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SARAH MCCRACKEN, LICSW, CIMHP
Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker,
Certified Integrative Mental Health Professional

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

As mandated by Vermont State Law and the Rules of the Board of Social Workers, Chapter 61, section 3231, the following information about my professional qualifications and experience, actions that constitute unprofessional conduct, and the method for filing a complaint or making a consumer inquiry is herein provided to you below.

Professional and Educational Qualifications

EDINBORO UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Master of Social Work, 2017

Edinboro, PA

THIEL COLLEGE
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, 2009

Greenville, PA

Background Information

I am a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker in the State of Vermont. During my Master's of Social Work (MSW) field internship placements, I was trained in trauma-informed care and family practice in the states of Virginia and Alabama. I completed MSW degree in 2017 from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. I am currently a social worker in independent private practice and the owner/therapist of Cave Counseling, PLLC.

Prior to starting my private practice, I provided community services to military families and veterans. Before that, I worked in private practice by providing psychotherapy to children, teens, adults, couples, families, and the military community at large. I have experience as a school social worker and a behavioral health/therapeutic support specialist providing modeling to parents and behavioral change techniques to children in their homes and classrooms, including work with children, teens, and young adults on the autism spectrum.

Other relevant experiences include facilitating group therapy to teens and adults and completing the Advanced Nutritional and Mental Health Integrative Medicine for Mental Health Professionals course which enabled me to gain my specialty certification in Integrative Health for Mental Health to incorporate sleep hygiene, nutritional knowledge, and mindfulness practice into my work. In

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addition to work experience, I am personally related to the military and understand military culture, stressors, family success, and the effects of military service that cause military families to seek therapy and support. In addition to being licensed in Vermont, I am currently licensed to practice independently in the states of North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

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Office of Professional Regulation Notice

The Office of Professional Regulation provides Vermont licenses, certifications, and registrations for over 55,000 practitioners and businesses. Forty-six professions and occupations are supported and managed by this office. A list of professions regulated is found below.

Each profession or occupation is governed by laws defining professional conduct. Consumers who have inquiries or wish to obtain a form to register a complaint may do so by calling (802) 828-1505, or by writing to the Director of the Office, Secretary of State's Office, 85 Main Street, 3rd Floor, Montpelier, VT 05620-3402.

Upon receipt of a complaint, an administrative review determines if the issues raised are covered by the applicable professional conduct statute. If so, a committee is assigned to investigate, collect information, and recommend action or closure to the appropriate governing body.

All complaint investigations are confidential. Should the investigation conclude with a decision for disciplinary action against a professional's license and ability to practice, the name of the license holder will then be made public.

Complaint investigations focus on licensure and fitness of the licensee to practice. Disciplinary action, when warranted, ranges from warning to revocation of license, based on the circumstances. You should not expect a return of fees paid or additional unpaid services as part of the results of this process. If you seek restitution of this nature, consider consulting with the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General, retaining an attorney, or filing a case in Small Claims Court.

Accountancy	Naturopaths
Acupuncture	Nursing
Architects	Nursing Home Administrators
Athletic Trainers	Occupational Therapists
Auctioneers	Opticians
Audiologists	Optometry
Barbers & Cosmetologists	Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
Boxing Control	Pharmacy
Chiropractic	Physical Therapists
Dental Examiners	Private Investigative & Security Services
Dietitians	Property Inspectors
Drug and Alcohol Counselor	Psychoanalyst
Electrolysis	Psychology
Professional Engineering	Psychotherapist, Non-licensed
Funeral Service	Radiologic Technology
Hearing Aid Dispensers	Real Estate Appraisers
Land Surveyors	Real Estate
Landscape Architects	Respiratory Care
Marriage & Family Therapists	Social Workers, Clinical
Clinical Mental Health Counselors	Tattooists
Midwiver, Licensed	Veterinary
Motor Vehicle Racing	

Chapter 78: Roster of Psychotherapists Who Are Nonlicensed

§ 4090. Disclosure of Information

The board shall adopt rules requiring persons entered on the roster to disclose to each client the psychotherapist's professional qualifications and experience, those actions that constitute unprofessional conduct, and the method for filing a complaint or making a consumer inquiry, and provisions relating to the manner in which the information shall be displayed and signed by both the rostered psychotherapist and the client. The rules may include provisions for applying or modifying these requirements in cases involving institutionalized clients, minors and adults under the supervision of a guardian.

