

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

**BEFORE THE
BOARD OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS
OF THE STATE OF OREGON**

In the Matter of

ROBERT CONNIFF, LCSW

Respondent.

STIPULATED FINAL ORDER

Case No. 2008-04

1.

The Board of Clinical Social Workers (Board) is the agency responsible for licensing, regulating, and disciplining Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) and Clinical Social Work Associates (CSWA) in the State of Oregon.

2.

At all times material herein, Robert Conniff, LCSW, (Respondent) was an LCSW and subject to the jurisdiction of the Board. Respondent's current address of record is 216 Madison, No. 1, Corvallis OR 97333.

3.

Respondent has been engaged in social work since 1976 and in private practice as an LCSW since 1986 (License No. 200). Respondent acknowledges that from 1986 to 2000, he has provided counseling services to about 1,100 to 1,200 persons, and since 2,000 to about 270 individuals. Respondent acknowledges that beginning in 1999 he became licensed to act as a financial advisor and has since then provided those services to about 450 individuals or couples. Respondent acknowledges that since 1999 he has provided both social work services and financial advisor services to an average of about three clients per year. Respondent acknowledges that of those clients there were eight clients who were receiving or had received social work services within twelve months of receiving financial advisor services. Respondent represents that he received approximately a total of \$5,824 in commissions from the amounts invested by these eight clients. Upon notification of the Board's investigation into this matter, Respondent represents that he promptly: (a) arranged to have the financial accounts of those

1 eight clients who were receiving financial advisor services transferred to another financial
2 advisor; (b) notified his current affected social work clients of the reason for the transfer of their
3 financial accounts to another financial advisor; and (c) instituted procedures to ensure that he
4 does not provide financial advisor services to current social work clients or former social work
5 clients within a year of having been a social work client; and (d) instituted procedures to avoid
6 the appearance of any conflict related to his mental health counseling and financial advisor
7 services in the future. Respondent has fully cooperated with the Board in reaching a resolution
8 in this matter.

9 4.

10 Based on the above, Respondent:

11 (a) Entered into dual relationships with clients that increased the risk of a conflict
12 with the client's ability to benefit from his social work practice, which are violations of OAR
13 877-030-0070(1)(b) [2005];

14 (b) Entered into dual relationships with clients that increased the risk of exploitation
15 of the client for the licensee's advantage, which are violations of OAR 877-030-0070(1)(d)
16 [2005]; and

17 (c) Entered into dual relationships with clients or former clients where there was a
18 potential for exercising undue influence on the client or former client within a year from the last
19 date of therapeutic service, which are violations of OAR 877-030-0070(1)(f) [2005].

20 5.

21 Respondent acknowledges and admits to having engaged in the above conduct and
22 violations, and agrees to the sanctions imposed below.

23 6.

24 Respondent and the Board desire to resolve this matter by entry of this Stipulated Final
25 Order (Stipulated Order), pursuant to ORS 183.417(3) and other applicable authority.

26 ///

7.

Now, therefore, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that:

a. A formal letter of **REPRIMAND** be issued to Respondent for the above conduct and violations, pursuant to ORS 675.595(6).

b. Respondent will enter a twelve-month regime of supervision consisting of at least one hour of consultation with a Board-approved supervisor per month. The supervision will focus on avoiding dual relationships and measures and practices Respondent must observe to maintain a separation between his therapy and financial consultant work. Respondent will sign a release of information form with the supervisor that will allow the Board to review the supervisor's files maintained in the course of the supervision described herein. The supervisor will agree to submit quarterly written reports to the Board on Respondent's progress under supervision, with a final written summary report that assesses whether there is any concern that Respondent will experience any problems with dual relationships in the future.

c. Respondent shall complete within one year of issuance of this Stipulated Order twelve (12) hours of Continuing Education Units that focus on avoiding dual relationships. These specific Continuing Education hours are in addition to the normal Continuing Education requirements for Respondent to maintain his clinical social worker license. Respondent shall provide a report on the completion of this Continuing Education requirement to the Board within thirty (30) days of completing each class. Each report shall summarize the lessons Respondent learned from the class and be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font, and no fewer than three pages and no longer than five pages in length.

d. All costs, fees, and expenses required for Respondent to comply with this Stipulated Order shall be paid by Respondent.

///

///

1 8.

2 In addition to the above discipline of Respondent, the Board imposes a civil penalty in
3 the sum of one thousand dollars and no cents (\$1,000) for each for the above rules violated by
4 Respondent, pursuant to ORS 675.540(2)(c), 675.595(10), and 183.745. The total civil penalties
5 assessed in this Stipulated Order are three thousand dollars and no cents (\$3,000). Respondent
6 shall pay the civil penalties assessed in this Stipulated Order within thirty (30) days of issuance.

7 9.

8 Respondent understands, acknowledges, and agrees to the following:

9 9.1. This Stipulated Order will be submitted to the Board for approval and is subject to
10 and conditioned upon approval by the full Board. This Stipulated Order, once issued by the
11 Board, is a final order.

12 9.2. This Stipulated Order is a public document and a matter of public discipline. This
13 document must be disclosed, published, and reported in accordance with ORS 676.175(5)(a)(D),
14 OAR 877-040-0050(2), and Oregon Public Records Law;

15 9.3. This Stipulated Order in no way limits or prevents further remedies, sanctions, or
16 actions which may be available to the Board under Oregon law for conduct or actions of
17 Respondent not covered by this Stipulated Order, or against a party not covered by the Stipulated
18 Order, or for Respondent's failure to comply with the terms of this Stipulated Order;

19 9.4. Respondent has been fully advised of Respondent's rights to notice and a
20 contested case hearing under the Oregon Administrative Procedures Act (ORS Chapter 183) and
21 Civil Penalty Procedures of ORS 183.745, and fully and finally waives any and all such rights
22 and any rights to appeal or otherwise challenge this Stipulated Order; and

23 9.5. Respondent has fully read this Stipulated Order and understands it completely.
24 Respondent voluntarily, without any force or duress, consents to issuance and entry of this
25 Stipulated Order. Respondent states that no promises or representation has been made to induce
26 Licensee to sign this Stipulated Order. Respondent has consulted with an attorney regarding this

1 Stipulated Order and has been fully advised in regards thereto or waives any and all rights to
2 consult with an attorney prior to issuance and entry of this Stipulated Order.

3 **IT IS SO STIPULATED AND AGREED TO** this 10th day of OCTOBER, 2008.
4

5 Robert Conniff
6 Robert Conniff, LCSW, Respondent
7

8 **IT IS SO ORDERED** this 4th day of November, 2008.

9 **BOARD OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS**
10 **State of Oregon**

11
12 By: Mark F. Oldham
13 Mark F. Oldham, Chair
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26