

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA  
BOARD OF LICENSED  
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

IN THE MATTER OF:

BONNIE TORELLA, LPC  
Respondent.  
No. 1721

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**CONSENT ORDER**

THIS CAUSE, coming on to be heard and being heard before the North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional Counselors (“the Board”), at its meeting on July 26, 2018, pursuant to a charge letter issued by the Board on July 2, 2018, which is now pending; 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 that:

1. Respondent was at all times relevant to this cause a licensed professional counselor and is subject to the Board’s jurisdiction pursuant to the North Carolina Licensed Professional Counselors Act, Chapter 90, Article 24 of the North Carolina General Statutes.
2. On or about October 16, 2017, Respondent began providing counseling services to minor clients AW and IW, whose parents were involved in a child custody dispute. Respondent was not ordered to provide a child custody evaluation by a court.
3. Over the course of providing counseling to the children, on November 2, 2017, Respondent recommended that the Court require the minor children’s father (CW) to have supervised visits by the minor children’s mother (KW) when he is with the children. Respondent further recommended the following: that minor client IW be able to make her own decisions about whether she has visitation with her father; that the children’s father have a psychological evaluation performed as it relates to his substance use/abuse and his overall mental stability; and that mental health providers communicate to the court at future date(s) determined by the Court as to the children’s father’s cooperation with treatment and his current progress.
4. Respondent provided recommendations to the Court about the parties and had not performed any assessment of the children’s father. Respondent was operating outside of the scope of Respondent’s role as the children’s counselor by making such recommendations.
5. Respondent admits that her conduct as set forth above in paragraph number 3-4 violates Sections A.6.d., C.2.a., and E.1.b. of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014) and violations of N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 90-340 (a)(9) & (a)(12) of the North Carolina Licensed Professional Counselors Act.

6. 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.

7. 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 the Respondent may be entitled by law. Respondent further agrees that presentation of this Consent Order to the Board for 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, should a hearing be required in this case.

8. Respondent forever releases the State of North Carolina, the North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional Counselors, and all its members, officials, agents, 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.

9. Respondent waives the right to seek judicial review or to otherwise challenge the validity of this Consent Order in any court. Respondent understands and agrees that this Consent Order shall be effective only after approval by the full Board and signature of its Chairperson.

10. 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.

Based upon the record and the foregoing stipulations,

NOW, THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

I. Respondent's license as a Licensed Professional Counselor shall be placed on PROBATION for a period of six months or until she successfully completes the following, whichever takes longer to occur:

II. Respondent shall complete six hours of continuing education coursework in the area of high conflict divorce, which meet the requirements of 21 NCAC .0603, which may either be completed in person or online. Upon successful completion of this continuing education coursework, Respondent shall submit a certificate of completion provided by the continuing education sponsor to the Board. This requirement shall be in addition to the continuing education coursework required for all licensees under Board Rule .0603. All costs associated with this continuing education shall be borne by Respondent. Respondent shall complete this continuing education within six months of the execution of this Consent Order.

III. Respondent shall be supervised for a period of six months by a Board approved supervisor for one hour of individual face to face supervision for every two weeks of counseling practice, regardless of the hours of practice. Respondent must file a supervision contract and the supervisor

must be approved by the Board prior to the beginning of supervision. The supervision contract must be filed with the Board office no later than one month after this Consent Order is signed by the Board.

IV. Respondent's supervisor shall submit quarterly supervision reports with the Board at the end of each quarter of supervision. At the conclusion of the six months of supervision, Respondent's Board approved supervisor shall submit a Final Supervision Report to the Board. Respondent must receive at least average ratings from her supervisor on all reports in order to be released from the supervision. Any costs and associated expenses of this supervision shall be borne by the Respondent

V. Respondent shall provide this Consent Order to her Board approved supervisor and to any subsequent supervisors, if applicable.

VI. Upon successful completion of the conditions set forth in Roman Numeral III through IV, Respondent may make a written request that the Board release her from supervision, which the Board shall grant so long as all conditions have been successfully completed.

VII. The failure of Respondent to abide by any provisions of this Consent Order, if proven true by a preponderance of the evidence following notice and an opportunity for hearing, shall result in the suspension, revocation, or other disciplinary action against Respondent's license, in the discretion of the Board.

VIII. The Board shall maintain this Consent Order as a public record pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §§132-1 and 90-340(f) 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.

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This the <sup>26</sup>~~23~~ day of July, 2018.

CONSENTED TO BY:

NORTH CAROLINA BOARD OF  
LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

BY:   
Denauro Robinson, Ph.D., LPCS      date  
Board Vice Chairperson

Bonnie Torella, LPC 07/23/18  
Bonnie Torella, LPC      date  
Respondent

 7/24/18  
Bowen C. Houff      date  
Attorney at Law  
Attorney for Respondent