

# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF REGULATION & LICENSING



## Wisconsin Department of Regulation & Licensing Access to the Public Records of the Reports of Decisions

This Reports of Decisions document was retrieved from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation & Licensing website. These records are open to public view under Wisconsin's Open Records law, sections 19.31-19.39 Wisconsin Statutes.

### Please read this agreement prior to viewing the Decision:

- The Reports of Decisions is designed to contain copies of all orders issued by credentialing authorities within the Department of Regulation and Licensing from November, 1998 to the present. In addition, many but not all orders for the time period between 1977 and November, 1998 are posted. Not all orders issued by a credentialing authority constitute a formal disciplinary action.
- Reports of Decisions contains information as it exists at a specific point in time in the Department of Regulation and Licensing data base. Because this data base changes constantly, the Department is not responsible for subsequent entries that update, correct or delete data. The Department is not responsible for notifying prior requesters of updates, modifications, corrections or deletions. All users have the responsibility to determine whether information obtained from this site is still accurate, current and complete.
- There may be discrepancies between the online copies and the original document. Original documents should be consulted as the definitive representation of the order's content. Copies of original orders may be obtained by mailing requests to the Department of Regulation and Licensing, PO Box 8935, Madison, WI 53708-8935. The Department charges copying fees. *All requests must cite the case number, the date of the order, and respondent's name as it appears on the order.*
- Reported decisions may have an appeal pending, and discipline may be stayed during the appeal. Information about the current status of a credential issued by the Department of Regulation and Licensing is shown on the Department's Web Site under "License Lookup." The status of an appeal may be found on court access websites at: <http://ccap.courts.state.wi.us/InternetCourtAccess> and <http://www.courts.state.wi.us/wscqa>.
- Records not open to public inspection by statute are not contained on this website.

**By viewing this document, you have read the above and agree to the use of the Reports of Decisions subject to the above terms, and that you understand the limitations of this on-line database.**

**Correcting information on the DRL website:** An individual who believes that information on the website is inaccurate may contact the webmaster at [web@drl.state.wi.gov](mailto:web@drl.state.wi.gov)

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
BEFORE THE SOCIAL WORKER SECTION  
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY, PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING  
AND SOCIAL WORK EXAMINING BOARD

---

IN THE MATTER OF THE DISCIPLINARY :  
PROCEEDINGS AGAINST :  
 :  
 : FINAL DECISION AND ORDER  
MARGARET A. GRIMMER, A.P.S.W., : LS0705024SOC  
RESPONDENT. :

---

[Division of Enforcement Case # 03 SOC 024]

The parties to this action for the purposes of Wis. Stat. § 227.53 are:

Margaret A. Grimmer, A.P.S.W.  
3912 N. 94<sup>th</sup> Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53222

Division of Enforcement  
Department of Regulation and Licensing  
1400 East Washington Avenue  
PO Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935

Social Worker Section  
Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling  
and Social Work Examining Board  
Department of Regulation and Licensing  
1400 East Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935

#### PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The parties in this matter agree to the terms and conditions of the attached Stipulation as the final decision of this matter subject to the approval of the Social Worker Section. The Section has reviewed this Stipulation and considers it acceptable.

Accordingly, the Section in this matter adopts the attached Stipulation and makes the following:

#### FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Margaret A. Grimmer, A.P.S.W., Respondent, date of birth June 24, 1965, is certified by the Social Worker Section as an advanced practice social worker in the state of Wisconsin pursuant to license number 1558, which was first granted March 25, 1999.

2. Respondent's last address reported to the Department of Regulation and Licensing is 3912 N. 94<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI 53222.

3. Respondent was employed as an advanced practice social worker at Innovative Family Partnerships, Inc. (IFPI), in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. IFPI was one of three partner agencies that contracted with the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) to provide in-home safety services and ongoing case management services for children in out-of-home care.

4. From August 2000 to January 2001, Respondent was an Ongoing Supervisor at BMCW Site 3, and provided supervision over personnel in the unit staffing the case of a male infant client for whom Ms. A became the foster parent in August 2000, when he was four months old. As the foster parent, Ms. A received financial and casework support from the agency. The primary function of the agency is to assist the natural parents in having the child safely returned to their home.

