

IN THE MATTER OF
ROBERT MANNIS, Ph.D.

Respondent

License Number: 02233

* BEFORE THE MARYLAND
* BOARD OF
* EXAMINERS OF PSYCHOLOGISTS
* Case Number: 2017-015

* * * * *

CONSENT ORDER

On June 26, 2018, the Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists (the “Board”) charged Robert Mannis, Ph.D. (the “Respondent”), License Number 02233, under the Maryland Psychologists Act (the “Act”), Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. (“Health Occ.”) § 18-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. & 2017 Supp.).

The pertinent provisions of the Act provide:

Health Occ. § 18-313. Denials, reprimands, suspensions, and revocations -- Grounds.

Subject to the hearing provisions of § 18-315 of this subtitle, the Board, on the affirmative vote of a majority of its members then serving, may deny a license or registration to any applicant, reprimand any licensee or registrant, place any licensee or registrant on probation, or suspend or revoke a license or registration of any licensee or registrant if the applicant, licensee, or registrant:

- ...
(2) Fraudulently or deceptively uses a license or registration;
- ...
(10) Willfully made or filed a false report;
- ...
(17) Commits an act of unprofessional conduct in the practice of psychology;
- ...
(20) Acted inconsistent with generally accepted professional standards in the practice of psychology[.]

The pertinent regulations under Md. Code Regs. 10.36.05 Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, are as follows:

...

.03 Responsibilities and Requirements

A. In General.

(1) A psychologist shall be fully responsible for the psychologist's professional decisions and professional actions;

...

(2) A psychologist...shall

...

(b) Provide psychological services only in the context of clear professional and scientific relationships and roles accepted by the standard of practice of the discipline of psychology[.]

On August 15, 2018, the Respondent appeared before a Case Resolution Conference committee of the Board (the "CRC") to discuss the pending charges and a potential resolution of the charges. Following the CRC, the parties agreed to enter into this Consent Order, consisting of Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order, with the terms and conditions set forth below.

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board finds:

BACKGROUND

1. On or about May 15, 1987, the Respondent was initially licensed by the Board as a psychologist. The Respondent's license is scheduled to expire on March 31, 2019.
2. At all times relevant to these charges, the Respondent was employed as a psychologist in private practice in Frederick, Maryland.

3. The Respondent has a disciplinary history with the Board. He entered into a February 2012 Consent Order with the Board resolving charges that he breached the confidentiality of a former deceased client to a family member.¹

4. On or about January 25, 2017, a social worker from Washington County Adult Protective Services (“APS”) filed a complaint with the Board alleging that the Respondent had engaged in a dual relationship with a former client of the Respondent (“Person A”). Specifically, the social worker (“Social Worker A”) alleged Person A had been receiving mental health services from the Respondent, and that Person A was residing in a residence owned by the Respondent.

5. According to the complaint, Social Worker A contacted the Respondent by telephone and during the conversation, the Respondent confirmed that Person A was receiving mental health services from him, that she was staying in a residence owned by him and that he had written and signed the letter submitted on Person A’s behalf set forth in ¶ 7.

6. The Board initiated an investigation of the allegations, set forth in pertinent part below that included conducting interviews of the Respondent, Person A, and her boyfriend (“Friend A”), and issuing subpoenas for relevant documents. In addition, the Board sent relevant documents from its file to a psychologist for his review and opinion of the Respondent’s conduct and standard of care with regard to Person A.

¹ Board Case# 2010-014.

INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS

7. On or about November 21, 2016, the Respondent drafted and signed a hand-written letter on notebook paper to a Case Management Company that was received by APS. The Respondent stated in the letter that Person A had been a “patient since April” and “she deserves housing for her disability.” The Respondent provided his office number “if you have any further questions.”

Interview of Person A

8. On or about April 18, 2017, Board staff interviewed Person A under oath. Person A stated the following during the course of her interview:

- She had known the Respondent since she was a young child;
- In or around April 2016, she and her boyfriend (“Friend A”) moved into a property owned by the Respondent;
- On or about April 29, 2016, she signed a contract of sale for the Respondent’s property;
- She vacated the Respondent’s property in March 2017;
- She did not own a vehicle and the Respondent drove her to conduct personal errands;
- She worked as the Respondent’s property manager; and
- She feels threatened by the Respondent.

Interview of Respondent

9. On or about July 21, 2017, Board staff conducted an interview of the Respondent under oath. The Respondent denied providing therapy to Person A or any of her family members. The Respondent stated:

- He had only met Person A several years ago briefly at a funeral of a former co-worker of Respondent and relative of Person A;
- On April 28, 2016, Person A signed a lease to rent his property.
- On April 29, 2018, Person A signed a contract to purchase the property following her divorce settlement;

- Person A was his tenant for approximately eight or nine months, but never paid him rent. After 8-9 months, he evicted Person A;
- Person A worked “informally” as his property manager for his real estate company;
- He acknowledged that he wrote the letter referenced in 7 which stated that Person A was a patient of his;
- He stated that he wrote the letter referenced in 7 under “duress”, and alleged that he had been assaulted by Friend A previously and had been threatened with further physical harm
- On several occasions, he or his wife drove Person A to a methadone clinic for treatment and provided Person A with clothing and personal items to assist Person A due to Person A’s financial problems.
- He denied many of the facts alleged by Person A.

