

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



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

IN THE MATTER OF DISCIPLINARY :
PROCEEDINGS AGAINST :
: FINAL DECISION AND ORDER
STEVEN S. KASSOF, L.C.S.W., :
RESPONDENT. :

ORDER 0007835

Division of Legal Services and Compliance Case No. 20 SOC 044

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

Steven S. Kassof, L.C.S.W.
Ashland, WI 54806

Wisconsin Social Worker Section of the Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional
Counseling and Social Work Examining Board
P.O. Box 8366
Madison, WI 53708-8366

Division of Legal Services and Compliance
Department of Safety and Professional Services
P.O. Box 7190
Madison, WI 53707-7190

The parties in this matter agree to the terms and conditions of the attached Stipulation as the final disposition of this matter, subject to the approval of the Social Worker Section of the Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work Examining Board (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, Conclusions of Law, and Order.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Steven S. Kassof, L.C.S.W. (Respondent), (Year of Birth 1964) is licensed in the state of Wisconsin as a licensed clinical social worker, having license number 7992-123, first issued on February 27, 2013, and current through February 28, 2021.¹ Respondent's most recent

¹ Respondent's license was set to expire February 28, 2021, and it does not appear he has attempted to renew. However, due to Governor Evers' Emergency Order 2, all health care provider licenses or certificates will not expire until thirty days after Emergency Order 2 is no longer in effect. Therefore, Respondent's license remains "Active" despite the fact he has not completed any of the renewal requirements as of the date of this Final Decision and Order.

address on file with the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (Department) is in Ashland, Wisconsin 54806.

2. At all times relevant to this proceeding, Respondent was employed as a licensed clinical social worker at a facility in Superior, Wisconsin (Facility).

3. From June 2019 to December 2019, Respondent provided social work services to Patient A (male born 2009). Patient A's mother filed a complaint with the Department alleging that Respondent did not keep and produce adequate records for Patient A when requested.

4. The Division of Legal Services and Compliance (Division) investigated the complaint and emailed Respondent requesting his response to the allegations on September 28, 2020, October 8, 2020, October 16, 2020, and December 22, 2020, at the email address on file with the Department. Respondent did not respond.

5. On January 13, 2021, and April 20, 2021, a Division investigator sent a letter to Respondent at his mailing address on file with the Department requesting his response to the allegations and requesting information related to the investigation. Respondent did not respond.

6. On August 30, 2021, a Division investigator called Respondent at his telephone number on file with the Department. Respondent informed the Division investigator that he would provide a written response by email. The Division received Respondent's response on September 13, 2021.

7. Respondent admitted that in May 2019 he experienced a major depressive episode as a result of personal issues that contributed to a lack of quality in his work and his failure to respond to the Department. Respondent confirmed that he took handwritten notes during his sessions with Patient A that were not transcribed into Patient A's health record prior to Respondent's departure from the Facility in December 2019.

8. On February 13, 2014, the Minnesota Board of Social Work reprimanded Respondent for failing to ensure that his patient records were timely and complete.

9. In resolution of this matter, Respondent consents to the entry of the following Conclusions of Law and Order.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Section has jurisdiction to act in this matter pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 457.26 and is authorized to enter into the attached Stipulation pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.44(5).

2. By the conduct described in the Findings of Fact, Respondent committed unprofessional conduct by failing to maintain adequate records relating to services provided a client in the course of a professional relationship within the meaning of Wis. Admin. Code § MPSW 20.02(18).

3. By the conduct described in the Findings of Fact, Respondent committed unprofessional conduct by practicing or attempting to practice while the credential holder was

impaired as a result of an illness which impaired the credential holder's ability to appropriately carry out the functions delineated under the credential in a manner consistent with the safety of a client, patient or the public within the meaning of Wis. Admin. Code § MPSW 20.02(9).

4. By the conduct described in the Findings of Fact, Respondent failed to respond, to the satisfaction of the department, credentialing board, or other board in the department, within 30 days to a request for information from the department, credentialing board, or other board in the department in connection with an investigation of alleged misconduct of the credential holder within the meaning of Wis. Stat. § 440.20(5)(a).

5. As a result of the above conduct, Respondent is subject to discipline pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 457.26(2)(h).

ORDER

1. The attached Stipulation is accepted.
2. Respondent is REPRIMANDED.
3. Respondent's license to practice as a licensed clinical social worker in the state of Wisconsin (license no. 7992-123), is LIMITED as follows:

a. Within ninety (90) days of the date of this Order, Respondent shall at his own expense, successfully complete four (4) hours of education on the topic of patient record keeping offered by a provider pre-approved by the Section monitoring liaison, including taking and passing any exam offered for the courses.

b. Respondent shall submit proof of successful completion of the education in the form of verification from the institution providing the education to the Department Monitor at the address stated below. None of the education completed pursuant to this requirement may be used to satisfy any continuing education requirements that have been or may be instituted by the Section or Department, and also may not be used in future attempts to upgrade a credential in Wisconsin.

c. The Section monitoring liaison may change the number of credit hours and/or education topics in response to a request from Respondent. The monitoring liaison may consider the topic availability and/or hours of education when determining if a change to the ordered education should occur.

d. This limitation shall be removed from Respondent's certificate after satisfying the Section or its designee that Respondent has successfully completed all the ordered education.

