



JEFF LANDRY  
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana  
Department of Health and Hospitals

CHARLOTTE F. MARTIN, M.P.A.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Louisiana Physical Therapy Board

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**GABRIEL SONNIER**

**LICENSE NO. 11763**

**ORDER OF SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

**COMPLAINT NUMBER 2025-I-014**

### **ORDER OF SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

Pursuant to La. R.S. 49:977.3, the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board (“LPTB” or “Board”) summarily suspends License Number 11763 issued to Gabriel Sonnier (“Mr. Sonnier”), pending an administrative hearing scheduled for June 18, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

This Order of Summary Suspension is effective as of May 9, 2025. Upon execution of this Order, Mr. Sonnier is not authorized to engage in the practice of physical therapy and must immediately cease and desist from the practice of physical therapy, as defined by La. R.S. 37:2407. Further, Mr. Sonnier must cease and desist from referring to himself as a licensed Physical Therapist.

#### **I. FACTUAL BASIS FOR ORDER**

To protect public health, safety, and welfare, emergency action is required due to the nature of the allegations against Mr. Sonnier. On March 19, 2025, the Board received notification that Mr. Sonnier had been arrested on March 16, 2025, and charged with two counts of felony indecent behavior with juveniles, in violation of Louisiana Revised Statute 14:81, and three counts of felony obscenity, in violation of Louisiana Revised Statute 14:106. On March 21, 2025, Mr. Sonnier emailed the Board Office and advised of his March 16, 2025 arrest. As a result, the Board initiated

a complaint against Mr. Sonnier, and an investigative committee of the Board was formed to investigate the allegations against Mr. Sonnier.

On April 4, 2025, Mr. Sonnier was sent a notice letter detailing the allegations made in the complaint and providing the potential laws and rules of the Board that may have been violated by such conduct if the allegations were found to be true. Mr. Sonnier was advised therein of his opportunity to show compliance with all lawful requirements for the retention of his physical therapist license at an informal conference to take place on April 9, 2025. It was requested that Mr. Sonnier provide a written response to the allegations by April 7, 2025.

On April 7, 2025, Mr. Sonnier, through counsel, provided a written response to the Board, admitting to his presence at the location of the complained-of conduct and to his questioning and charges by law enforcement as a result of the incident. Mr. Sonnier provided no response to the allegations of unlawful conduct. He advised that he planned to enter a plea of not guilty on all counts.

On April 8, 2025, the Board received a copy of the police report from the Thibodaux Police Department related to Mr. Sonnier's arrest from his attorney. The police report indicated that the complainant advised that upon exiting Wal-Mart and going to her vehicle, a vehicle later identified to be Mr. Sonnier's followed her to her car, and there he exposed himself while masturbating. The complainant advised that her daughters were with her at the time this occurred. The investigating officer reviewed video footage of the incident and was able to confirm the presence of Mr. Sonnier's vehicle next to the complainant's vehicle at the time the alleged conduct occurred.

On April 9, 2025, the Investigative Committee met with Mr. Sonnier and his counsel and conducted an informal conference. Due to the serious nature of the allegations in the complaint, the Investigative Committee determined that Mr. Sonnier should not practice physical therapy during the pendency of the investigation and/or administrative proceedings before the Board unless

under continuous supervision and that he must promptly complete a fit-for-duty evaluation to determine his fitness to practice as a physical therapist. Mr. Sonnier, through counsel, agreed to submit to continuous supervision and a full evaluation pending further proceedings before the Board.

On April 21-23, 2025, Mr. Sonnier submitted to a comprehensive psychosexual evaluation at Pine Grove Behavioral Health & Addiction Services, located in Hattiesburg, Mississippi (“Pine Grove”), to address the issues raised by the Investigative Committee. On May 1, 2025, the evaluation team at Pine Grove provided the Board with a copy of Mr. Sonnier’s evaluation report (“the Pine Grove Report”). The Pine Grove Report provides detailed information regarding Mr. Sonnier’s evaluation and the evaluation team’s diagnostic impressions, conclusions, and recommendations, all as more fully set forth in the Pine Grove Report. The Pine Grove evaluation team concluded that Mr. Sonnier is not fit to practice physical therapy with reasonable skill and safety at this time. The Pine Grove evaluation team’s recommendations are stated in the Pine Grove Report and include:

1. Successful completion of a Board-approved residential treatment program to address the issues set forth in the Pine Grove Report, inclusive of a component for professionals, and which program should be able to provide a determination of safety to practice at the end of his treatment course and to include the identification of any additional parameters necessary for him to return safely to the workplace;
2. During his treatment course, an evaluation of Mr. Sonnier’s use of substances;
3. Repeat polygraph near the end of his treatment course to ensure all concerns have been adequately addressed;
4. Forensic psychosexual evaluation prior to returning to the practice of physical therapy, either during his treatment process or after the successful completion of a Board-approved treatment program, along with compliance with the recommendations of that evaluation;
5. Enter into a monitoring agreement with the Board, to include quarterly to biannual polygraph examinations, for a recommended period of five years; and

6. Arrange for a copy of the final evaluation report to be delivered to the program Mr. Sonnier chooses, in order to facilitate an efficient treatment process.

