



19CF7501



## West Palm Beach Department PROBABLE CAUSE AFFIDAVIT

OBTS#: FL0500800

CASE#: 94-19-4555

DEFENDANT: Johnson, Alonderay

DOB: 12/18/64

VICTIM: 600 BANYAN BLVD, WEST PALM BEACH  
FL 33401

PHONE: (561)822-1900

On August 9, 2018 the State Attorney's Office Sober Homes Task Force received a citizen complaint about Garden of New Beginnings, a treatment facility licensed by DCF to provide Day or Night, IOP, and OP level of care. This facility was located at 300 Prosperity Farms Road within the Village of North Palm Beach, located in Palm Beach County in the state of Florida.

The reporting citizen stated that they observed a client of Garden of New Beginnings get dropped off by a van to attend a weekly NA/ALLANON meeting in Palm Beach Gardens. According to the reporting party, the client appeared to be under the influence of unknown narcotics at the meeting. The client was subsequently left unsupervised for the duration of the meeting and several hours after the meeting had ended.

An online check of DCF's licensed substance abuse providers revealed that "Garden of New Beginnings" was issued DCF License: SITE-00004108 for outpatient, day or night treatment, and intensive outpatient treatment.

An internet search revealed a website belonging to Garden of New Beginnings (gardenofnewbeginnings.com) advertising with the same phone number and location of this treatment facility.

On 12/10/2018, the following was published on Garden of New Beginnings' website under the "About" tab: "Alonderay Johnson, PhD, COO". According to the website, "Dr. Johnson received her PHD in psychology from The University of Florida. Her passion and desire for helping struggling alcoholics and addicts is great and of key importance where successful treatment planning can mean the difference and help each of our clients ensure long term recovery."

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OFFICER (F.S.S. 117.10)

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SIGNATURE OF ARRESTING OFFICER

Detective D. Kerschmer #1741

8, 3, 19



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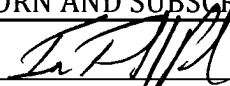
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According to WHOIS, an internet database that contains domain name registration information, the website is being hosted by GoDaddy. Publicly sourced research indicates that the website was created using the WORDPRESS software with a commercial template. Your affiant knows from personal experience that WORDPRESS is a type of computer program or blog software that is popular for its ease of use for creating a webpage and is easily user-accessible in such a way that it does not require services of an outside computer programmer or other experienced professional. Commercial templates are readily available and designed as a "plug-and-play" style webpage. Once this software is purchased, an end-user can act as their own "webmaster" or designer and subsequently just fill in the data that a person would wish to share and publish on a website.

Public Records were obtained from the Division of Children and Family Services ("DCF"), the licensing entity for treatment facilities in the State of Florida. Included in the licensing application was an organizational chart, listing Alonderay Johnson, PhD (Johnson) as the COO / Program Director and "Training Coordinator" of Garden of New Beginnings.

On the resume and documentation supplied by Johnson to DCF, she purported to have received a PhD from the University of Florida. Johnson attached a resume listing extensive work, education, and clinical experience conducting psychological diagnostic services, therapeutic counseling, and psychotherapy. The resume submitted as part of the public record required for licensure in the state of Florida purports that Johnson obtained her PhD in Psychology from the University of Florida in 2004, a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Florida in 1989, and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from the University of Florida in

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1986.

The resume further lists that Johnson served as the Clinical Director for Shand's Hospital at the University of Florida from 1989 - 1999.

The resume additionally claims that Johnson served as "Clinical Psychologist I." at the Jerome Golden Center (formerly known as: 45<sup>th</sup> Street Mental Health). In this position, Johnson claims that her duties included:

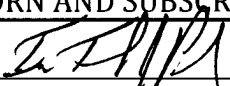
"...Clinical Input relating to client diagnosis and recommended treatment plans, ...Evaluate clients for voluntary and involuntary commitments, ...Sign commitments for patients requiring hospitalization."

The aforementioned job duties should only be conducted by a person who is licensed through the State of Florida to practice health care. Johnson is not presently, nor has she ever been, licensed by the Department of Health to practice a health care profession.

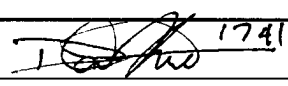
Marlene Saria, HR Manager for Jerome Golden Center, formerly known as 45<sup>th</sup> St Mental Health Center, advised that they had no record of Johnson being employed in any capacity as alleged on Johnson's resume, nor did their business have anyone employed with the title of "Clinical Psychologist I."

Further review of the DCF licensing documents showed a formal complaint filed by JoAnn Kutsukos, the Clinical Director of Garden of New Beginnings. The complaint alleged that Johnson did not actually have a PhD.

