

## WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



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STATE OF WISCONSIN  
BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

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IN THE MATTER OF THE DISCIPLINARY :  
PROCEEDINGS AGAINST :  
: FINAL DECISION AND ORDER  
ERICA M. SCHOCH, :  
RESPONDENT. : ~~ORDER 0001368~~

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[Division of Enforcement Case #11 RSA 047]

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

Erica M. Schoch  
421 Irvine Street  
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

Division of Enforcement  
Department of Safety and Professional Services  
1400 East Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935

Department of Safety and Professional Services  
1400 East Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935

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 Department of Safety and Professional Services (Department). The Department has reviewed this Stipulation and considers it acceptable.

Accordingly, the Department adopts the attached Stipulation and makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Erica M. Schoch ("Respondent") was born on January 6, 1979 and is certified as a Substance Abuse Counselor-in-Training in the State of Wisconsin (certificate #15598-130). This certificate was first granted on June 24, 2008.

2. Respondent's most recent address on file with the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services is 2909 East Park Avenue, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.

3. At all times relevant to this proceeding, Respondent was employed with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections at the Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility (CVCTF) as a psychotherapist, providing services to inmates and those under supervision.

4. From August 2010 to September 2011, Respondent experienced a number of events in her personal life:

- a. In August 2010, Respondent's ex-husband informed her of his intention to remarry;
- b. In October 2010, Respondent's ex-husband filed for joint custody of their two children;
- c. In May 2011, Respondent's ex-husband remarried; and
- d. In June 2011, Respondent's ex-husband was granted joint custody of their two children.

5. As a result of these events, Respondent fell into a depressed and vulnerable state.

6. Around the end of August 2011, Respondent began to exchange letters of a romantic nature with an inmate enrolled in her Earned Release Group. Between August and September 2011, Respondent wrote three letters and received approximately five letters from the inmate.

7. On September 27, 2011, CVCTF became aware of Respondent's relationship with the inmate. An investigation was initiated and found that there was no evidence to suggest a physical relationship had developed or that delivery of articles to an inmate had occurred.

8. Prior to the CVCTF investigation, Respondent had recognized that she needed help and checked herself into a behavioral health unit at a local hospital. Respondent successfully completed treatment goals and is currently seeing a counselor.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 440.88(6) and has authority to enter into this stipulated resolution of this matter pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.44(5).

2. The conduct described above constitutes unprofessional conduct as defined by Wis. Admin. Code § RL 164.01(2)(n) (Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 164.01(2)(n) as of December 1, 2011) and subjects Respondent to discipline pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 440.88(6).

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

1. Respondent, Erica M. Schoch, (certificate #15598-130) is **SUSPENDED** for a period of SIX (6) MONTHS from the date of this Order. During this period of suspension, Respondent is prohibited from providing substance abuse counseling services.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that:

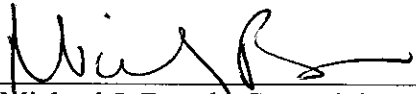
2. Within ninety (90) days from the date of this Order, Respondent shall pay costs of this proceeding in the amount of TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$200.00). Payment shall be made payable to the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services and mailed to:

Department Monitor  
Division of Enforcement  
Department of Safety and Professional Services  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935  
Telephone (608) 267-3817  
Fax (608) 266-2264

3. Violation of any of the terms of this Order may be construed as conduct imperiling public health, safety and welfare and may result in a summary suspension of Respondent's certificate. The Department may in the alternative impose additional conditions and limitations or other additional discipline for a violation of any of the terms of this Order. In the event Respondent fails to timely pay costs as ordered, Respondent's certificate to practice as a substance abuse counselor-in-training (certificate #15598-132) shall be **SUSPENDED**, without further notice or hearing, until Respondent has complied with the terms of this Order.

4. This Order is effective on the date of its signing.

**Department of Safety and Professional Services**

By:   
Michael J. Berndt, General Counsel  
On behalf of the Department

2/14/12  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date