MSCE (now designated as MSACE) in Counseling and Psychology in 2004. The courses that she returned to graduate school to take after this degree was conferred were specifically to meet the didactic requirements to pursue her license as a Licensed Professional Counselor. Prior to January 2017, the State of Mississippi LPC allowed “stacking” of degrees to meet didactic requirements. I understand that this is no longer the case. However, the courses she returned to take, both PY (Psychology)

courses and SC (School Counseling) courses were specifically for this purpose. Thank you for your time considering Ms. Powell as a candidate to sit for her P-LPC/LPC.

The Board's Executive Director testified, however, that when the Board reviewed the University of West Alabama's description of Respondent's Master of Science in Continuing Education (MSCE): Counseling/Psych, the degree was described as a program that does not prepare graduates for licensure. Thus, Respondent's Master of Science in Continuing Education (MSCE): Counseling/Psych conferred on November 12, 2004, per Respondent's transcript submitted in support of her October 2, 2023 Application, was not a qualifying degree for provisional licensure in Mississippi.

10. The sworn testimony and evidence presented at the hearing clearly and convincingly establishes Respondent failed to meet the educational requirements for provisional licensure under Board Rules and Regulations. Respondent's transcript verified that the University of West Alabama conferred a Master of Science degree in Continuing Education (MSCE): Counseling/Psych upon Respondent on November 12, 2004. Respondent's transcript also showed that she completed additional courses at the University between 2014 and 2016, with no additional degree conferred. Moreover, the University's website stated that Respondent's Master of Science in Continuing Education (MSCE): Counseling/Psych was a program that does not prepare graduates for licensure. Regarding Respondent's argument related to her supervision hours, the Board's Executive Director testified that Respondent had also previously applied for licensure as a licensed professional counselor (LPC) but had to remain under supervision. Respondent logged supervision hours through 2019, but then stopped. As such, the sworn testimony and evidence presented at the hearing clearly and convincingly establishes Respondent reported no supervision hours after 2019, during the time period in which Respondent had obtained P-LPC licensure.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. The Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to Sections 73-30-1 *et seq.*, of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended. Venue is likewise properly placed before the Board to hear this matter at its regularly scheduled Board meeting.

2. This matter was duly and properly convened with all substantive and procedural requirements satisfied.

3. The provisions of Sections 73-30-1 *et seq.*, of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended set forth the eligibility requirements for provisional licensure. Applicants for provisional licensure must show proof of completion of a qualifying graduate degree program as outlined under Board Rules and Regulations, namely 30 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 2201, R. 4.2.

4. The sworn testimony and evidence presented at the hearing clearly and convincingly establishes Respondent failed to meet the educational requirements for provisional licensure under Board Rules and Regulations. Respondent's transcript verified that the University of West Alabama conferred a Master of Science in Continuing Education (MSCE): Counseling/Psych upon Respondent on November 12, 2004. Respondent's transcript also showed that she completed additional courses at the University between 2014 and 2016, with no additional degree conferred. Moreover, the University's website stated that Respondent's degree in MS Adult Continuing Education (ACE): Counseling and Psychology was a program that does not prepare graduates for licensure and therefore was a non-qualifying degree.

10. The evidence clearly and convincingly establishes Respondent failed to demonstrate she meets the education requirements for provisional licensure that are required by the Board's Rules and Regulations.

Based upon its Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Board finds as follows:

**FINAL ORDER**

**IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED** that the application for provisional licensure for Ardrena Renee Powell is denied by clear and convincing evidence in accordance with provisions of Sections 73-30-1 *et seq.*, of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended and the Board's Rules and Regulations.

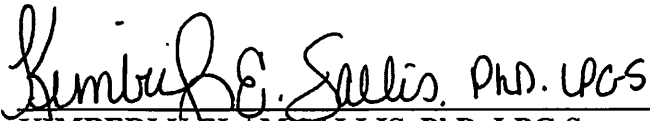
**IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED** that this decision and opinion shall be a final order of the Board and shall be conclusive evidence of the matters described herein.

**FURTHER ORDERED**, this action and order of the Board shall be public record. It may be shared with other licensing boards (in- and out-of-state) and the public and may be reported to the appropriate entities as required or authorized by state and/or federal law or guidelines. This action shall be spread upon the Minutes of the Board as its official act and deed.

**FURTHER ORDERED**, upon execution of this Final Order by affixing the authorized signature below, the provisions of this Final Order shall become the Final Order of the Board.

**SO ORDERED**, this the 26<sup>th</sup> day of SEPTEMBER, 2024.

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

BY:  **Kimberly E. Sallis, PhD, LPC-S**  
**KIMBERLY ELAM SALLIS, PhD, LPC-S**  
**BOARD CHAIR**

**NOTICE OF APPEAL RIGHTS**

Ardrena Renee Powell, Respondent, may, within thirty (30) days after the decision of the Board appeal therefrom in accordance with MISS. CODE ANN. § 73-30-11.

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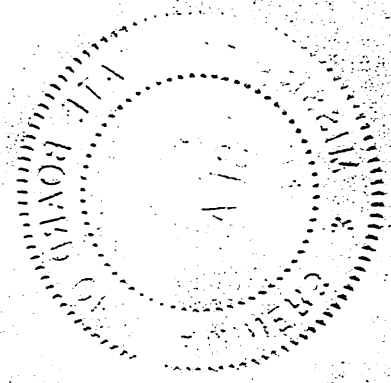
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