

**BEFORE THE MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL LICENSURE  
IN THE MATTER OF THE PHYSICIAN'S LICENSE**

**OF**

**STEVE MORRIS, III, M.D.**

**FINAL ORDER**

The above-titled matter came before the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure in Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi, on July 29, 2020, pursuant to a Notice to Show Cause issued to Steve Morris, III, M.D. A quorum of Board members was present throughout the hearing and deliberation in the matter.

Board Counsel Stan Ingram, Esq., presented the charges regarding the application for licensure. The Applicant, having been served with the Notice to Show Cause, and being fully informed of his rights to a formal hearing before the Board, was represented by Doug Mercier, Esq. The case was called to hearing without objection from either party.

Leyser Q. Hayes, Special Assistant Attorney General, who served as Administrative Hearing Officer, presided at the hearing and was directed to prepare the Board's written decision in accordance with its deliberations.

And now, upon consideration of all the material produced in the record before the Board, along with the testimony presented at the hearing, the Board makes the following findings and conclusions, and Order based on clear and convincing evidence:

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. The Board is established pursuant to the Mississippi State Board Medical Licensure Act, Title 73, Chapter 43 of the Mississippi Code of 1972 as amended, and is charged with the duty of licensing and regulating the practice of medicine in the State of Mississippi.
2. Section 73-25-29, and 73-25-83, 73-25-87 of the Mississippi Code Annotated (1972) as amended provide that the board may deny an application for license if the applicant has violated any provisions therein.
3. Dr. Steve Morris was called as an adverse witness by the counsel for the Board. Counsel for the Board submitted fourteen (14) exhibits. During his testimony, Dr. Morris testified that he had been investigated by the Board on September 23, 1998 regarding his controlled substance prescribing practices and that within a year, on April 5, 1999, he was found to be in violation of the Board's regulations governing the use of diet medication. Morris further testified that following a comprehensive investigation, September 8-14, 2000, he executed his first Consent Order which was signed on November 15, 2000, where he agreed that he would remain in compliance and familiarize himself with Board rules and regulations.

4. Dr. Morris admitted that he had performed breast augmentations/reductions in his office that had adverse effects in June through August of 2002. He further testified that on October 17, 2002, following a comprehensive investigation, it was determined that he violated his first Consent Order and was presented with a second Consent Order suspending his medical license indefinitely but with a stay of suspension after six months provided he met certain conditions, including but not limited to: (i) completion of a comprehensive psychological and psychiatric evaluation; (ii) prohibition against performing breast augmentations/reductions or “any surgical procedures inside or outside a hospital: until successful completion of an approved surgical residency; (iii) prohibition against use of any medications for weight loss or control; (iv) completion of CME as to proper medical records; and (v) presentation of a practice plan acceptable to the board. Dr. Morris testified that after this action was taken by the Mississippi Board, the Alabama Medical Board revoked his Alabama license and the Wisconsin Medical Licensure Board suspended his license based upon his conduct in Mississippi.
5. Dr. Morris testified that on November 4, 2004, he requested reinstatement of his medical license and his request was granted but subject to restrictions, including: prohibition against office based surgery, including breast augmentation or breast reduction surgery, prohibition against prescribing for obesity, weight loss or weight control, and clinical practice limited to 48 hours per week, and also remain under the care of a Board approved psychiatrist.
6. Dr. Morris testified that the Board entered an Order on January 20, 2011, after a hearing finding that he had violated the November 4, 2004 Consent Order of Reinstatement. However, he testified that the Board could have revoked his license, but allowed him to continue practicing, subject to the original restrictions.
7. Dr. Morris testified that on April 21, 2015, a 57 Count Criminal indictment was issued against him in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi, charging him with violation of 21 U.S.C. 84 (a)(1) – distributing controlled substances outside the scope of professional practice and 21 U.S.C. 846 – conspiracy to distribute controlled substances outside the scope of professional practice. He testified that he lost focus and was “caught up” with all the work he had committed to regarding his Urgent Care Clinic, being a professor in Florida, and working on an Indian Reservation in Arizona.
8. Dr. Morris testified that as a result of the Criminal Indictment, the Board issued a Summons and Affidavit charging him with six (6) Counts for violation of the Mississippi Medical Practice Law, including prescribing controlled substances outside the course of legitimate professional practice; violation of board regulations governing the use of controlled substances (the “holy trinity”) which reflected that he failed to familiarize himself with Board rules and regulations; failure to register a Pain Management Practice; violation of the Board Order of January 2011; and unprofessional conduct likely to deceive, defraud or harm the public.