10. The Respondent’s conduct in misrepresenting that Person A was his patient in the signed letter submitted on Person A’s behalf set forth in 7, constitutes evidence in whole or in part the Respondent fraudulently or deceptively used his license in violation of Health Occ. § 18-313(2), and willfully made or filed a false report in violation of Health Occ. § 18-313(10), and engaged in unprofessional conduct in the practice of psychology in violation of Health Occ. § 18-313(17), and his conduct was inconsistent with generally accepted professional standards in the practice of psychology in violation of Health Occ. § 18-313 (20), and with the underlying regulations of Md. Code Regs. 10.36.05.03.

II. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board concludes as a matter of law that the Respondent’s conduct constitutes violations of Health Occ. § 18-313(2), (10), (17) and (20) and is in violation of the underlying regulation of Md. Code Regs. 10.36.05.03.

III. ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is this **2nd day of November, 2018**, by a majority of the full-authorized membership of the Board considering this case:

ORDERED that thirty (30) days from the date of this Consent Order the Respondent's license to practice psychology shall be **SUSPENDED** for a period of **NINETY (90) DAYS**, with **THIRTY (30) DAYS** stayed; and it is further

ORDERED that prior to the period of active suspension, the Respondent shall provide to the Board his plan of transfer for his existing clients; and it is further

ORDERED that after **SIXTY (60) DAYS** of active **SUSPENSION**, the Respondent shall be placed on **PROBATION** for a minimum of **TWO (2) YEARS** and shall fully and satisfactorily comply with the following terms and conditions:

1. Within thirty (30) days of being placed on probation, the Respondent shall meet in-person at a minimum monthly with a Board-approved supervisor who is a psychologist licensed in Maryland. The terms and conditions of the supervision, including the exact duration and frequency of supervisory sessions, shall be determined by the supervisor. The Respondent shall ensure that the supervisor provides quarterly reports as to his progress to the Board. An unsatisfactory report may be considered a violation of probation and/or this Consent Order. After a minimum of one (1) year of supervision, the supervisor may advise the Board if the supervisor determines that supervision may be terminated.

2. The Respondent shall successfully complete a Board-approved ethics tutorial, the length of which shall be determined by the tutor. It is the Respondent's responsibility to provide Board staff with documentation that he has successfully completed the ethics tutorial; and it is further

ORDERED that a violation of probation is considered a violation of this Consent Order; and it is further

ORDERED that if the Respondent allegedly fails to comply with any term or condition of this Consent Order, the Board in its discretion, after notice and an opportunity for an evidentiary hearing before a quorum of the Board if there is a genuine dispute as to the underlying material facts, or after an opportunity for a show cause hearing before the Board, may impose any sanction which the Board may have imposed in this case under §§ 18-313 & 18-313.1 of the Maryland Psychologists Act, including a reprimand, probation, suspension, revocation and/or a monetary fine; and it is further

ORDERED that after a minimum period of **TWO (2) YEARS** from the date of probation, the Respondent may file a written petition for termination of probation provided he has fully satisfied all the terms and conditions of probation and there are no pending complaints regarding the Respondent before the Board that are related to the subject of these charges; and it is further;

ORDERED that the Respondent is responsible for all costs incurred in fulfilling the terms and conditions of this Consent Order; and it is further

ORDERED that the Respondent shall comply with all laws governing the practice of psychology under the Maryland Psychologists Act and all federal and state laws and regulations governing the practice of psychology in Maryland; and it is further

ORDERED that this Consent Order is a public document. *See* Md. Health Occ. Code Ann., §1-607 and Gen. Prov. § 4-333(b)(6).

November 2, 2018

Date

Christopher Bishop, Psy.D.

Christopher Bishop, Psy.D., Chair
Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists

CONSENT

I, Robert Mannis, Ph.D., License No. 02233, by affixing my signature hereto, acknowledge that:

I am represented by counsel and have consulted with counsel before entering into this Consent Order. By this Consent and for the sole purpose of resolving the issues raised by the Board, I agree and accept to be bound by the foregoing Consent Order and its conditions.

I acknowledge the validity of this Consent Order as if entered into after the conclusion of a formal evidentiary hearing in which I would have had the right to counsel, to confront witnesses, to give testimony, to call witnesses on my own behalf, and to all other substantive and procedural protections provided by law. I agree to forego my opportunity to challenge these allegations. I acknowledge the legal authority and jurisdiction of the Board to initiate these proceedings and to issue and enforce this

Order. I affirm that I am waiving my right to appeal any adverse ruling of the Board that I might have filed after any such hearing.

I sign this Consent Order after having an opportunity to consult with counsel, voluntarily and without reservation, and I fully understand and comprehend the language, meaning and terms of the Consent Order.

10/12/18
Date

Robert Mannis, Ph.D.
Robert Mannis, Ph.D.

STATE/ DISTRICT OF MD

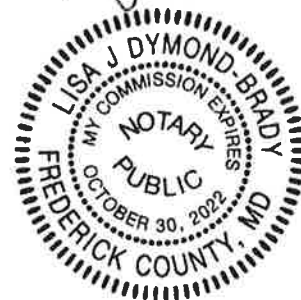
CITY/COUNTY OF: Frederick

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 12 day of October, 2018, before me, a Notary Public of the State/District and County aforesaid, personally appeared Robert Mannis, Ph.D., and gave oath in due form of law that the foregoing Consent Order was his voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESS, my hand and Notary Seal.

Lisa J Dymond-Brady

10-30-22
Notary Public
Commission expires:



Order. I affirm that I am waiving my right to appeal any adverse ruling of the Board that I might have filed after any such hearing.

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