

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF WAKE

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA  
ADDICTIONS SPECIALIST  
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE BOARD  
EC CASE NO. 825-24

NORTH CAROLINA ADDICTIONS	)
SPECIALIST PROFESSIONAL	)
PRACTICE BOARD,	)
Petitioner,	)
	)
v.	)
	)
AMANDA KAY CUTTS	)
(LCAS No. 21502, CCS-I No. 21292),	)
Respondent.	)

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**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND FINAL AGENCY DECISION**

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In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B, the North Carolina Substance Use Disorder Professional Practice Act, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90, Article 5C, and the rules and regulations adopted by the Board and codified in Title 21, Chapter 68 of the North Carolina Administrative Code, the North Carolina Addictions Specialist Professional Practice Board (hereinafter the “Board”) issues the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Final Agency Decision in the above-captioned matter.

The record reflects that a quorum of the Board was present at the hearing held on July 25, 2025, when the Board made this decision. At the hearing, Attorney Carolyn E. Duhon appeared on behalf of Board Staff. Respondent was not present at the hearing.

Before the Board issued this Final Agency Decision, the following inquiry was read aloud in accordance with state ethics laws: “[d]oes any board member have any known conflict of interest with respect to this matter coming before the Board today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearance of conflict and refrain from any undue or inappropriate participation in the particular matter involved.” No Board members stated that they had a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Kendra Davis heard the case as presiding Board Chair. Board Members Johnny Bass, Flo Stein, Anita Daniels, Lauren Quick, Stephanie Robinson, Virginia L. Johnson, and Katheryn L. Salmons heard the case. Board Member Kathy Allen was recused from hearing the case.

### **PETITIONER'S LIST OF EXHIBITS**

Bd. Ex. 1 - 06/30/2025 Notice of Hearing .....	1
Bd. Ex. 2 - 07/02/2025 Acceptance of Service of Notice of Hearing .....	8
Bd. Ex. 3 - 04/30/2019 - 04/29/2027 LCAS Credential .....	9
Bd. Ex. 4 - 04/22/2025 - 04/21/2028 CCS-I License Credential .....	11
Bd. Ex. 5 - 07/08/2024 Complaint with copy of linked supporting documents .....	12
Bd. Ex. 6 - 07/08/2024 Board Request for Response Letter .....	37
Bd. Ex. 7 - 08/05/2024 Subpoena to Pinnacle Treatment Centers, Inc. with Documents Produced in Response .....	38
Bd. Ex. 8 - 09/19/2024 Investigation Report, James McDougle Investigations, LLC .....	64
Bd. Ex. 9 - 10/25/2024 Board Counsel Text to Respondent Requesting Response .....	66
Bd. Ex. 10 - 10/31/2024 Email Response to Complaint with Follow-up Email .....	67
Bd. Ex. 11 - CONFIDENTIAL - 03/09/2025 Assessment Report, Grey Johnson, Ph.D., LCMHC, LCAS .....	69
Bd. Ex. 12 - 06/22/2025 ED Triage Notes .....	75
Bd. Ex. 13 - 04/21/2025 Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist, Letter confirming 06/23/2024 spinal surgery .....	76
Bd. Ex. 14 - 08/12/2011 Master of Arts Degree, Professional Counseling, Amridge University .....	77
Bd. Ex. 15 - 07.22.2025 W. Morgan Motion to Withdraw as Attorney of Record and signed Order .....	78

Petitioner Board Exhibit 11 was entered onto the record under seal.

### **RESPONDENT'S LIST OF EXHIBITS**

Respondent was not present and did not submit any exhibits during the course of the hearing.

