

BEFORE THE ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

IN THE MATTER )

KRISTIN J. DAWSON, )

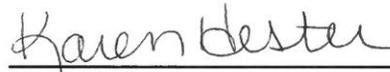
Respondent. )

) Case No.: 17-5200B-03  
)  
)  
)

**ORDER**

The Board met on January 12, 2018, and considered the recommendation of the hearing officer. The Board accepted the recommendation of the hearing officer to revoke your license and fine you five hundred dollars but declines to assess costs of the hearing against you.

Done this the 11<sup>th</sup> day of April 2018.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen Hester  
Acting Executive Director  
For the Board of Social Work Examiners

cc: Ellen Leonard  
Board Attorney

**BEFORE THE ALABAMA  
STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS**

<b>IN THE MATTER OF</b>	)	
	)	
<b>KRISTIN J. DAWSON,</b>	)	<b>CASE NO. 17-5200B-03</b>
	)	
<b>RESPONDENT</b>	)	

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE HEARING OFFICER**

**I. Procedural Posture**

Kristin J. Dawson (hereinafter “Respondent”) was heretofore licensed by the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners (hereinafter “Board”), as a licensed social worker. Respondent at all times pertinent to the Board’s complaint was and is subject to the Board’s jurisdiction.

Respondent was notified of a formal hearing to be held on October 24, 2017.<sup>1</sup> Respondent was properly noticed by regular and certified mail of the time and place of the formal hearing.<sup>2</sup>

The Board, pursuant to ALA. ADMIN. CODE r. 850-X-10-.06(4), engaged James Jerry Wood to act as a hearing officer in this matter. The undersigned conducted the hearing on October 24, 2017. Seven Board Members were present. The Board was represented by Ellen Leonard, Esq.

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<sup>1</sup> Board Exhibit 1.

<sup>2</sup> Board Exhibit 2 and testimony of Hester.

Respondent did not appear for the hearing as scheduled. At the Board's request, pursuant to the provisions of ALA. CODE § 41-22-12(d) (1975), the hearing was conducted without Respondent's presence.

## **II. Findings of Fact**

The Board's complaint against Respondent was admitted into evidence.<sup>3</sup> Pursuant to ALA. ADMIN. CODE r. 850-X-10-.09, in Respondent's absence a plea of "not guilty" was entered for her by the hearing officer.

The Board called Karen Hester (hereinafter "Hester"), its Acting Executive Director and Custodian of Records, as its witness. Through the testimony of Hester, Board Exhibits 1-4 were authenticated and admitted. Hester testified that Respondent was a licensed social worker subject to the Board's jurisdiction.

Respondent, on February 6, 2017, entered into a settlement agreement with the Board.<sup>4</sup> Respondent has failed to comply with the terms of the settlement agreement, including the provisions of paragraph (2), which concerned "...proof of professional treatment for alcohol/drug abuse..." Pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreement, upon Respondent's failure to comply, the Board set this matter for formal hearing.

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<sup>3</sup> Board Exhibit 1.

<sup>4</sup> Board Exhibit 4.

Based on the testimony of Ashley Horton, a Social Service Caseworker for the Alabama Department of Human Resources, and formerly a co-worker with Respondent, it is abundantly clear that Respondent used alcohol during her working hours while employed at the Cullman County Department of Human Resources (“CCDHR”). The licensure complaint filed by the Director of CCDHR details the behaviors and unprofessional conduct exhibited by Respondent. Respondent is alleged to have admitted her behaviors giving rise to her discipline by CCDHR.<sup>5</sup>

### **III. Conclusions of Law**

Based on the testimony and documentary evidence, the Respondent violated ALA. CODE § 34-30-4(6) (1975) and ALA. ADMIN. CODE r. 850-X-9 and r. 850-X-10-.01(2)(k), (o) and (v).

The testimonial and documentary evidence clearly establishes, by a preponderance of the evidence, that Respondent engaged in behavior that demonstrates incapacity and incompetence to practice social work. The evidence indicates Respondent is addicted or habituated to alcohol or other chemical substances that impair her ability to practice competently.

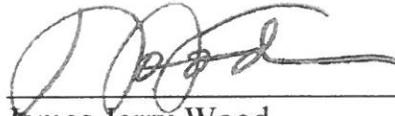
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<sup>5</sup> Board Exhibit 3. Note: The Director of CCDHR is a member of the Board and was recused from participating in the Board’s formal hearing.

#### IV. Recommendation

Respondent's conduct clearly demonstrates that Respondent cannot competently conduct herself as a licensed social worker. The undersigned recommends that Respondent's license to practice as a social worker be revoked, that Respondent be fined five hundred dollars (\$500.00), and that Respondent pay the costs of this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted this 26<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2017.



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James Jerry Wood  
Administrative Law Judge  
State of Alabama  
Alabama State Personnel Department  
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Facsimile: (334) 353-9901

#### VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL

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