

BEFORE THE WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

**WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF SOCIAL
WORK EXAMINERS,**

Complainant,

v.

Case No. 1202-0309

**PATRICIA BOBES,
Licensed Social Worker
License Number: AP00455385**

Respondent.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND ORDER

In the interest of settling all matters between them, the West Virginia Board of Social Work Examiners (referred to hereinafter as the "Board") and the respondent, Patricia Bobes, do hereby agree to entry of an Order resolving disciplinary proceedings pending before the Board involving the license of the respondent to practice social work within the State of West Virginia.

The parties stipulate and agree to the following facts:

1. The West Virginia Board of Social Work Examiners is a regulatory body created for the purpose of regulating and supervising the practice of social work within the State of West Virginia.

2. In order to carry out its regulatory duties, the Board is empowered to investigate allegations of unprofessional or unethical conduct and to suspend, restrict, revoke or refuse to issue a license to practice social work under the authority granted to it by *West Virginia Code §§ 30-30-7 and 30-30-8a*.

3. Patricia Bobes is a licensee of the Board, holding License No. AP00455385, and is subject to the license requirements and authority of said Board.

4. Patricia Bobes was, at all times material hereto, employed by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources within the Office for Children and Adult Services, and in this position her duties included the investigation and alleviation of cases of child neglect and abuse.

5. In December, 2002, the Board received the complaints of two witnesses which alleged that the respondent, Patricia Bobes, violated the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers and the laws of the State of West Virginia by failing to make contact with a child, alleged to be neglected and abused, within seventy-two hours of receiving the report of the child's circumstances.

6. The Board then conducted an investigation of these allegations and, after finding probable cause to substantiate the allegations, the Board filed a complaint against the respondent to initiate these disciplinary proceedings against her.

7. After receiving proper notice of the proceedings, the respondent, Patricia Bobes, requested a hearing on the allegations against her. A hearing was set for June 12, 2003, but continued at the request of the respondent to allow her an opportunity to consult with, and possibly retain, legal counsel.

8. While these disciplinary proceedings were pending, the Board then received another complaint in May, 2003, that the respondent, Patricia Bobes, violated the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers and the laws of the State of West Virginia by failing to follow the protocols of the Department of Health and Human Resources for investigation of alleged child abuse and that her conduct was unprofessional in failing to provide adequate supervision and appropriate direction of social workers reporting to her in the investigation of cases of alleged child abuse and neglect.

9. The Board then presented these new allegations to the respondent and provided her with an opportunity to answer them. However, on June 19, 2003, the respondent requested an extension of time to respond, citing health concerns and the stress of her situation.

10. Based upon the allegations of unprofessional or unethical conduct set out above, the Board would be authorized to suspend, revoke or otherwise restrict the license of Patricia Bobes to practice social work, pursuant to *W. Va. Code §30-30-7(a)(6)*.

11. The West Virginia Board of Social Work Examiners is bound by agreement and by law to report the results of all disciplinary actions for posting in the Health Integrity Practitioners Data Bank through the Association of Social Work Boards.

12. The respondent has had an opportunity to consult with legal counsel for advice and guidance with regard to these allegations and the proceedings against her.

13. The respondent states that she has contracted pneumonia, that she is afflicted with a serious, auto-immune disorder and that her health concerns now take priority for her over her employment or professional status.

14. This Agreement, its stipulations, and terms are and will be a public record.

5. Should the respondent apply for a new license to practice social work in this State, she may only do so after having satisfied all of the requirements for new licensees, including education, training, examination and degree requirements, and :

a. She must also attend a minimum of nine (9) hours of ethics training prior to seeking a license to practice social work; and

b. She will reimburse the Board for the costs of investigation of the complaints against her and for the attorney fees incurred in this proceeding.


5. The West Virginia Board of Social Work Examiners will conclude and close its investigation of all allegations currently pending against her before the Board and the respondent will not be required to make any further answer to these complaints and allegations except as set out in the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

6. The West Virginia Board of Social Work Examiners agrees and acknowledges that this agreement is a compromise of claims disputed by the respondent, Patricia Bobes, and that her agreement and consent to these terms do not constitute an admission of guilt or culpability on her part.

In witness and acknowledgment of the agreement set out above, the parties hereby set their signatures:

Respondent

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS


PATRICIA BOBES

by: 
Chairperson, RITA BROWN

Date: 7-23-03

Date: 07/29/03