4. Respondent's license (license no. 7992-123) is further LIMITED as follows:

a. Within sixty (60) days of the date of this Order, Respondent shall, at his own expense, undergo a fitness for practice evaluation with a pre-approved

psychiatrist or psychologist (Evaluator) who has not provided treatment to Respondent and is experienced in evaluating whether a health care professional is fit to practice.

b. Prior to evaluation, Respondent shall provide a copy of this Final Decision and Order to the Evaluator.

c. Respondent shall identify and provide the Evaluator with authorizations to communicate with all physicians, mental health professionals, and facilities at which Respondent has been treated or evaluated.

d. Within fifteen (15) days of the completion of the evaluation, a written report regarding the results of the assessment shall be submitted to the Department Monitor at the address below. The report shall address whether Respondent suffers from any condition(s) that may interfere with his ability to practice safely and competently and, if so, shall provide any recommended limitations for safe and competent practice.

e. Respondent shall execute necessary documents authorizing the Division to obtain records of the evaluation, and to discuss Respondent and his case with the Evaluator. Respondent shall execute all releases necessary to permit disclosure of the final evaluation report to the Section or its designee. Certified copies of the final evaluation report shall be admissible in any future proceeding before the Section.

f. If the Evaluator determines that Respondent is not fit to practice or is fit for practice with limitations, the Section or its designee may suspend Respondent's certificate until Respondent provides proof sufficient to convince the Section or its designee that Respondent is able to practice with reasonable skill and safety of patients and the public and does not suffer from any condition which prevents Respondent from practicing in that manner.

g. If the Evaluator determines that Respondent is fit to practice or is fit to practice with limitations, the Section or its designee may limit Respondent's certificate in a manner to address any concerns the Section or its designee has as a result of the conduct set out in the Findings of Fact and to address any recommendations resulting from the evaluation, including, but not limited to:

- i. Psychotherapy, at Respondent's expense, by a therapist approved by the Section or its designee, to address specific treatment goals, with quarterly reports to the Section by the therapist.
- ii. Additional professional education in any identified areas of deficiency.

iii. Restrictions on the nature of practice, practice setting, or requirements for supervision of practice by a professional approved by the Section, with periodic reports to the Section by the supervisor.

h. Respondent is responsible for ensuring that the results of the evaluation are sent to the Department Monitor.

5. Within ninety (90) days from the date of this Order, Respondent shall pay COSTS of this matter in the amount of \$1,189.00.

6. Any requests, petitions, payments of costs (made payable to Department of Safety and Professional Services), and other information required by this Order shall be submitted to:

Department Monitor
Division of Legal Services and Compliance
Department of Safety and Professional Services
P.O. Box 7190, Madison, WI 53707-7190
Telephone (608) 266-2112; Fax (608) 266-2264
DPSMonitoring@wisconsin.gov

Respondent may also submit this information online at: <https://dpsmonitoring.wi.gov>

7. In the event Respondent violates any term of this Order, Respondent's license (no. 7992-123), or Respondent's right to renew his license, may, in the discretion of the Section or its designee, be SUSPENDED, without further notice or hearing, until Respondent has complied with the terms of the Order. The Section may, in addition and/or in the alternative refer any violation of this Order to the Division of Legal Services and Compliance for further investigation and action.

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

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

By: Sheng J. Yang Date 2/11/2022
A Member of the Section

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

IN THE MATTER OF DISCIPLINARY
PROCEEDINGS AGAINST

STEVEN S. KASSOF, L.C.S.W.,
RESPONDENT.

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STIPULATION

ORDER 0007835

Division of Legal Services and Compliance Case No. 20 SOC 044

Steven S. Kassof, L.C.S.W. (Respondent), and the Division of Legal Services and Compliance, Department of Safety and Professional Services, stipulate as follows:

1. This Stipulation is entered into as a result of a pending investigation by the Division of Legal Services and Compliance. Respondent consents to the resolution of this investigation by Stipulation.

2. Respondent understands that by signing this Stipulation, Respondent voluntarily and knowingly waives the following rights:

- the right to a hearing on the allegations against Respondent, 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 Respondent;
- the right to call witnesses on Respondent's behalf and to compel their attendance by subpoena;
- the right to testify on Respondent's own behalf;
- 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 Respondent under the United States Constitution, the Wisconsin Constitution, the Wisconsin Statutes, the Wisconsin Administrative Code, and other provisions of state or federal law.

3. Respondent is aware of Respondent's right to seek legal representation and has been provided an opportunity to obtain legal counsel before signing this Stipulation.

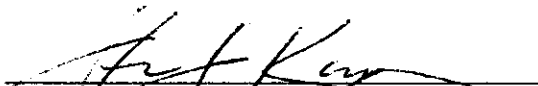
4. Respondent agrees to the adoption of the attached Final Decision and Order by the Wisconsin Social Worker Section of the Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work Examining Board (Section). The parties to the Stipulation consent to the entry of the attached Final Decision 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 then be returned to the Division of Legal Services and Compliance for further proceedings. In the event that the 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 Legal Services and Compliance and any member of the Section ever assigned as an advisor in this investigation may appear before the Section in open or closed session, without the presence of Respondent, for purposes of speaking in support of this agreement and answering questions that any member of the Section may have in connection with deliberations on the Stipulation. Additionally, any such 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 Legal Services and Compliance joins Respondent in recommending the Section adopt this Stipulation and issue the attached Final Decision and Order.


Steven S. Kassof, L.C.S.W., Respondent
Ashland, WI 54806
License No. 7992-123

10/18/2021
Date


Gretchen Mrozinski, Prosecuting Attorney
Department of Safety and Professional Services
Division of Legal Services and Compliance
P.O. Box 7190
Madison, WI 53707-7190

10/19/21
Date