The Vermont Statutes Online

Title 3: Executive

Chapter 5: SECRETARY OF STATE

Sub-Chapter 3: Professional Regulation

3 V.S.A. § 129a. Unprofessional conduct

(a) In addition to any other provision of law, the following conduct by a licensee constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of a license or other disciplinary action. Any one of the following items or any combination of items, whether the conduct at issue was committed within or outside the State, shall constitute unprofessional conduct:

- (1) Fraudulent or deceptive procurement or use of a license.
- (2) Advertising that is intended or has a tendency to deceive.
- (3) Failing to comply with provisions of federal or State statutes or rules governing the practice of the profession.
- (4) Failing to comply with an order of the board or violating any term or condition of a license restricted by the board.
- (5) Practicing the profession when medically or psychologically unfit to do so.
- (6) Delegating professional responsibilities to a person whom the licensed professional knows, or has reason to know, is not qualified by training, experience, education, or licensing credentials to perform them, or knowingly providing professional supervision or serving as a preceptor to a person who has not been licensed or registered as required by the laws of that person's profession.
- (7) Willfully making or filing false reports or records in the practice of the profession, willfully impeding or obstructing the proper making or filing of reports or records, or willfully failing to file the proper reports or records.
- (8) Failing to make available promptly to a person using professional health care services, that person's representative, or succeeding health care professionals or institutions, upon written request and direction of the person using professional health care services, copies of that person's records in the possession or under the control of the licensed practitioner, or failing to notify patients or clients how to obtain their records when a practice closes.
- (9) Failing to retain client records for a period of seven years, unless laws specific to the profession allow for a shorter retention period. When other laws or agency rules require retention for a longer period of time, the longer retention period shall apply.
- (10) Conviction of a crime related to the practice of the profession or conviction of a felony, whether or not related to the practice of the profession.
- (11) Failing to report to the Office a conviction of any felony or misdemeanor offense in a Vermont District Court, a Vermont Superior Court, a federal court, or a court outside Vermont within 30 days.
- (12) Exercising undue influence on or taking improper advantage of a person using professional services, or promoting the sale of services or goods in a manner that exploits a person for the financial gain of the practitioner or a third party.
- (13) Performing treatments or providing services that the licensee is not qualified to perform or that are beyond the scope of the licensee's education, training, capabilities, experience, or scope of practice.
- (14) Failing to report to the Office within 30 days a change of name, e-mail, or mailing address.
- (15) Failing to exercise independent professional judgment in the performance of licensed activities when that judgment is necessary to avoid action repugnant to the obligations of the profession.
- (16)(A) Impeding an investigation under this chapter or unreasonably failing to reply, cooperate, or produce lawfully requested records in relation to such investigation.

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(D) The patient privilege set forth in 12 V.S.A. § 1612 shall not bar the licensee's obligations under this subsection (a) and a confidentiality agreement entered into in concluding a settlement of a civil claim shall not exempt the licensee from fulfilling his or her obligations under this subdivision (16).

(17) Advertising, promoting, or recommending a therapy or treatment in a manner tending to deceive the public or to suggest a degree of reliability or efficacy unsupported by competent evidence and professional judgment.

(18) Promotion by a treatment provider of the sale of drugs, devices, appliances, or goods provided for a patient or client in such a manner as to exploit the patient or client for the financial gain of the treatment provider, or selling, prescribing, giving away, or administering drugs for other than legal and legitimate therapeutic purposes.

(19) Willful misrepresentation in treatments or therapies.

(20) Offering, undertaking, or agreeing to cure or treat a disease or disorder by a secret method, procedure, treatment, or medicine.

(21) Permitting one's name or license to be used by a person, group, or corporation when not actually in charge of or responsible for the professional services provided.

(22) Prescribing, selling, administering, distributing, ordering, or dispensing any drug legally classified as a controlled substance for the licensee's own use or to an immediate family member as defined by rule.

(23) For any professional with prescribing authority, signing a blank or undated prescription form or negligently failing to secure electronic means of prescribing.

(24) For any mental health care provider, use of conversion therapy as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 8351 on a client younger than 18 years of age.

