

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS**

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HEALTH SERVICES REGULATION
BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS
AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS**

vs.

ELIZABETH HOUDE

CONSENT ORDER

Pursuant to Section 5-63.2-21 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, as Amended, and the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder, the Department of Health (hereinafter "Department"), the Board of Mental Health Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists (hereinafter "Board"), has investigated a complaint charging Elizabeth Houde (hereinafter "Respondent") with a violation of Section 5-63.2-21 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, as Amended.

After consideration by the Department, the following constitutes the Findings of Fact with respect to the professional performance of the Respondent:

1. Respondent is a licensed marriage and family therapist licensed to practice in the State of Rhode Island.
2. During the course of treatment for Client A, Respondent violated sections 1.3, 1.9 and 3.4 of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) Code of Ethics by failing to promptly and effectively terminate treatment of a client who was no longer benefiting from the therapeutic relationship and, through continued communication with her former client, created a conflict of interest and a non-professional relationship which impaired her professional and clinical judgment. Further, in regard to Client A, Respondent failed to maintain adequate knowledge of and adhere to applicable laws, ethics, and professional standards, in violation of section 3.2 of the AAMFT Code of Ethics.

The conduct in paragraph two (2) constitutes unprofessional conduct pursuant to Section 5-63.2-21(7) of the Rhode Island General Laws and the Rules and Regulation promulgated thereunder.

The parties agree as follows:

1. Respondent is a marriage and family therapist licensed to practice in the State of Rhode Island.
2. Respondent admits to the jurisdiction of the Board and hereby agrees to remain under the jurisdiction of the Department.
3. Respondent has read this Consent Order and understands that it is a proposal of the Department and is subject to the final approval by the Department. This Consent Order and the contents thereof are not binding on Respondent until final approval by the Department.
4. Respondent hereby acknowledges and waives:
 - a. The right to appear personally or by counsel or both before the Department;
 - b. The right to produce witnesses and evidence in her behalf at a hearing;
 - c. The right to cross-examine witnesses;
 - d. The right to have subpoenas issued by the Department;
 - e. The right to further procedural steps except for those specifically contained herein; and
 - f. Any and all rights of appeal of this Consent Order.
5. This Consent Order shall become part of the public record of this proceeding once all parties accept it.
6. Acceptance by the Respondent and approval by the Department of this Consent Order shall constitute a final agreement among the parties.
7. That Respondent agrees to a two (2) year suspension of her license to practice as a marriage and family therapist, however said suspension shall be stayed for a period of 12 months, which shall constitute the term of this Consent Order.
8. During the 12 month term of this Consent Order, Respondent shall submit to supervision with a Board approved supervisor at least two (2) times each month and that reports of said supervision shall be submitted to the Board on a quarterly

basis. That it shall be the responsibility of the Respondent to request that the supervisor submit said reports to the Department.

9. That Respondent shall complete nine (9) Board approved continuing education credits on the topics of ethics, boundaries, and documentation prior to the expiration of the term of this Consent Order.
10. Provided the Respondent complies with the laws and regulations governing the practice of marriage and family therapy, and complies with the requirements of this Consent Order (as set forth above), during the term of this Consent Order, she may apply to the Board for removal of the above-referenced restrictions to her practice as a licensed marriage and family therapist.
11. Should Respondent fail to comply with the laws and regulations governing the practice of marriage and family therapy and/or fails to comply with the requirements of the Consent Order, the Department, at its discretion may either extend the term of this Consent Order for a reasonable period to allow Respondent time to come into compliance; or, remove the stay and immediately invoke the two (2) year suspension of Respondent's license to practice as a marriage and family therapist.
12. At the end of the term of this Consent Order, or at the end of the two-year suspension (if invoked) Respondent may apply to the Board for removal of the above-referenced restrictions to her practice as a licensed marriage and family therapist.

Assented to;


Elizabeth Houde

8-25-11
Date

Approved and assented to on behalf of the Department and the Board:


Charles Alexandre, PhD, RN
Chief, Health Professionals Regulation

9/6/11
Date