

STATE OF IOWA  
BEFORE THE BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE EXAMINERS

IN THE MATTER OF:	)	NO: 01-005
	)	
LAURA ELLEN CHRISTENSEN,	)	
License No: 131-00145	)	
	)	<b>STATEMENT OF CHARGES</b>
RESPONDENT.	)	
	)	

TO THE ABOVE NAMED RESPONDENT:

1. On or about May 24, 1995, the Board issued the Respondent license number 131-00145 to practice mental health counseling in the State of Iowa. Respondent's mental health counselor license was placed on inactive status on September 23, 2002.
2. Board records indicate that at all times material to the following alleged events, the Respondent was a Licensed Mental Health Counselor in the State of Iowa.
3. Licenses issued by the Board are subject to the laws of the State of Iowa and the administrative rules promulgated by the Board.
4. The penalties authorized under Iowa law which the Board may impose against any licensed mental health counselor found to have engaged in prohibited or improper conduct include imposition of a civil money penalty up to \$1,000 and/or revocation of the licensee's mental health counseling license. See Iowa Code §§ 154D.3, 272C.3 (2001), 645 Iowa Admin. Code §§ 13.1, 33.1.

5. The Iowa Board of Behavioral Science Examiners has jurisdiction of this matter pursuant to Iowa Code chapters 17A, 154D, and 272C (2001).

**COUNT I**

Respondent is charged with conducting dual relationships in violation of 645 Iowa Administrative Code sections 33.1(4), 33.3(1)(a) and 33.3(6)(a). See Iowa Code §§ 154D.3, 272C.3 (2001); 645 Iowa Admin. Code § 33.1(4).

**COUNT II**

Respondent is charged with misusing and exploiting the influence derived from her professional relationship with a client in violation of 645 Iowa Administrative Code sections 33.1(4), 33.3(1)(d), and 33.3(6)(a). See Iowa Code §§ 154D.3, 272C.3 (2001); 645 Iowa Admin. Code § 33.1(4).

**COUNT III**

Respondent is charged with entering into financial arrangements with clients which do not conform to accepted professional practices in violation of 645 Iowa Administrative Code sections 33.1(4) and 33.3(6)(d). See Iowa Code § 154D.3, 272C.3 (2001); 645 Iowa Admin. Code § 33.1(4).

**COUNT IV**

Respondent is charged with engaging in unethical conduct or practices that are harmful or detrimental to the public by participating in prohibited dual relationships or financial arrangements with clients to further her own pecuniary interests. See Iowa Code

§§ 147.55(3), 154D.3, 272C.10(3) (2001); 645 Iowa Admin. Code §§ 33.1(7), 33.3(1)(a), 33.3(1)(d), 33.3(6)(a), 33.3(6)(d).

### **CIRCUMSTANCES**

6. The Respondent provided nutritional consulting services simultaneously with mental health counseling services to a consumer.

7. The Respondent sold a consumer of mental health counseling services several thousand dollars in nutritional supplements.

8. The Respondent sold a consumer of mental health counseling services a tax preparation package.

9. The Respondent benefited financially from her counseling relationship with one of her clients contrary to accepted professional practices.

### **COUNT V**

Respondent is charged with disclosing client confidences in violation of 645 Iowa Administrative Code sections 33.1(4), 33.3(5)(b), and 33.3(5)(c). See Iowa Code §§ 154D.3, 272C.3 (2001); 645 Iowa Admin. Code § 33.1(4).

### **COUNT VI**

Respondent is charged with engaging in unethical conduct or practices that are harmful or detrimental to the public by improperly disclosing client confidences. See Iowa Code §§ 147.55(3), 154D.3, 272C.10(3) (2001); 645 Iowa Admin. Code §§ 33.1(7), 33.3(5)(b), and 33.3(5)(c).

## **CIRCUMSTANCES**

10. The Respondent disclosed consumer specific information gathered through her practice as a mental health counselor with a professional acquaintance outside of the Respondent's agency.

11. The Respondent did not receive written permission or consent to disclose private information from the consumer of mental health counseling services prior to her disclosure of that consumer's information to the professional acquaintance. Nor did the Respondent take appropriate steps to preserve the anonymity of the consumer when discussing the consumer's private information with others outside her agency.

## **FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

On September 20, 2002, the Iowa Board of Behavioral Science Examiners found probable cause to file this Statement of Charges and to order a hearing set in this case.

This Statement of Charges is approved by the board on December 17, 2002.