5. The assigned case worker was inexperienced and asked Respondent to provide assistance and to attend a permanency plan review meeting with Ms. A in October 2000. Respondent attended the meeting and met Ms. A. In the following months, Respondent received and responded to several e-mails from Ms. A, most of which concerned the child's development. The e-mail contact initially was professional in nature but evolved into personal conversations about single parenting, parenting boys and other things Ms. A and Respondent had in common.

6. On Saturday, January 6, 2001, Respondent and Ms. A went out to dinner together. Sometime after the dinner date, Respondent informed her supervisor of an unspecified conflict of interest with the case involving the infant and Ms. A and requested that the case be transferred to another unit and supervisor. On January 26, 2001, the case was transferred to a different unit at the site, which was outside of Respondent's supervision. Respondent contends that she did not have any discussions about the case after it was transferred and that if anyone attempted to talk to her about the case, she ended the conversation.

7. Prior to the end of January 2001, Respondent began a personal and sexual relationship with Ms. A which continued for approximately 14 months. In the course of that relationship, Respondent had social contact with Ms. A's foster child.

8. In August 2001, Respondent was promoted to Program Director for BMCW Site 5 and no longer worked at the location where the case involving Ms. A was being managed. However, from March 1, 2002 through May 13, 2002, Respondent also served as the IFPI Interim Program Director for BMCW Site 3 which continued to handle the case involving Ms. A and the child. In her role as Interim Program Director, Respondent had no professional contacts with the case of Ms. A and the child, but did sign off on routine payments made to Ms. A.

9. In mid-March 2002, Respondent ended her relationship with Ms. A. Ms. A did not want the relationship to end and attempted to resume the relationship with numerous telephone calls, e-mails and visits to Respondent at her home and office. Ms. A persisted to the point of harassment.

10. On August 5, 2002, Respondent informed her supervisor about her past relationship with Ms. A and that Ms. A had been harassing her for the past five months, threatening to "expose" her at work. Her supervisor allowed her to try to resolve this matter privately.

11. A determination had been made to pursue termination of the parental rights of the child's natural parents. This would allow for the adoption of the child and Ms. A was seeking to adopt the child. Because the natural parents would not consent to termination of parental rights, a petition for termination was filed and following a jury trial on September 24 through 26, 2002, parental rights were terminated. Although the issues on a petition for termination of parental rights are different and separate from the issues for any subsequent adoption, there was a potential for Respondent's relationship with Ms. A to complicate and interfere with the termination of the parental rights.

12. On October 9, 2002, Respondent disclosed the nature of her relationship with Ms. A to her supervisor and told him she was seeking a restraining order against Ms. A. Respondent was placed on administrative leave with pay while her employer investigated the matter.

13. The employer's investigation was concluded in October 2002 and Respondent received a five-day suspension from employment without pay, which was based on the employer's conclusions that:

- a. Respondent had engaged in unprofessional conduct by having a sexual relationship with a person significant to a client on IFPI's caseload.
- b. Although Respondent transferred the case to another unit she did not supervise, the foster child was still a client of IFPI.

14. This is the only complaint about Respondent's practice ever received by the Section or the Department in the 8 years Respondent has been credentialed and practicing in Wisconsin.

15. On March 20, 2007, Respondent took and completed "No Simple Answers: Advanced Ethics & Boundary Issues," a six contact hour continuing education program sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Extension.

16. Respondent has tendered \$625.00 to the Department of Regulation and Licensing to reimburse the State of Wisconsin for the costs associated with this investigation.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Social Worker Section of the Wisconsin Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work Examining Board has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 457.26(2) and has authority to enter into this stipulated resolution pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.44(5).

2. Respondent, by engaging in the conduct as set out above, failed to avoid a dual relationship or relationship that could impair her objectivity or create a conflict of interest, which is unprofessional conduct as defined by Wis. Adm. Code § SFC 20.02(13), and is subject to discipline pursuant to Wis. Stat. §457.26(2)(f).

#### ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. Respondent, Margaret A. Grimmer, A.P.S.W., is hereby REPRIMANDED for the above conduct.

2. Respondent's completion of "No Simple Answers: Advanced Ethics and Boundary Issues," as set out in Finding of Fact 15, is accepted and approved, in lieu of ordering further education.