### **JURISDICTION**

The North Carolina Addictions Specialist Professional Practice Board is an occupational licensing board of the State of North Carolina, organized under the provisions of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90, Article 5C, and has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to the provisions of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.33, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B, and the Board's duly enacted rules, as enumerated in 21 N.C. Administrative Code, Chapter 68.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. On April 30, 2019, Respondent was credentialed by the Board as a Licensed Clinical Addictions Specialist ("LCAS") (LCAS No. 21502), which would expire on April 29, 2027, if not renewed. *Board Exhibit 3.*

2. On April 22, 2025, Respondent was credentialed by the Board as a Certified Clinical Supervisor Intern (“CCS-I”) (CCS-I No. 21292), which would expire on April 21, 2028, if not renewed. *Board Exhibit 4.*
3. On July 8, 2024, Erin Caparolie (“Caparolie”), Executive Director for Pinnacle Treatment Centers d/b/a Stepping Stone of Wilkes (“Pinnacle”), filed a formal complaint before the Board alleging Respondent violated professional boundaries with clients, engaged in dual relationships with clients, was involved in potential criminal activity and suffered a relapse to impairment. The complaint was designated by the Board as Ethics Complaint (“EC”) Case No. 825-24. *Board Exhibit 5.*
4. On June 30, 2025, the Board issued a Notice of Hearing scheduling a hearing for the above-referenced matter on July 25, 2025, at 12:00 PM or as soon thereafter as the Board could hear it. *Board Exhibit 1.*
5. On July 2, 2025, counsel for Respondent in this matter, Mr. William Morgan, Morgan Law PLLC, accepted service of the Notice of Hearing on behalf of Respondent via return of Acceptance of Service. *Board Exhibit 2.*
6. On July 22, 2025, counsel for Respondent withdrew as attorney of record for Respondent in this matter. *Board Exhibit 15.*
7. The Presiding Officer convened the hearing on July 25, 2025, in person, via videoconference (Zoom) and administered before a Court Reporter. Board staff was represented by Attorney Carolyn E. Duhon, Hedrick Gardner Kincheloe and Garofalo, L.L.P. Respondent was not present and was not represented by counsel.
8. At hearing, the Board heard testimony and other evidence regarding the following statutes and administrative code provisions:
  - a. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(6), grounds for disciplinary action include engaging in any act or practice in violation of any of the provisions of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90, Article 5C, or any of the rules adopted pursuant to it.
  - b. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(7), grounds for disciplinary action include the commission of an act of malpractice, gross negligence, or incompetence while serving as a substance use disorder professional, intern, or registrant.
  - c. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(9), grounds for disciplinary action include engaging in conduct that could result in harm or injury to the public.

- d. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(10), grounds for disciplinary action include entering into a dual relationship that impairs professional judgment or increases the risk of exploitation with a client or supervisee.
  - e. Pursuant to 21 NCAC 68 .0503(a), substance use disorder professionals shall employ their knowledge, skill and proficiencies within their scope of practice.
  - f. Pursuant to 21 NCAC 68 .0503(e), substance use disorder professionals who know of unethical conduct by a substance use disorder professional shall report such violations to the Board.
  - g. Pursuant to 21 NCAC 68 .0503(h), substance use disorder professionals shall complete reports and record keeping functions in a manner that supports client treatment experience and welfare.
  - h. Pursuant to 21 NCAC 68 .0507(i), substance use disorder professionals shall collaborate with other health care professionals providing treatment or support services to a client.
  - i. Pursuant to 21 NCAC 68 .0508(a), substance use disorder professionals shall protect the privacy of current and former clients and shall not disclose confidential information without prior consent.
  - j. Pursuant to 21 NCAC 68 .0508(d), substance use disorder professionals shall disclose confidential information only in accordance with state confidentiality rules found in 10A NCAC 26B and in 42 CFR Part 2.
  - k. Pursuant to 21 NCAC 68 .0509(b), substance use disorder professionals shall avoid dual relationships that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation of a client.
  - l. Pursuant to 21 NCAC 68 .0601(6)(a), professional incompetency or failure to meet standards of practice include failure to follow the standards of skill and competence possessed and applied by professional peers credentialed in this State acting in the same or similar circumstances.
9. The Board heard testimony from four (4) witnesses who appear on behalf of Petitioner Board via videoconference, as follows:
- a. Kathy Allen ("Allen"), Board Ethics Committee Chair, testified credibly as to investigating the Ethics Complaint Case, EC Case No. 825-24, alongside the Board's Executive Director, Barden Culbreth ("Culbreth") and Board counsel, in accordance with 21 NCAC 68 .0603.