(25) For providers of clinical care to patients, failing to have in place a plan for responsible disposition of patient health records in the event the licensee should become incapacitated or unexpectedly discontinue practice.

(26) Sexually harassing or exploiting a patient, client, or consumer, or doing so to a coworker in a manner that threatens the health, safety, or welfare of patients, clients, or consumers; failing to maintain professional boundaries; or violating a patient, client, or consumer's reasonable expectation of privacy.

(b) Failure to practice competently by reason of any cause on a single occasion or on multiple occasions may constitute unprofessional conduct, whether actual injury to a client, patient, or customer has occurred. Failure to practice competently includes:

- (1) performance of unsafe or unacceptable patient or client care; or
- (2) failure to conform to the essential standards of acceptable and prevailing practice.

(c) The burden of proof in a disciplinary action shall be on the State to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the person has engaged in unprofessional conduct.

(d)(1) After hearing, and upon a finding of unprofessional conduct, a board or an administrative law officer may take disciplinary action against a licensee or applicant, including imposing an administrative penalty not to exceed \$5,000.00 for each unprofessional conduct violation.

(?)(A) Any money received under this subsection shall be deposited in the Professional Regulatory Fee Fund established in section 124 of this chapter for the purpose of providing education and training for board members and advisor appointees.

(B) The Director shall detail in the annual report receipts and expenses from money received under this subsection.

(c) In the case where a standard of unprofessional conduct as set forth in this section conflicts with a standard set forth in a specific board's statute or rule, the standard that is most protective of the public shall govern. (Added 1997, No. 40, § 5; amended 2001, No. 151 (Adj. Sess.), § 2, eff. June 27, 2002; 2003, No. 60, § 2; 2005, No. 27, § 5; 2005, No. 148 (Adj. Sess.), § 4; 2009, No. 35, § 2; 2011, No. 66, § 3, eff. June 1, 2011; 2011, No. 116 (Adj. Sess.), § 5; 2017, No. 48, § 4; 2017, No. 44 (Adj. Sess.), § 6, eff. July 1, 2019; 2019, No. 30, § 4.)

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Vermont Laws: Chapter 61 Social Workers

§ 3210. Unprofessional conduct

(a) The following conduct and the conduct set forth in 3 V.S.A. § 129a by a person licensed under this chapter constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or a person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial or discipline of a license:

- (1) failing to use a correct title in professional activity;
- (2) conduct that evidences unfitness to practice licensed master's or licensed independent clinical social work;
- (3) engaging in any sexual conduct with a client, or with the immediate family member of a client, with whom the licensee has had a professional relationship within the previous two years;
- (4) harassing, intimidating, or abusing a client or patient;
- (5) practicing outside or beyond a licensee's education, training, experience, or competence;
- (6) having a conflict of interest that interferes with the exercise of the licensee's professional responsibilities, discretion, and impartial judgment;
- (7) failing to inform a client when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and failing to take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the client's interest primary and protects the client's interest to the greatest extent possible;
- (8) taking unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploring others to further the licensee's personal, religious, political, or business interests;
- (9) engaging in dual or multiple relationships with a client or former client in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client;
- (10) failing to take steps to protect a client and to set clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries, in instances where dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable;

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(11) failing to clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of the licensee's professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services, when a licensee provides services to two or more people who have a spousal, familial, or other relationship with each other;

(12) failing to clarify the licensee's role with the parties involved and to take appropriate action to minimize any conflicts of interest, when the clinical social worker anticipates a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or anticipates having to perform in conflicting roles such as testifying in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients; or

(13) using conversion therapy as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 8351 on a client younger than 18 years of age.

(b) After hearing, and upon a finding of unprofessional conduct, an administrative hearing officer may take disciplinary action against a licensee or applicant. (Added 1985, No. 253 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; amended 1989, No. 250 (Adj. Sess.), § 4(b); 1993, No. 98, § 30; 1993, No. 222 (Adj. Sess.), § 6; 1997, No. 40, § 36; 1997, No. 145 (Adj. Sess.), § 52; 1999, No. 133 (Adj. Sess.), § 29; 2015, No. 38, § 31, eff. July 1, 2017; 2015, No. 138 (Adj. Sess.), § 7, eff. July 1, 2017.)