3. Respondent is prohibited from applying any of the 6 hours of continuing education from the March 20, 2007 "No Simple Answers: Advanced Ethics and Boundary Issues" course toward satisfaction of the continuing education required during the July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2007 registration biennium.

4. Payment shall be sent to:

Department Monitor  
Department of Regulation and Licensing  
Division of Enforcement  
1400 East Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935  
Fax (608) 266-2264  
Telephone (608) 267-3817

6. This Order is effective on the date it is signed.

Social Worker Section  
Wisconsin Marriage and Family Therapy,  
Professional Counseling and Social Work Examining Board

By: Mary Jo Walsh  
A Member of the Section

5/2/07  
Date

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
BEFORE THE SOCIAL WORKER SECTION  
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY, PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING  
AND SOCIAL WORK EXAMINING BOARD

---

IN THE MATTER OF THE DISCIPLINARY :  
PROCEEDINGS AGAINST :  
 : STIPULATION  
MARGARET A. GRIMMER, A.P.S.W., : LS \_\_\_\_\_ SOC  
RESPONDENT. :

---

[Division of Enforcement Case # 03 SOC 024]

It is hereby stipulated and agreed, by and between Margaret A. Grimmer, A.P.S.W., Respondent; E. Campion Kersten of Kersten & McKinnon, S.C., attorneys for Respondent; and John R. Zwieg, attorney for the Complainant; Department of Regulation and Licensing, Division of Enforcement, as follows:

1. This Stipulation is entered into as a result of a pending investigation of Respondent's certification by the Division of Enforcement (file 03 SOC 024). Respondent consents to the resolution of this investigation by stipulation and without the issuance of a formal complaint.

2. Respondent understands that by signing this Stipulation, she voluntarily and knowingly waives her rights, including the right to a hearing on the allegations against her, at which time the state has the burden of proving those allegations by a preponderance of the evidence; the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against her; the right to call witnesses on her behalf and to compel their attendance by subpoena; the right to testify herself; the right to file objections to any proposed decision and to present briefs or oral arguments to the officials who are to render the final decision; the right to petition for rehearing; and all other applicable rights afforded to her under the United States Constitution, the Wisconsin Constitution, the Wisconsin Statutes, the Wisconsin Administrative Code, and any other provisions of state or federal law.

3. Respondent has obtained advice of legal counsel prior to signing this Stipulation

4. Respondent agrees to the adoption of the attached Final Decision and Order by the Section. The parties to the Stipulation consent to the entry of the attached Final Decision and Order without further notice, pleading, appearance or consent of the parties. Respondent waives all rights to any appeal of the Section's Order, if adopted in the form as attached.

5. If the terms of this Stipulation are not acceptable to the Section, the parties shall not be bound by the contents of this Stipulation, and the matter shall be returned to the Division of Enforcement for further proceedings. In the event that this Stipulation is not accepted by the Section, the parties agree not to contend that the Section has been prejudiced or biased in any manner by the consideration of this attempted resolution.

6. The parties to this Stipulation agree that the attorney or other agent for the Division of Enforcement and any member of the Section ever assigned as a case advisor in this investigation may appear before the Section in open or closed session, without the presence of Respondent or her attorney, for purposes of speaking in support of this agreement and answering questions that any member of the Section may have in connection with the Section's deliberations on the Stipulation. Additionally, any such case advisor may vote on whether the Section should accept this Stipulation and issue the attached Final Decision and Order.

7. Respondent is informed that should the Section adopt this Stipulation, the Section's Final Decision and Order is a public record and will be published in accordance with standard Department procedure.

8. The Division of Enforcement joins Respondent in recommending the Section adopt this Stipulation and issue the attached Final Decision and Order.

---

Margaret A. Grimmer, A.P.S.W.  
Respondent  
3912 N. 94<sup>th</sup> Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53222

---

Date

---

E. Campion Kersten  
Kersten & McKinnon, S.C.  
Attorneys for Respondent  
735 N. Water Street, Suite 630  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

---

Date

---

John R. Zwiig  
Attorney for Complainant  
Division of Enforcement  
Department of Regulation and Licensing  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935

---

Date