- b. Erin Caparolie (“Caparolie”), former Executive Director at Pinnacle, testified credibly as to her time working with Respondent while Respondent was employed as a counselor and clinical supervisor at Pinnacle, and explained the basis for Respondent’s termination from employment at Pinnacle, and what led her to file the ethics complaint before the Board (Board Exhibit 5).
  - c. Mackenzie “Kenzie” Smith (“Smith”), substance use counselor and former supervisee of Respondent at Pinnacle, testified credibly as to her experience working with Respondent at Pinnacle and the shortcomings in clinical supervision facilitated by Respondent, including Respondent’s failure to facilitate weekly clinical supervision sessions as required, and that Respondent often came to Smith for guidance as opposed to Respondent providing supervision to Smith.
  - d. Erika Arauz (“Arauz”), the receptionist at Pinnacle, testified credibly as to her time working with Respondent at Pinnacle, including Respondent’s failure to appear for work in June of 2025.
10. Allen testified credibly and presented evidence as to the investigation of EC Case No. 824-24, which was initiated by issuing a request for response to the ethics complaint to Respondent. The request for response was issued on July 8, 2024. *Board Exhibit 6*. Respondent failed to respond to the Board’s request for response within thirty (30) days.
11. Due to Respondent’s nonresponse, Allen referred the complaint case to Board Investigator James McDougle (“McDougle”) in an attempt to locate Respondent. McDougle attempted to establish contact with Respondent, but all telephone numbers associated with Respondent were disconnected and McDougle was unable to verify Respondent’s current residential address. *Board Exhibit 8*.
12. Respondent returned contact in October of 2024, three (3) months after the above-referenced request for response was issued. *Board Exhibits 9 and 10*. Respondent reported involvement in a motor vehicle collision resulting in severe injuries and hospitalization. Respondent indicated she had relocated to Virginia for assisted living and physical therapy and only recently returned to North Carolina. Respondent also indicated she had issues with email and internet access and could not provide a permanent residence.
13. In Respondent’s written response, submitted via email on October 31, 2024, Respondent indicated she brought a bag with shoes and a blanket to Pinnacle and instructed a different counselor to give the gifts to a client at Pinnacle. Respondent also indicated she provided food and a wheelchair cushion to a Pinnacle client. Respondent denied all other allegations in the ethics complaint. *Board Exhibit 10*.
14. Allen testified credibly as to concerns at this point in the investigation relating to Respondent’s physical and mental health and associated fitness to practice. Allen also

- testified credibly as to impairment concerns, which led to requesting Respondent submit to an independent assessment with a Board approved clinician pertaining to fitness to practice.
15. Respondent completed the assessment with clinician Grey Johnson (“Johnson”). In the Assessment Report, dated March 9, 2025, Johnson made the following recommendations:
- a. Respondent review the Board code of ethics and the American Counseling Association (“ACA”) code of ethics;
  - b. Respondent complete three (3) additional continuing education units (“CEUS”) from a Board approved agency; and
  - c. Respondent engage in additional documented supervision for no less than six (6) months to evaluate her decision-making processes. *Board Exhibit 11.*
16. Caparolie testified credibly regarding Pinnacle’s gift-giving policy, which includes placing eligible items on a community bookshelf for clients to take what they may need. It is against Pinnacle policy to personally give gifts to clients. Clients should not be singled out for gift giving, as it would be considered inappropriate favoritism.
17. Smith and Caparolie testified credibly that, on or about January 3, 2024, Respondent requested Smith provide a Christmas bag full of unidentified items and a large blanket to a specific client at Pinnacle, which Smith reported made her feel uncomfortable as it was against Pinnacle policy. As a result, on or about January 26, 2024, Smith and Respondent were provided additional training related to boundaries and Pinnacle’s gift-giving policy.
18. Smith, Arauz, and Caparolie testified credibly that, on or about April 22, 2024, Respondent instructed Smith and Arauz to pick up food for a client, which Smith and Arauz refused as it was against Pinnacle company policy. Smith testified credibly that she again felt uncomfortable due to continued boundary concerns.
19. Caparolie testified credibly that, on April 30, 2024, Respondent provided another gift to a specific client at Pinnacle, a wheelchair cushion.
20. Caparolie testified credibly that, on May 3, 2024, Respondent provided another gift to a specific client at Pinnacle, food.
21. Caparolie testified credibly that, on May 9, 2024, Caparolie discovered Respondent had not appropriately released a client at Pinnacle. Respondent shared Protected Health Information (“PHI”) for the client to an outside entity without the appropriate Release of Information (“ROI”).
22. Arauz testified credibly that, on June 17, 2024, Respondent failed to present for work at Pinnacle without notice. Arauz tried to reach Respondent via telephone regarding her

