BEFORE THE ARKANSAS PSYCHOLOGY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF
STEFFIE TURNER, Psy. D. **RESPONDENT**
License # 08-05P

Case No: C-14-03

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSION OF LAW, AND ORDER

On May 15, 2015 the Arkansas Psychology Board (the "Board") held a hearing in the above styled matter with Steffie Turner, Psy.D. ("Respondent"), appearing, after notice, to be heard with and through her attorney Austin Power, Jr., as to whether she had violated Ark. Code Ann. §17-97-101 *et. seq.* From the testimony, exhibits, and other facts and matters presented before it, the Board makes the following findings of fact, conclusions of law and order.

FINDING OF FACTS

1. Respondent is a licensed Psychologist in the State of Arkansas and holds license number 08-05P.

2. In a complaint dated February 10, 2014 filed by Robert Parker, M.S. 80-14E and a second complaint dated March 13, 2014 filed by Connie Venhaus, Ph.D. 10-19P, it is alleged that Respondent had a sexual relationship with a licensed Psychological Examiner over whom she exercised clinical supervision.

3. Respondent was employed by the Arkansas Department of Corrections ("ADC") from May 27, 2012 through January 8, 2014 when she resigned during the course of her employer's investigation of a report that she had sexual relations with a

Psychological Examiner in the same work unit and over which she had clinical supervision responsibilities.

4. According to the testimony of Connie Venhaus, Ph.D., #10-19P, she learned of the relationship when it was disclosed to her by the Psychological Examiner at issue during a Board required supervision session. Venhaus was the Examiner's Board registered supervisor. Dr. Venhaus testified that any psychologist in the unit was expected to, and did, provide clinical supervision to any of the lesser-licensed mental health staff in the unit.

5. Susan Skinner Holt, Ph.D. #92-04P, who was the Board registered supervisor of the Examiner until January 1, 2014 and was also employed in the Unit at which the Respondent and the Examiner worked, notified Robert Parker on December 5, 2013 of a possible violation of an ADC conduct standard after the Psychological Examiner reported his prior sexual relationship with the Respondent to Holt.

6. Robert Parker initiated an investigation into the Psychological Examiner's report. During the course of the investigation, Respondent initially denied having a sexual relationship with the Psychological Examiner. After the investigator confronted Respondent with undergarments that were left at the home of the Psychological Examiner, Respondent resigned from her employment.

7. The Board finds that Respondent did have sexual relations with the Psychological Examiner at issue while she was in a position at the ADC that required her to provide him with clinical supervision.

APPLICABLE LAW AND REGULATIONS

APA Ethical Standard 7.07 Sexual Relationships with Students or Supervisees

> Psychologists do not engage in sexual relationships with students or supervisees who are in their department, agency, or training center or over whom psychologists have or are likely to have evaluative authority.

Ark. Code Anno. § 17-97-310 (a) (8) states:

> (a) The Arkansas Psychology Board may refuse to grant a certificate or may suspend or revoke any license for a period to be determined by the board, may impose a fine of up to five thousand dollars ($ 5,000), may issue a letter of reprimand, and may require additional hours of education of a licensee on the following grounds:
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> . . .
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> (8) A violation of any rule or regulation of the board or the rules of ethics as adopted by the board.

Arkansas Psychology Board Rule 11.6 (H) and (I) states:

> Pursuant to A.C.A. § 17-97-101, et seq., the Board may suspend, refuse, or revoke a license for a period to be determined by the Board, may impose a fine of up to five thousand dollars ($5,000.); may issue a letter of reprimand; and/or may require additional hours of education of a licensee on the following grounds:
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> > 11.6. H. Violations of the current ethical code.
> > 11.6. I. Violations of A.C.A. § 17-97-101, tense, or the Rules and Regulations of the Arkansas Psychology Board.

CONCLUSION OF LAW

By engaging in a sexual relationship with a Psychological Examiner under her clinical supervision, Respondent, Steffie Turner, Ph.D., License # 08-05P, violated APA Ethical Standard 7.07, and is subject to discipline by this Board pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 17-97-310 (a) (8) and Arkansas Psychology Board Rule 11.6 (H) and (I).

ORDER

It is therefore the Order of this Board that the Respondent, Steffie Turner, Ph.D., #08-05P is issued the following sanctions to begin upon the Board's execution of this Order:

1. A suspension of licensure for a period of twelve (12) months. Respondent must maintain all requirements, including continuing education requirements, for renewal of her license during the term of suspension and following.

2. A fine in the amount of three thousand ($3,000.00) dollars due payable in installments during the period of her suspension prior to reinstatement of her license.

3. One (1) year period of Board approved supervision following reinstatement of her license subject to quarterly reports by the Board approved supervisor. The supervision shall consist of one (1) hour per week, face to face supervision. The Supervisor shall be supplied a copy of this Order by the Respondent before entering into any supervisory plan and agreement which must be pre-approved by the Board. The Supervisor shall acknowledge receipt of the Order to the Board and provide a Supervision Agreement and Plan consistent with this Order.

4. Acceptable completion (passing) of a Board- approved APA qualified continuing education course of a minimum of (6) six contact hours (not online) regarding ethical principles with emphasis on supervisory relationships and boundary issues. Proof of completion of these hours must be submitted prior to completion of the suspension. In addition to these (6) six disciplinary hours, continuing education for license renewal must also be completed during the suspension year.

5. Respondent must participate in, and successfully pass, a Board oral examination in the tenth (10th) month of her one (1) year of suspension.

6. A copy of this order will be placed in Respondent's Complaint File and general licensure file. Any violation of the terms and conditions of this Consent Order shall subject the Respondent to additional disciplinary proceedings.

The Respondent may seek judicial review of the Board's decision either in the circuit court of the county where she resides or in Pulaski County if filed within thirty (30) days of receipt of this Order. No further notice of the Board's findings will be sent and the Board's action will be final unless a stay is issued by the circuit court in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act. All appeals or reviews must be in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, A.C.A. §25-12-2015 *et-seq*.

IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 4th DAY OF June, 2015

ARKANSAS PSYCHOLOGY BOARD

Maggie Sponer

Maggie Sponer, Administrative Director