9. Dr. Morris testified that he entered a guilty plea before the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi, as a single count. Specifically, Count 54 of the indictment charging him with violation of 21 U.S.C. 84(a)(1)—distributing a controlled substance outside the scope of professional practice. He expressed that he surrendered his license on January 16, 2016 and was jailed in a federal prison camp in Tucson, Arizona. He testified that at the time of his surrender, he agreed that it would be necessary for him to submit a new application with the Board and that the Board reserved the right to utilize all evidence, including all facts developed during the current investigation, as part of the consideration of any application.
10. Dr. Morris testified that while incarcerated in prison, he obtained a master's degree in psychotherapy and counseling from the Louisiana Baptist University. He testified that after his release from prison, he worked as an advocate at a treatment center to assist others in placement for mental health services, addiction services, housing, employment, and education. He stated that since he had not practiced medicine for three years, he had to submit to a personal assessment in order to re-apply for licensure. (See Exhibit 12)
11. Dr. Morris also testified that he had to develop an educational plan to coincide with the assessment and intended to comply with the plan in the event the Board granted him licensure. Dr. Morris testified that he is not asking to prescribe opioids in his practice because he is aware that he needs training.
12. Dr. Morris was called as a witness by his attorney who submitted seven(7) exhibits. During this testimony, Dr. Morris expressed that what happened with his licenses in Alabama and Wisconsin was based on his misconduct in Mississippi. He also described the work and activities he was involved in since leaving prison and the commendations he possessed. He answered questions based upon CPEP recommendations and what would be required to approve his knowledge. He testified that he needed to regain his license prior to an educational plan. He testified that he also needed a preceptor.
13. Dr. Morris testified that while in prison, in addition to pursuing his Masters, he volunteered and tutored those trying to obtain their GED and participated in Bible Study. He also reiterated the programs he worked with since leaving the Federal Prison Camp and testified about the letters of support from people he worked with as well as the one provided by Elder J. Nelson Brown, a pastor in Jefferson Parish. Dr. Morris, using his Exhibit P-6, "A History of Good Works", testified about each of the activities he had been involved in. Dr. Morris further testified that Exhibit P-

7 reflected the terms of his probation, showing he was identified as low risk. He testified that his probation would end April 30, 2021.

14. Dr. Susan Julius, who provided a letter of support (see Exhibit P-2), also testified at the hearing. She testified that she met Dr. Morris at the Positive Treatment Center where he was working, and that she knew Dr. Morris to be punctual, polite, kind, smart, and diligent. She also said that in the past she believed he had been motivated by greed, but that she was a keen observer and believed that he should be given another chance. She testified that she has the disease of addiction and was afforded a chance to change.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. The Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to Sections 73-25-29, and 73-25-83 (a), Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended<sup>1</sup>. Venue is likewise properly placed before the Board to hear this matter in Hinds County, Mississippi.
2. These proceedings were duly and properly convened, and all substantive and procedural requirements under law have been satisfied. This matter is, therefore, properly before the Board.
3. The Board is authorized to license and regulate persons who apply for or hold medical licenses and prescribe conditions under which persons may practice in order to protect the public health, safety and welfare.
4. The Applicant bears the burden of establishing that he satisfies the requirements for licensure as a medical doctor.
5. According to Section 73-25-29, the Board may deny an application for a Mississippi license to practice medicine.

Based upon the findings and conclusions, the Board finds the following order to be appropriate under the circumstances.

---

<sup>1</sup>Unless indicated otherwise, all statutory references are to the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended.

**ORDER**

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT** Applicant be given a probationary restrictive license pending successful completion of the CPEP Education Plan as presented to the Board;

**FURTHER ORDERED** that until otherwise ordered by the Board, Applicant is prohibited from administering, prescribing or dispensing any scheduled drugs;

**FURTHER ORDERED** that upon successful completion of the CPEP Education Plan, Applicant shall appear before the Board at the first available opportunity to address his practice plans and to reconsider the probationary status of his license. In so doing, the Board may impose any other restrictions which the Board may deem necessary to protect the public;

**FURTHER ORDERED** that Applicant be required to cooperate with the Board, its attorneys, investigators, and other representatives in the investigation and monitoring of Respondent's practice and compliance with the provisions of this Final Order.


**FURTHER ORDERED** that if Applicant violates the terms of this Final Order or further violates the laws, rules and regulations governing the practice of medicine, the Board may take further disciplinary action against Applicant, up to and including revocation of his license. The burden of proof for any action brought against Applicant as a result of a breach of the conditions of this Final Order shall be on the Applicant to demonstrate compliance with this Order.

**FURTHER ORDERED** that this action and order of the Board shall be public record. It may be shared with other licensing boards (in and out of state), and the public, and may be reported to the appropriate entities as required or authorized by state and/or federal law or guidelines. This action shall be spread upon the Minutes of the Board as its official act and deed.

**SO ORDERED** this, the 29th day of July 2020.

**MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF  
MEDICAL LICENSURE**

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

  
JEANNE ANN REA, M.D., PRESIDENT