

BEFORE THE IOWA BOARD OF  
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE EXAMINERS

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IN THE MATTER OF:	)	CASE NUMBER: 01-005
	)	
LAURA ELLEN CHRISTENSEN,	)	
	)	<b>SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT</b>
	)	<b>AND FINAL ORDER</b>
Respondent.	)	

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COME NOW the Board of Behavioral Science Examiners of the State of Iowa ("Board") and Laura Ellen Christensen ("Respondent"), and pursuant to Iowa Code sections 17A.10 and 272C.3(4), enter into the following Settlement Agreement and Final Order of the contested case currently on file against the Respondent:

1. The Respondent was originally licensed to practice as a mental health counselor in the state of Iowa on May 24, 1995, and holds license number 131-00145.
2. A Statement of Charges was filed against the Respondent on December 17, 2002. A contested case hearing in this matter is scheduled for June 13, 2003. The Respondent denies all allegations set forth in the Statement of Charges, and this Settlement Agreement and Final Order is executed as a compromise settlement of disputed claims.
3. The Board has jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter of the Statement of Charges.
4. Execution of this Settlement Agreement and Final Order constitutes the resolution of this contested case. Respondent has a right to a hearing on the charges, but waives her right to hearing and all attendant rights, including the right to seek judicial review, by freely and voluntarily agreeing to this Settlement Agreement and

Final Order. Once entered, this Order shall have the force and effect of a disciplinary order entered following contested case hearing.

5. Respondent is freely and voluntarily entering into this Settlement Agreement and Final Order, and she agrees that the State's counsel may present this agreement to the Board.

6. This agreement is subject to approval of the Board. If the Board approves this agreement, it becomes the final disposition of this matter. If the Board fails to approve this agreement, it shall be of no force or effect to either party.

7. This agreement shall be part of the permanent record of Respondent and shall be considered by the Board in determining the nature and severity of any disciplinary action to be imposed in the event of any future violations.

8. In the event Respondent violates or fails to comply with any of the terms of this Settlement Agreement and Final Order, the Board may initiate appropriate action to revoke or suspend Respondent's license or to impose other licensee discipline in accordance with Iowa Code section 272C.3(2)(a).

9. This Settlement Agreement and Final Order as well as the Statement of Charges are public records available for inspection and copying in accordance with the requirements of Iowa Code Chapter 22.

10. The Board's approval of this agreement shall constitute a FINAL ORDER of the Board.

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:**

11. Upon the Board's approval of this Settlement Agreement and Final Order, the Respondent's license shall be suspended indefinitely until further order of the Board.

During the entire period of suspension, the Respondent shall not utilize any designation, abbreviation, or title which implies that Respondent is licensed to practice mental health counseling or otherwise hold herself out to be a licensed mental health counselor. During the entire period of suspension, Respondent shall not provide or offer to provide mental health counseling in the State of Iowa.

12. Respondent may apply for reinstatement when the following conditions have been satisfied:

a. Respondent submits to a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary evaluation by Dr. Gary Schoener, 2421 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55404, telephone (612) 870-0565, to evaluate and review the disputed issues that have arisen in this case. Respondent is responsible for all costs associated with this evaluation.

b. Prior to the evaluation, the facility shall be provided with the Statement of Charges, the Settlement Agreement, and the investigative file in this contested case.

c. The facility shall forward directly to the Board an evaluation report and initial treatment plan. The evaluation report shall include a recommendation as to whether Respondent may return to the practice of mental health counseling and additional recommendations or restrictions as indicated. The initial treatment plan shall be subject to the approval of the Board.

d. The Respondent shall comply with the recommendations of the facility and shall undergo further evaluation and/or treatment pursuant to such approved plan.

e. The Respondent shall sign a release which (a) will enable the Board to freely communicate with all individuals involved in Respondent's evaluation and treatment, (b) provide for full access by the Board to all records maintained with respect

to such evaluation and treatment, and (c) provide for monthly reports on Respondent's progress to be submitted directly to the Board. It is the Respondent's responsibility to ensure that such monthly progress reports are provided to the Board.

f. Upon compliance with the above provisions, Respondent may submit an application for reinstatement to the Board pursuant to 645 Iowa Administrative Code 11.31. Respondent's license shall not be reinstated except upon a showing that Respondent has complied with the terms of this Settlement Agreement, that the basis for the suspension no longer exists, and that it would be in the public interest for the license to be reinstated. The burden of proof to establish such facts shall be on the Respondent.

13. Respondent agrees that following a hearing on the application for reinstatement the Board may issue an Order which places Respondent's license on probation for a period of time subject to terms, conditions and restrictions which the Board deems appropriate, or which imposes other appropriate discipline.

AGREED AND ACCEPTED:

**This Settlement Agreement and Final Order is approved by the board on June 17, 2003.**