Based on the foregoing, it is alleged that Mr. Sonnier may have violated the following, which are applicable to him as a licensee subject to the jurisdiction and the Rules and Regulations of the Louisiana Physical Therapy Practice Act (La. R.S. 37:2401, *et seq.*), and of the LPTB (LAC 46:LIV §103, *et seq.*):

#### **La. R.S. 37:2420 DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

1. La R.S. 37:2420(A): After due notice and hearing, the board may refuse to license any applicant, or may refuse to renew the license of any person, or may restrict, suspend, or revoke any license upon proof that the person has: (1) Practiced physical therapy in violation of the provisions of this Chapter, the rules of the board, or standards of practice . . . (7) Been found guilty of unprofessional conduct . . . including but not limited to departure from, or failure to conform to, the minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing physical therapy practice, in which proceeding actual injury to a patient need not be established . . .
2. LAC 46:LIV §345(A): The board shall deem a violation any charge of conduct which fails to conform to the Practice Act, and board rules to carry out the provisions of the Act, and shall take appropriate action where violations are found. The rules of this Chapter complement the board's authority to deny, suspend, revoke or take such other action against a licensee, or Compact Privilege holder as it deems appropriate.
3. LAC 46:LIV §345(B)(1)(a) - As used in R.S. 37:2420(A)(7) of the Practice Act and in these rules, the term unprofessional conduct does not require actual injury to a patient, and includes, but is not limited to, the following: (1) departure from, failure to conform to, or failure to perform on a continuing basis to the minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing physical therapy practice as defined in §123, or the commission of any act contrary to honesty, justice, good morals, patient safety or the best interest of the patient, whether committed in the course of the licensee's practice or otherwise, regardless of whether actual injury to a patient results therefrom, including, but not limited to: (a) failure to use sound professional judgment.
4. LAC 46:LIV §345(B)(5) - As used in R.S. 37:2420(A)(7) of the Practice Act and in these rules, the term unprofessional conduct does not require actual injury to a patient, and includes, but is not limited to, the following: (5) sexual misconduct—inappropriate sexual or intimate conduct, includes, but is not limited to sexual intimacy, contact, exposure, gratification, abuse, exploitation or other sexual behavior with or in the presence of a patient or any other individual in connection to the licensee's practice of physical therapy regardless of consent by the patient. Such conduct may be verbal, physical, visual, written or electronic, or it may consist of expressions of thoughts, feelings or gestures that are sexual or reasonably may be construed by a patient or other individual as sexual or which may reasonably be interpreted as intended for the sexual arousal or gratification of the practitioner, the patient, or another individual. Sexual misconduct between a licensee and

a former patient after termination of the therapist–patient relationship may also constitute unprofessional conduct if the sexual misconduct is a result of the exploitation of trust, knowledge, influence or emotions derived from the professional relationship.

5. LAC 46:LIV §379(A) EMERGENCY ACTION

In accordance with R.S. 49:961, if the board finds that public health, safety, and welfare require emergency action and incorporates a finding to that effect in its order, a summary suspension of a license may be ordered pending proceedings for suspension, revocation or other action. Such proceedings shall be promptly instituted and determined.

**II. DECISION AND ORDER**

To maintain public health, safety, and welfare, emergency action is required due to the allegations set forth above, specifically that Mr. Sonnier is not fit to return to duty as a physical therapist until he complies with all recommendations of the Pine Grove Report dated May 1, 2025, including the completion of a treatment program, said program to include a component for professionals, to evaluate his use of substances, to provide a determination of safety to practice at the end of his treatment course, and to include the identification of any additional parameters necessary for him to return safely to the workplace; repeat polygraph near the end of his treatment course to ensure all concerns have been adequately addressed; submission to a forensic psychosexual evaluation which shall determine whether he is safe to return to the practice of physical therapy with reasonable skill and safety to the public; compliance with all recommendations of the treatment program and the forensic psychosexual evaluation; and signing of a monitoring agreement with the Board for a period of five years, to include quarterly to biannual polygraph examinations.

Pursuant to an Order of the Board at its meeting on March 19, 2025, the Board’s Executive Director was granted the authority to issue Summary Suspension Orders upon the unanimous approval of the Investigative Committee. The Investigative Committee reviewed the information outlined above and confirmed unanimously their support for the issuance of a summary suspension of the license of Mr. Sonnier. Accordingly, LPTB License Number 11763 issued to Gabriel

Sonnier is SUSPENDED, effective immediately, pending proceedings for suspension, revocation of licensure or other action(s) as the Board deems fit.

Proceedings before the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board shall be promptly instituted and determined. Accordingly, an administrative hearing before the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board is scheduled for June 18, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., at the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board, located at 214 Jefferson Street, Suite 102, Lafayette, LA 70501. The hearing panel will consist of current Board Members or ad hoc members appointed for the purpose of the hearing. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, the Louisiana Physical Therapy Practice Act, and the rules promulgated by the Board.

Mr. Sonnier will be given a full opportunity to appear and be heard, with or without counsel, and is entitled to hear a statement of what accusations have been made against him, to present evidence, to cross-examine witnesses, and to have witnesses subpoenaed. Mr. Sonnier may request that subpoenas be issued by the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board and must send a request to the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board office at least 15 days prior to the hearing, listing the names and addresses of the individuals to be subpoenaed, along with a brief summary as to what each individual will testify. The testimony will be under oath and a court reporter will record the proceedings at the hearing, and any party wishing to obtain a transcript of the hearing may do so at their expense.

Date: May 9, 2025

  
Charlotte F. Martin, Executive Director  
Louisiana Physical Therapy Board