

## SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

### **A. PARTIES**

This Settlement Agreement is made by the North Dakota Board of Social Work Examiners ("Board") and Lynnea Ritz ("Ritz").

### **B. RECITALS**

The Board is authorized pursuant to North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) ch. 43-41 to license and regulate the profession of social work.

N.D.C.C. § 43-41-10 authorizes the Board to suspend, revoke, or place on probationary status any license issued by the Board on proof at a hearing that the licensed person has committed an act set forth in the law.

Ritz is licensed to practice social work in North Dakota by the Board.

The Board found grounds to support allegations Ritz violated N.D.C.C. § 43-41-10(4) and (5), and North Dakota Administrative Code (N.D.A.C.) §§ 75.5-02-06.1-01(6)(a), (b), (c), 75.5-02-06.1-02(5), 75.5-02-06.1-03 (2)(a), (3)(c), and 75.5-02-06.1-04(6), and decided to initiate a disciplinary action.

Ritz acknowledges she has been informed and understands she has the right to seek the advice of legal counsel in this matter.

Ritz acknowledges she has been informed and understands she has the right to a hearing and appeal pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 43-41-10 and N.D.C.C. ch. 28-32 prior to any adverse action being taken against her license.

### **C. AGREEMENT**

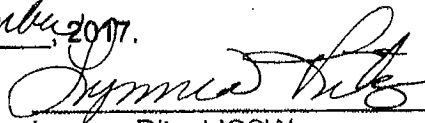
The Board and Ritz agree to resolve this matter as follows:

1. Ritz waives her right to an administrative hearing and appeal pursuant to N.D.C.C. ch. 43-41 and ch. 28-32.

2. Ritz's license to practice social work in North Dakota is suspended.
3. During suspension:
  - a. Ritz shall register for a three (3) semester hour credit course on ethics, complete the course, and earn a passing grade of at least a "C" or its equivalent. The course shall be provided by an education institution accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Ritz may choose a course that allows her to attend either face-to-face or online. The expense of the course will be paid by Ritz. The course may not be used to satisfy the continuing education required by N.D.A.C. § 75.5-02-03-07.
  - b. Ritz shall comply with all laws and rules relating to the practice of social work.
  - c. Ritz shall contact the Board to arrange her in-person attendance at a meeting of the Board. At that meeting Ritz shall be prepared to respond to questions from the Board related to her understanding of the law, rules, and code of ethics that apply to social work; explain how Ritz's conduct resulted in violations of the law, rules, and code of ethics; discuss any understandings Ritz arrived at through her completion of the three (3) credit course listed herein and during her suspension that will aid Ritz in avoiding future violations; discuss the means by which Ritz proposes to avoid future violations; and, other matters related to the profession of social work.

- d. Without a hearing or appeal pursuant to N.D.C.C. ch. 43-41 or N.D.C.C. ch. 28-32, the Board will determine if Ritz fulfills the terms of this Agreement. If Ritz fails to fulfill the terms of this Agreement, the Board may take further disciplinary action against her license without a hearing or appeal pursuant to N.D.C.C. ch. 43-41 or N.D.C.C. ch. 28-32.
4. There are no covenants, promises, undertakings, or understandings outside this Agreement other than those herein specifically set forth.
5. This Agreement shall be governed by the substantive laws of the State of North Dakota without regard to conflict of law principles.

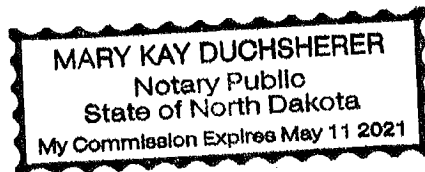
Dated this 1 day of November, 2017.

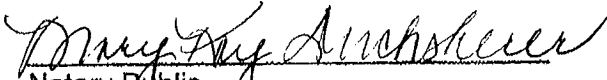
  
Lynnea Ritz, LICSW

State of NORTH DAKOTA

County of MORTON

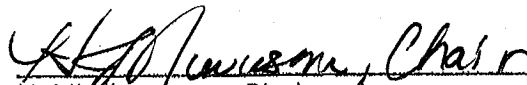
Subscribed and affirmed to before me  
this 1 day of NOVEMBER, 2017.



  
Notary Public

Dated this 1 day of November, 2017.

NORTH DAKOTA BOARD OF  
SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

  
Heidi Nieuwsma, Chair