

JOHNNY BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



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

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS
Louisiana Physical Therapy Board

IN THE MATTER OF

MATTHEW BRIDGES

LICENSE NO. A10023

CONSENT ORDER

NUMBER: 2023-I-032

CONSENT ORDER

MATTHEW BRIDGES (“Mr. Bridges” or “Respondent”) is a Physical Therapist Assistant (“PTA”), as evidenced by License No. A10023, and is subject to the jurisdiction and the Rules and Regulations of the Louisiana Physical Therapy Practice Act (La. R.S. 37:2401, et seq.), and the Rules and Regulations of the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board (“LPTB” or “Board”) (LAC 46:LIV §103, et seq.), and enters in the following agreement relative to Complaint No. 2023-I-032.

FACTUAL BASIS FOR CONSENT ORDER

1. Respondent received his Physical Therapist Assistant (“PTA”) license, number A10023, on or about on July 17, 2018. Mr. Bridges was employed by Jones Physical Therapy at the time of the incident.
2. On or around May 24, 2023, Mr. Bridges wrote a fraudulent work excuse for Jewel Munch using Jones Physical Therapy letterhead. The work excuse stated that Jewel Munch had physical therapy treatment at Jones Physical Therapy on May 9, 10, and 11, 2023.
3. Sedgwick Claims Management, the workers compensation claims management company for Mr. Munch’s employer, requested verification of treatment from Jones Physical Therapy on June 1, 2023. Paul Jones advised Sedgwick that Mr. Munch was not a patient of Jones Physical therapy.
4. On June 6, 2023, the Hammond Police Department was contacted by Mr. Jones’ attorney in order for Mr. Jones to provide a statement about the fraudulent letterhead.

5. On or about June 23, 2023, the Board received a self-report from Mr. Bridges asserting that he created a fraudulent written work excuse for a friend, Jewel Munch, using Jones Physical Therapy letterhead, in order for Mr. Munch to keep his job.
6. In association with the complaint, on June 23, 2023, Mr. Jones submitted documentation to the Board that included the letter to Sedgwick, the Hammond Police Report from June 6, 2023, and a copy of the fraudulent letter written by Mr. Bridges.

VIOLATIONS RELATED TO RESPONDENT'S CONDUCT

Respondent's conduct described above and otherwise reviewed in this action is subject to and/or in violation of the following provisions of law regarding his practice of physical therapy:

1. La R.S. 37: §2420A(1) – Practiced physical therapy in violation of the provisions of this Chapter, the rules of the board, or standards of practice;
2. La R.S. 37: §2420A(7) – Been found guilty of unprofessional conduct or sexual misconduct, 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;
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(10) – 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: (10) making or participating in any communication, advertisement, or solicitation which is false, fraudulent, deceptive, misleading or unfair in violation of board rules, or which contains a false, fraudulent, deceptive, misleading or unfair statement or claim, including, but not limited to: a. documenting services provided which have not been provided as documented or billing for services which have not been provided;
5. LAC 46: LIV §345 B(3)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: (3) failing to create or maintain medical record—a licensee shall create and maintain adequate and legible patient records. In addition, a licensee shall: a. not falsely create or alter a medical record or destroy a medical record except as authorized by law.

ORDER

Pursuant to the foregoing Factual Basis for Consent Order and Violations Related to Respondent's Conduct, and, in order to avoid further administrative and judicial proceedings, Respondent and the Board, by vote of quorum, agree as follows:

1. Respondent's license shall be on probation for two and a half (2.5) years (30 months) from the date this Order is approved by the Board. Respondent shall submit to the Board Executive Director in writing not less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to completion of the probationary period a request for a letter from the Board formally acknowledging the close of the probationary period. Respondent's probationary period concludes upon receipt by Respondent of the Board letter acknowledging the close of the probationary period and a final exit interview with the Board to be scheduled by the Board Executive Director.
2. During the two and a half (2.5) year probationary period, Board representatives will make random unannounced monitoring visits to Respondent's work site(s). Respondent shall fully cooperate with Board representatives making random unannounced monitoring visits to his work site(s) and shall provide complete access to his place of employment, employment and/or business records, patient treatment and billing records, and all other documentation necessary for a full legal compliance review. Respondent shall reimburse the Board for expenses related to the monitoring visit as invoiced and must be paid within 30 days of receipt of invoice.
3. During the two and a half-year probationary period, Respondent shall provide a copy of this Consent Order to his employer(s), direct supervisor(s), and any physical therapist(s), physical therapist assistant(s), or physical therapy technician(s) who are supervised by, work for, or contract with Respondent at any business, including, but not limited to, any business(es) Respondent owns, operates or manages before providing physical therapy services and shall have such person(s) notify the Executive Director in writing that he has received and reviewed a copy of this Consent Order prior to Respondent providing physical therapy services. Respondent shall do this also with any new or subsequent employer(s), direct supervisor(s), physical therapist(s), physical therapist assistant(s), or physical therapy technician(s) during the probationary period;
4. The two and a half-year probation period shall be extended for any period of time in which Respondent is not employed as a physical therapist assistant within the State of Louisiana and regularly working at least an aggregate over the month that is at *least eighty (80)* hours per month. If Respondent ceases to be regularly employed as a physical therapist assistant in Louisiana, he shall notify the Executive Director in writing within *ten (10) calendar days* of the last date he has practiced physical therapy in Louisiana. Likewise, if Respondent returns to work as a physical therapist assistant within the State of Louisiana, he shall notify the Executive Director in writing within *ten (10) calendar days* of his return to practice.
5. During the first six (6) months of probation, Mr. Bridges shall complete an additional four (4) hours of continuing education in ethics/professionalism. These hours are required in addition to all standard requirements for PTA licensure renewal during each renewal cycle.
6. Mr. Bridges shall pay the Board the sum of \$705.00 in partial reimbursement for legal and administrative expenses incurred in this matter. Failure to reimburse associated fees will

