

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA  
BOARD OF LICENSED CLINICAL  
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

IN THE MATTER OF: )  
)  
Michaela Deane Forsythe, LCMHC )  
Respondent )  
No. 14654 )

**CONSENT ORDER**  
**OF PERMANENT**  
**SURRENDER**

THIS CAUSE, coming on to be heard and being heard before the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors [“the Board”], regarding pending complaint number 2370; and

IT APPEARING to the Board that the Respondent has stipulated to certain facts and to the entry of a Consent Order in conformity therewith;

IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED by the undersigned Respondent and the Board, exclusively for the purposes of this disciplinary proceeding and any future potential proceedings by, against, or involving the Board, that:

1. Respondent was at all times relevant to this cause a licensed clinical mental health counselor [“LCMHC”] and is subject to the Board’s jurisdiction pursuant to the North Carolina Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors Act, Chapter 90, Article 24 of the North Carolina General Statutes.
2. The Board issued an associate counseling license to Respondent on February 11, 2019. On November 3, 2021, Respondent became a licensed clinical mental health counselor [“LCMHC”], which license she renewed through June 30, 2027.
3. The Board’s Ethics Review Committee found probable cause that Respondent engaged in the following conduct while licensed by the Board:
  - a. Respondent provided therapy to Complainant for several months before terminating the counseling relationship so he could assist Respondent with opening her own practice.
  - b. Complainant assisted Respondent in setting up her new practice, and Respondent employed Complainant at her new practice.
  - c. Shortly after terminating the counseling relationship, Respondent engaged in a romantic and sexual relationship with Complainant.
4. The Committee concluded that Respondent’s conduct, as set forth in Paragraph 3 above, violated Section A.5.c. and A.6.d. of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014)

[“ACA Ethics Code”] and N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-340 (a)(9) of the North Carolina Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors Act.

5. The Board and Respondent wish to avoid the time and the costs associated with full litigation of this matter and, *in lieu* of any proceedings, enter into this Consent Order.

6. This Consent Order contains the entire agreement between the undersigned, there being no agreement of any kind, verbal or otherwise, which varies, alters, or adds to this Consent Order.

7. Respondent understands and agrees that this Consent Order must be presented to the Board for review and potential approval and shall be effective only after approval by the full Board and entered by signature of its Chairperson.

8. Respondent further agrees that presentation of this Consent Order to the Board for review and potential approval shall not constitute improper *ex parte* communication between the Board and its counsel, or the Board and its staff, nor require the recusal of the members of the Board from consideration of this matter before the full Board if the Board rejects the Consent Order and a contested case hearing is required in this case.

9. Respondent has read this entire Consent Order, assents to its terms and conditions, and agrees not to contest the findings, conclusions, or order in any future potential proceedings by, against, or involving the Board. By entering into this Consent Order, Respondent is not making any admissions for any current or future proceedings, other than those by, against, or involving the Board.

10. Respondent expressly waives notice of hearing, a hearing, the making of findings of fact and conclusions of law, and all further proceedings before the Board to which Respondent may be entitled by law.

11. Respondent waives the right to seek judicial review or to otherwise challenge the validity of this Consent Order in any court or before the Board in the future.

12. Upon entry of the Consent Order, Respondent forever releases the State of North Carolina, the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors, and all its members, officials, agents, counsel, representatives, and employees, both past and present, in their individual or official capacities, from any and all liability, suits, claims, and causes of action arising prior to or as a result of the execution of this Consent Order.

13. Respondent understands that entry of this Consent Order as a public record, mandatory reporting, and its distribution may have adverse consequences in other contexts, which shall not be the basis for reconsideration of its terms in the future.

14. Respondent was represented by Alan Schneider and Brittany Pinkham in connection with the execution of this Consent Order. The Board was represented in this Consent Order by Douglas Brocker of The Brocker Law Firm, P.A.

15. Respondent agrees to service of the fully executed Consent Order via email to her counsel and waives service by any other method.

Based upon the record and the foregoing stipulations,

NOW, THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

I. Respondent permanently surrenders her license to practice clinical mental health counseling in the State of North Carolina, license number 14654, which becomes effective upon signature and entry of this Order by the Chairperson and service via email.

II. Respondent acknowledges and agrees that she cannot reapply for or regain a license to practice clinical mental health counseling in North Carolina at any time in the future, and the Board shall not accept or consider any future application or request from her to obtain a license.

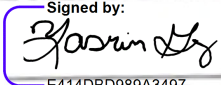
III. Respondent acknowledges and agrees that she is not authorized to engage in any acts constituting the practice of clinical mental health counseling under the North Carolina Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors Act in this State or concerning residents of this State, as of the effective date of the Consent Order. Respondent will submit her original license to the Board by or on by the effective date of the Consent Order.

IV. This Consent Order shall constitute action against the license of Respondent, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §90-340(a) and (b).

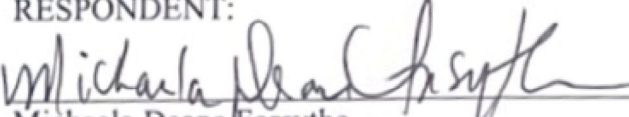
V. The Board shall maintain this Consent Order as a public record pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §§132-1 and 90-340(f), shall submit a report to the National Practitioner Databank, and shall provide copies to the American Counseling Association and the National Board of Certified Counselors, and to other agencies or individuals as required by law. Other than this Consent Order, all documents obtained, collected, or compiled by the Board in this matter shall remain confidential pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-340(f).

CONSENTED TO BY:

NORTH CAROLINA BOARD OF LICENSED CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

BY:  Signed by: 6/2/26  
Dr. Yasmin Gay, LCMHCS Date  
Board Chairperson

RESPONDENT:

 3/27/2024  
Michaela Deane Forsythe Date  
effective 4/11/2024