

1                   **BEFORE THE ARIZONA STATE BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EXAMINERS**

2  
3   **In the Matter of:**  
4   **Craig T. Nelson, LAMFT-10546,**  
5   **Licensed Associate Marriage and Family**  
6   **Therapist,**  
7   **In the State of Arizona.**

**COMPLAINT NOS. 2020-0009 & 2020-0024**

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF  
LAW AND ORDER OF REVOCATION**

8                   **Respondent.**

9                   On October 25, 2019, the Arizona Board of Behavioral Health Examiners (“Board”) held a  
10 formal hearing in the above matter. The State was represented by the Office of the Attorney General,  
11 Assistant Attorney General Marc H. Harris. Assistant Attorney General Carrie Smith provided  
12 independent legal advice to the Board. The Respondent did not appear.

13                   After having considered all the testimony and evidence presented, the Board issues the following  
14 Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order.

15   **FINDINGS OF FACT**

16   **Case No. 2020-0009**

17                   1.       Respondent is the holder of License No. 10546 for the practice of marriage and family  
18 therapy in the State of Arizona.

19                   2.       On July 16, 2019, the Board received a complaint from Respondent’s employer, a  
20 behavioral health agency (“Agency”).

21                   3.       Agency’s complaint alleged that Respondent engaged in a sexual relationship with an  
22 adult female client (“Client”).

23                   4.       During the course of the investigation, Board staff conducted an investigative interview  
24 with Agency’s CEO, who reported the following:

- 25                                   a.   Respondent was Client’s primary therapist.  
                                  b.   Respondent met with Client approximately two to three times per week.  
                                  c.   Some sessions were joint sessions that included her husband.

- 1 d. Client disclosed that she and Respondent had been having an affair for a few months.  
2 e. Client disclosed having sex with Respondent and made statements that she was in  
3 love with him.  
4 f. Respondent was terminated immediately.

5 5. During the course of the investigation, Board staff also conducted an investigative  
6 interview with Agency's Clinical Director, who reported the following:

- 7 a. Respondent knocked on his door and asked to speak about something urgent.  
8 b. Respondent told him that he had been having an affair with a client.  
9 c. Respondent did not name the client, but reported the client had called Respondent to  
10 notify him that she and her husband were going to Agency to notify the CEO of the  
11 affair.  
12 d. Once Client told the CEO about the affair, it was clear to him that the person  
13 Respondent was referring to was Client.  
14 e. Respondent told him that the affair was both emotional and physical.  
15 f. There is no question, in his mind, that the affair Respondent was describing was  
16 sexual.  
17 g. Respondent reported that the affair had been going on for approximately two to three  
18 months.  
19 h. Clinical Director believes that Respondent only reported the affair because Client  
20 was going to notify the CEO in-person.  
21 i. Clinical Director is worried about Client due to her history of suicide attempts.

22 **Case No. 2020-0024**

23 6. On August 6, 2019, the Board received a second complaint from Client's husband  
24 ("Husband"), which stated the following:

- 25 a. On July 10, 2019, Client told him that she and Respondent had been having an affair.  
b. The affair lasted for over two months.

1 c. Respondent and Client used their sessions as sex time, which were usually held after  
2 hours.

3 d. Client believed she and Respondent were in love.

4 e. He found suicide notes written by Client.

5 f. Respondent took advantage of Client by keeping her in a delusional fantasy.

6 7. In support of his complaint, Husband provided several emails between Client and  
7 Respondent such as:

8 a. Respondent misses Client like hell.

9 b. Respondent will be lovesick for his trip, "blue balls and all."

10 c. "I love you! I love you more than I have ever felt before."

11 d. Respondent loves Client's smile and sexiness.

12 e. "Know that my heart is all yours."

13 f. "I love you and will never stop."

14 8. During the Board's investigation, Board staff made numerous attempts to contact  
15 Respondent at his address of record.

16 9. These attempts included, but were not limited to, mailing correspondence, such as the  
17 notice of complaints, to Respondent; calling Respondent; and sending emails to all known accounts,  
18 including the personal email address he used to communicate with Client.

19 10. None of these attempts were successful.

20 11. Board staff has since learned that Respondent's contact information on file with the  
21 Board is no longer valid.

#### 22 CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

23 1. The Board has jurisdiction over Respondent pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-3251 *et seq.* and the  
24 rules promulgated by the Board relating to Respondent's professional practice as a licensed behavioral  
25 health professional.



1 This 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2019, with:

2 The Board of Behavioral Health Examiners  
3 1740 W. Adams Street, Suite 3600  
4 Phoenix, AZ 85007

5 **COPY** of the foregoing mailed via

6 Certified mail no. 9489 0090 0027 0049 3093.77

7 This 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2019, to:

8 Craig T. Nelson  
9 Address of Record  
10 Respondent

11 **COPY** of the foregoing sent by mail

12 This 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2019 to:

13 Marc Harris  
14 Assistant Attorney General  
15 2005 North Central Avenue  
16 Phoenix, AZ 85004  
17 Attorney for the State of Arizona

18 **COPY** of the foregoing sent by mail

19 This 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2019 to:

20 Carrie Smith  
21 Assistant Attorney General  
22 2005 North Central Avenue  
23 Phoenix, AZ 85004  
24 Attorney for the Board of Behavioral Health Examiners  
25