require the Board to take further action in collection of this debt. Respondent has twenty-four (24) months to reimburse the expenses before the debt will be considered final and transferred to the Louisiana Office of Debt Recovery (ODR). After transfer, the debt is subject to an additional collection fee of up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the total debt liability, as provided for in LA R.S. 47:1676(E).

7. Respondent shall comply with La R.S. 37:2415(B) and notify the Executive Director of the Louisiana Physical Therapy Board in writing and prior to a change of residence to another country, state, or jurisdiction.
8. Respondent shall meet with the Board, or with the Board's representative, whenever requested during the probationary period, and shall fully cooperate in providing information and documents requested in such meetings.
9. Respondent shall have reliable access to a computer, internet, and telephone. In accordance with Board Rule §385, Respondent shall provide to the Executive Director his preferred telephone number and/or email address in writing for expedited communications regarding compliance with this Board Order within forty-eight (48) hours of signing the Consent Order. Respondent shall reply to Board emails and telephone calls within four (4) hours of such communication. Respondent shall notify the Executive Director in writing of any change to his preferred telephone number and/or email address immediately upon such change.
10. Respondent declares that, before signing this Consent Order, he is of sound mind, has carefully read this document, understands the contents, and freely consents to it as valid and binding upon him. He is aware of his right to a notice of hearing, to a formal administrative hearing and to judicial review of an administrative finding, and freely waives those rights. Further, he has had the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel in this matter and in the negotiation of this Agreement.
11. Respondent acknowledges that his failure to comply with any term of this Consent Order is a basis for the immediate summary suspension of his license and for further disciplinary action by the Board.
12. Respondent acknowledges that this Consent Order only addresses the specific violations outlined above. Further, the Board specifically reserves the right to further discipline Respondent based upon the outcome of the legal proceedings currently pending against him.
13. Respondent authorizes the Investigating Board Members, Tyra Mitchell, Deandra Johnson-Narcisse, and legal counsel assisting the Investigating Board Members, to present this Consent Order to the full Board for its consideration and to fully disclose and discuss with the Board the nature and results of the investigation. Respondent waives any objection to such disclosures under La. R.S. 49:977.2 and expressly acknowledges that the disclosure of such information to the Board shall be without prejudice to the Investigative Board Member's authority to file a formal Administrative Complaint against him, or to the Board's capacity, as currently comprised, or any future composition of the Board, to adjudicate such Complaint, should the Board decline to approve this Consent Order. Should the Board decline to approve this Consent Order, Respondent retains all rights to due process including, but not limited to, his right to have notice of any allegations or

charges against him, to administrative adjudication of such allegations or charges, and to a subsequent final decision rendered upon written findings of fact and conclusions of law.

14. Respondent acknowledges that presentation to and consideration by the Board of this Consent Agreement, including presented documentary evidence and information, shall not unfairly or illegally prejudice or preclude the Board, or any of its members, as the Board is currently constituted, or any future appointments to the Board, from further participation in hearings or resolution to these proceedings.
15. Respondent acknowledges that this Consent Order becomes effective only upon signature by the Board Chair.
16. Respondent acknowledges that all communication(s) regarding compliance with and/or fulfillment of the requirements of this Consent Order shall be in writing between Respondent and the Board Executive Director. No verbal communication(s) shall be considered proof of compliance or commitment. Respondent acknowledges that it is the responsibility of the Respondent to fully comply with the Consent Order and proactively communicate with the Board Executive Director.

I, MATTHEW BRIDGES, have read this Consent Order, understand it, and agree to be bound by its terms and conditions.



MATTHEW BRIDGES

SWORN TO and subscribed before me, Notary Public this 1st day of December, 2023,
in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.



Notary Public

A. Gregory Rome

Notary Name printed (#21062)

SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL BY:



Deandra Narcisse
Complaint Investigator

AGREED AND ACCEPTED by official action of the Board, this 14th day of
December, 2023, at Lafayette, Louisiana.

Louisiana Physical Therapy Board


Judith Halverson, P.T., D.P.T., M.H.A., Chair