absence from work without success. On the same day, law enforcement arrived at Pinnacle in an attempt to locate Respondent.

23. Caparolie testified credibly that, on June 18, 2024, and June 20, 2024, Respondent continued to fail to present for work at Pinnacle.
24. Respondent provided documentation to the Board indicating she was involved in a motor vehicle collision on June 22, 2024. The Emergency Department ("ED") Triage Notes indicate Respondent was transported to the Emergency Room via Emergency Services ("EMS"), and that Respondent fell asleep behind the wheel and drove into a field. *Board Exhibit 12.*
25. Allen testified credibly as to concerns regarding impairment upon reviewing the ED Notes, considering the known circumstances of the motor vehicle collisions and Respondent's failure to appear for scheduled shifts at Pinnacle prior to the motor vehicle accident. Allen testified credibly as to Respondent's failure to clarify what happened on the day of the motor vehicle collision, leading to further impairment concerns.
26. Caparolie testified credibly that, on June 24, 2024, Respondent continued to fail to present for work at Pinnacle. Respondent failed to notify anyone at Pinnacle as to her unscheduled absences. Respondent was terminated from employment at Pinnacle on June 24, 2024.
27. Smith testified credibly as to being informed by a client at Pinnacle that, in June of 2024, Respondent was seen providing transportation in her personal motor vehicle to a Pinnacle client. The client also reported Respondent had been seen purchasing drugs in Winston.
28. Caparolie testified credibly that, on June 27, 2024, Smith reported to Caparolie that a client at Pinnacle reported seeing Respondent at various locations purchasing drugs and that Respondent drove the same client to Winston and left the client there. The same client reported seeking substances with Respondent, and indicated her personal items were still in Respondent's personal motor vehicle.
29. In considering N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(6), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence, finding Respondent engaged in acts or practices in violation of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90, Article 5C, and the rules adopted pursuant to it, as described above.
30. In considering N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(7), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent engaged in the commission of an act of malpractice, gross negligence, or incompetence while serving as a substance use disorder professional, as described above.
31. In considering N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(9), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence, finding Respondent engaged in conduct that could result in harm or injury to the public, as described above.

32. In considering N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(10), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent entered into a dual relationship that impaired professional judgment and increased the risk of exploitation with a client or supervisee, as described above.
33. In considering 21 NCAC 68 .0503(a), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent failed to employ her knowledge, skill and proficiencies within her scope of practice, as described above.
34. In considering 21 NCAC 68 .0503(e), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent knew of unethical conduct by a substance use disorder professional and failed to report such violations to the Board, as described above.
35. In considering 21 NCAC 68 .0503(h), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent failed to complete reports and record keeping functions in a manner that supported the client's treatment experience and welfare, as described above.
36. In considering 21 NCAC 68 .0507(i), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent failed to collaborate with other health care professionals providing treatment or support services to a client, as described above.
37. In considering 21 NCAC 68 .0508(a), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent failed to protect the privacy of a client by disclosing confidential information without prior consent, as described above.
38. In considering 21 NCAC 68 .0508(d), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent disclosed confidential information not in accordance with state confidentiality rules found in 10A NCAC 26B and in 42 CFR Part 2, as described above.
39. In considering 21 NCAC 68 .0509(b), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent failed to avoid dual relationships that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation of a client, as described above.
40. In considering 21 NCAC 68 .0601(6)(a), the Board considered the above-referenced evidence presented, finding Respondent failed to follow the standards of skill and competence possessed and applied by professional peers credentialed in this State acting in the same or similar circumstances, as described above.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. Respondent is subject to the Administrative Procedure Act, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B, the North Carolina Substance Use Disorder Professional Practice Act, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90,



