



## STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Former Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Employee Dr. Ralph Ford pays \$15K to Settle Ethics Code Violations**

**Hartford** – Former Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) employee Dr. Ralph Ford of Bridgeport, Connecticut paid a \$15,000 penalty for violating the Code of Ethics when he used state resources and personnel to facilitate business transactions related to his private clinical practice. Following an investigation by the Enforcement Division of the Office of State Ethics, he entered a stipulation and consent order in which he also agreed not to enter into any contracts with the State of Connecticut to provide psychological evaluations or treatment for a period of six months from the date of the stipulation and consent order.

From 2010 through 2014, while a state employee, Ford owned and operated a private clinical practice. During this time period, Ford utilized state resources, including his state-issued computer and state-provided e-mail account, in order to conduct his private business.

Additionally, the investigation revealed that Ford also used another state employee to perform tasks related to his private practice, while using state resources on state time and being paid by the state.

Under Section 1-84 (c) of the Code of Ethics, a public official or state employee is prohibited from using state resources to obtain personal financial gain. Ford also violated Section 1-84 (b) which prohibits a public official or state employee from accepting outside employment that will impair his independence of judgment as to his official duties or employment. On several occasions, Ford performed psychological evaluations in his private capacity on individuals who were, at the same time, clients of DMHAS. His private evaluation of DMHAS clients had a clear possibility of affecting the DMHAS clients' access to state funds and services, thereby impairing his judgment as to his state responsibilities. In addition, Ford falsely approved time sheets for a DMHAS employee whom he directed to work on private clinical practice tasks during state time.

“State employees, particularly those in leadership positions, who turn their offices into private, for-profit businesses will face significant penalties,” said Executive Director Carol Carson. “The Office of State Ethics has resolved a number of matters involving use of state resources for private businesses. The pervasive nature of this activity makes it particularly egregious because of the impact it has on the state’s budget.”

Ford lost his state position through a separate but related personnel action.

View: Stipulation and Consent Order 2014-07

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*The Connecticut Office of State Ethics mission is to ensure honesty, integrity and accountability in state government through education, interpretation and enforcement of the State of Connecticut Code of Ethics. To contact us please visit our website at [www.ct.gov/ethics](http://www.ct.gov/ethics) or call us at (860) 263-2400.*