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On 09/24/2018, a lawful subpoena was served upon the University of Florida for student records to verify whether Johnson had received a PhD from the University of Florida.

On 10/10/2018, a certified copy of records from the University of Florida's Registrar Office revealed that Johnson had never been a student at the University of Florida.

Additionally, in reviewing the DCF licensure application, it was discovered that Johnson had completed the "Affidavit of Good Moral Character" for DCF licensing regulations, in which she acknowledged having a disqualifying criminal record under Chapters 435 and 408 of the Florida Statutes.

Johnson submitted an exemption letter from DCF, granting her an exemption for the disqualifying offenses. A subpoena was issued to DCF for the entirety of the exemption application including any documentation DCF considered as part of the application packet.

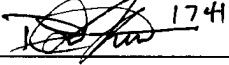
On 01/21/2019, I received copies of the documents DCF considered in granting the exemption to Johnson. Included in the paperwork was a transcript purporting to be from the University of Florida, listing a student number of 602088 and a PHD achievement date of 12/21/2002.

On 01/22/2019, this transcript was forwarded to the University of Florida for authentication. On 3/8/2019 the University of Florida confirmed that the student number, date, and name provided on the transcript that Johnson submitted to DCF as part of her exemption request were not valid and that the documentation was fraudulent.

During this time period, information was received that a PhD from the  
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University of Florida was hanging up on Johnson's personal office wall. Photographs were obtained by undercover law enforcement officers who were there for unrelated matters and observed the diploma, in plain view, from outside her open office door.

As a result of the fraudulent transcript and untruthful resume, DCF granted an exemption, and ultimately licensure to Johnson to allow her to own/operate "Garden of New Beginnings" as a treatment facility licensed by DCF.

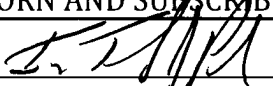
The exemption letter DCF forwarded to Johnson read as follows:

"This is to advise you that your request for an exemption from disqualification has been granted. This decision has been made after careful review of all the evidence on record concerning the incident, as well as the information you presented for our consideration."

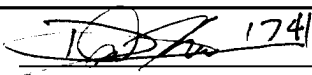
Based on the previous history involving Johnson as a person of interest in a previous unrelated patient brokering case, bank records for Johnson were subpoenaed. In reviewing the records provided by Johnson's banking institutions, the below information was discovered:

In the time period prior to Johnson's receiving licensure from DCF to own/operate Garden of New Beginnings, her bank account was frequently operating with a negative balance. Once Garden of New Beginnings became established and was able to bill for out-of-network insurance benefits, Johnson began paying herself a salary of approximately \$6,000 every two weeks. Additionally, bank records revealed that Johnson did ultimately purchase the domain for her website, in which she claims to have a PhD from the University of Florida.

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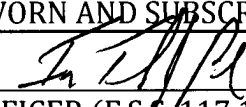
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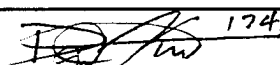
Based on the above facts, I believe Probable Cause exists to charge the defendant with the following:

- (1) One Count of Uttering Forged Instruments, in violation of F.S.S. 831.02, specifically, for submitting a false/fraudulent transcript to DCF for the purposes of obtaining an exemption to own/operate a licensed treatment facility.
- (2) One Count of Unlicensed Practice of a Health Care Profession, in violation of F.S.S. 456.065(1), specifically for holding herself out in written communication (resume) as able to practice a healthcare profession by purporting to be a licensed psychologist, a profession regulated by the Florida Department of Health.
- (3) One Count of violating Florida's Prohibition on Fraudulent Marketing Practices, in violation of F.S.S. 817.0345, specifically, for publishing that she acquired a PhD in Psychology from the University of Florida on the treatment facility's website (GARDENOFNEWBEGINNINGS.COM) to entice patronage at the Garden of New Beginnings treatment facility.
- (4) One count of Misrepresentation of Academic Standing, in violation of F.S.S. 817.566, specifically for passing a fraudulent transcript from the University of Florida off as true.
- (5) One Count of Unlawful Activities, Relating to Personnel, in violation of F.S.S. 397.4075(1), specifically, for misrepresenting material facts about her qualifications as part

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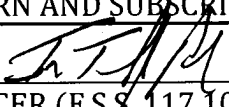
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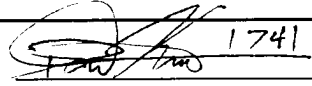
of her DCF application for exemption and licensure.

- (6) One count of False Official Statements, in violation of F.S.S. 837.06, specifically for making false statements to DCF on her exemption and licensing application in an attempt to mislead DCF into granting her licensure to own/operate a licensed treatment facility.

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