- Article 5C, and the rules and regulations adopted by the Board and codified in 21 N.C. Administrative Code, Chapter 68.
2. Respondent is subject to jurisdiction before the Board.
  3. The Board is authorized under Article 3A, Chapter 150B of the North Carolina General Statutes to hear this matter.
  4. To the extent that the Findings of Fact contain conclusions of law, or that the Conclusions of Law are findings of fact, they should be so considered without regard to their given labels. Charlotte v. Heath, 226 N.C. 750, 755, 40 S.E.2d 600, 604 (1946); Peters v. Pennington, 210 N.C. App. 1, 15, 707 S.E.2d 724, 735 (2011).
  5. The Board concludes that the acts and omissions of Respondent described in Findings of Fact No. 9-28 violate the following statutes and rules governed by the Board:
    - a. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(6);
    - b. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(7);
    - c. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(9);
    - d. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-113.44(a)(10);
    - e. 21 NCAC 68 .0503(a);
    - f. 21 NCAC 68 .0503(e);
    - g. 21 NCAC 68 .0503(h);
    - h. 21 NCAC 68 .0507(i);
    - i. 21 NCAC 68 .0508(a);
    - j. 21 NCAC 68 .0508(d);
    - k. 21 NCAC 68 .0509(b); and
    - l. 21 NCAC 68 .0601(6)(a).
  6. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 90-113.33(2) and 90-113.44(a), the Board has the authority to issue, renew, deny, suspend, or revoke licensure, certification, or registration to practice in this State or reprimand or otherwise discipline a license, certificate, or registration holder in this State.

### **FINAL AGENCY DECISION**

The North Carolina Addictions Specialist Professional Practice Board hereby issues the following decision:

- I. Respondent's credentialing and registration before the Board as a CCS-I (CCS-I No. 21292) is hereby **PERMANENTLY REVOKED**.

- II. Respondent's credentialing and registration before the Board as an LCAS (LCAS No. 21502) is hereby **SUSPENDED FOR A PERIOD OF THREE (3) YEARS**.
- III. This Final Agency Decision shall take effect upon service of Respondent in a manner consistent with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B-42(a).
- IV. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B-45(a)(2), Respondent has thirty (30) days from the date that she receives this Final Agency Decision to file a Petition for Judicial Review. The Petition for Judicial Review must be filed in the Superior Court of the county where the person aggrieved by the administrative decision resides, or in the case of a person residing outside the State, in the county where the contested case which resulted in the final decision was filed. Since this is an administrative appeal, no additional evidence will be taken. If a Petition is filed, a Superior Court Judge will review the Final Agency Decision to determine whether there were any legal errors in the Final Agency Decision.

**NOTICE**

This Final Agency Decision is issued under the authority of N.C. Gen. Stat. §150B-42. Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §150B-45, any party wishing to appeal this Final Agency Decision may commence such appeal by filing a Petition for Judicial Review in the Superior Court of the county in which the party resides. The party seeking review must file the Petition within 30 days after being served with a written copy of this Final Agency Decision.

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B-46 describes the contents of the Petition and requires service of the Petition on all parties. N.C. Gen. Stat. §150B-47 requires the Board to file the official record in the contested case with the reviewing court within 30 days of receipt of the Petition.

This, the 26 day of August 2025.

By: Dr. Kendra T. Davis  
Kendra Davis, Presiding Chair  
NORTH CAROLINA ADDICTIONS SPECIALIST  
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE BOARD

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

The undersigned does hereby certify that on this day the foregoing **Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Final Agency Decision** was served upon the Respondent in this action by USPS, postage prepaid, and by electronic mail delivery, addressed as follows:

Ms. Amanda Kay Cutts  
183 Elm Avenue  
Hudson, NC 28638

*Respondent*

**COURTESY COPY:**

amandan4188@hotmail.com

This, the 26 day of August 2025.

**HEDRICK, GARDNER, KINCHELOE &  
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