

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA**

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF WAKE**

**BEFORE THE COMMISSIONER
OF INSURANCE**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSURE
OF CHARISSA CUOZZO-EDWARDS
LICENSE NO. 0018252351**

**VOLUNTARY SETTLEMENT
AGREEMENT**

NOW COME, Charissa Cuozzo-Edwards (hereinafter "Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards") and the North Carolina Department of Insurance Bail Bond Regulatory Division (hereinafter "BBRD"), and hereby voluntarily and knowingly enter into the following Voluntary Settlement Agreement (hereinafter "this Agreement").

WHEREAS, the BBRD has the authority and responsibility for the enforcement of the insurance laws of this State, and for regulating and licensing bail bondsmen; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards holds an active license as a Surety Bail Bondsman issued by the BBRD; and

WHEREAS, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 58-71-80(a)(5) provides that the Commissioner may deny, place on probation, suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew any license issued under this Article, in accordance with the provisions of Article 3A of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, for fraudulent, coercive, or dishonest practices in the conduct of business or demonstrating incompetence, untrustworthiness, or financial irresponsibility in the conduct of business in this State or any other jurisdiction.

WHEREAS, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 58-71-80(a)(8) provides, among other things, that the Commissioner may deny, place on probation, suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew any license when in the judgment of the Commissioner, the licensee has in the conduct of the licensee's affairs under the license, demonstrated incompetency, financial irresponsibility, or untrustworthiness; and

WHEREAS, information made available to BBRD indicated that Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards was involved in an altercation in the Craven County (New Bern, NC) Magistrate's office on Wednesday, December 16, 2020 initiated by another bail bondsman regarding a disagreement purportedly over the loss of a client to Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards, which required the assistance of Deputies to calm the situation; and

WHEREAS, such conduct on the part of both parties was inconsistent with that which is expected in the conduct of bail bond business in this State and constituted violations of the provisions of N.C. Gen. Stats. §§ 58-71-80(a)(5) and (8); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 58-71-80(a) (7), the Commissioner may deny, suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew any license under Article 71 of Chapter 58 of the North Carolina General Statutes for failure to comply with or violation of the provisions of Article 71 of Chapter 58 of the North Carolina General Statutes or of any order, rule, or regulation of the Commissioner; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards admits to the violations set out herein; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 58-2-70(g), the Commissioner of Insurance and the BBRD have the express authority to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement with any person as to the status of the person's license or certificate or as to any civil penalty or restitution; and

WHEREAS, in lieu of an administrative hearing on the matters stated herein, Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards has agreed to settle, compromise, and resolve the matters referenced in this Agreement, and the BBRD has agreed not to pursue additional civil ramifications; including penalties, sanctions, remedies, or restitution based on these matters against Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and agreements set out herein, the BBRD and Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards hereby agree to the following:

1. Immediately upon her signing of this document, Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards shall pay a **civil penalty of \$ 250.00** to the North Carolina Department of Insurance. The form of payment shall be in a certified check, cashier's check, or money order. The check or money order for the payment of this civil penalty shall be payable to the "North Carolina Department of Insurance." Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards shall send the civil penalty by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the N.C. Department of Insurance, Bail Bonds Regulatory Division, 12 Baker Road, Suite 106, Archdale, NC 27263 simultaneously with the return of this Agreement, signed by Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards. The civil penalty and the signed Agreement must be received by the BBRD no later than **October 14, 2021**. The civil penalty shall be subject to disbursement in accordance with the provisions of Article IX, Section 7 of the North Carolina Constitution for the benefit of the public schools.
2. Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards shall obey all laws and regulations applicable to all licenses issued to her; and
3. Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards enters into this Agreement freely and voluntarily and with knowledge of her right to have an administrative hearing on this matter. Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards understands that she may consult with an attorney prior to entering into this Agreement.
4. This Agreement does not in any way affect the BBRD's disciplinary power in any future follow-up examinations of Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards, or in any other cases or complaints involving Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards.
5. The parties to this Agreement agree that this Agreement shall have the full force and effect of an Order of the Commissioner. Ms. Cuozzo-Edwards understands that N. C. Gen. Stat. § 58-71-80(a)(7) provides that a surety bondsman's license may be revoked for violating an Order of the Commissioner.
6. This Voluntary Settlement Agreement, when finalized, will be a public record

and is not confidential. Any and all licenses issued by the BBRD to the licensee shall reflect that Regulatory Action has been taken against the licensee following the execution of this Agreement. The BBRD is free to disclose the contents of this Agreement to third parties upon request or pursuant to any law or policy providing for such disclosure. The BBRD, upon request, routinely provide a copy of the voluntary settlement agreement to all companies that have appointed the licensee.

7. This Settlement Agreement shall become effective when signed by Ms. Cuzzo-Edwards and the BBRD.

**N. C. Department of Insurance
Bail Bond Regulatory Division**



**By: Charissa Cuzzo-Edwards
License No. 0018252351**



**By: Marty Sumner
Senior Deputy Commissioner**

Date:
10-14-21

Date: 10/20/2021