

## Notice of Decision

<b>Registrant</b>	Margaret Dass
<b>Registration number</b>	3043535
<b>Part of Register</b>	Social care worker
<b>Town of employment</b>	Clydebank
<b>Sanction</b>	Removal
<b>Date of effect</b>	15 May 2025

This is notice of a decision of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

### Our decision

We decided:

1. that based on the facts found your fitness to practise is impaired, as defined in Rule 2 of Part 1 of the Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021
2. to impose a Removal Order removing your registration from the part of the SSSC Register for social care worker.

### Findings of fact

We decided there is evidence that on 20 August 2024, at Dumbarton Sheriff Court you were convicted of the following offences:

1. between 7 January 2021 and 27 May 2021, steal a bank card belonging to service user AA and you did this while employed as a carer for said AA
2. between 7 January 2021 and 27 May 2021, at the ATM at Usave Store, Brucehill Road, Dumbarton and the ATM at the Royal Bank of Scotland, High Street, Dumbarton and elsewhere, force open lockfast automated teller machines by use of a pin number and true bank card and steal £5470 or thereby in monies
3. on 18 May 2021, at the Royal Bank of Scotland, Sylvania Way South, Clydebank, pretend to an employee of the Royal Bank of Scotland that

you were the lawful holder of a debit card in the name of AA and did thus induce said employee to accept the use of the card and did thus obtain £1000 in monies by fraud

and your fitness to practise is impaired because of your conviction as set out in allegations 1 – 3.

### **Reasons for finding your fitness to practise has been impaired**

1. Your fitness to practise is impaired because:
  - a. social service workers, in whom service users and the public place their trust and confidence, are expected to act with honesty and integrity at all times. By stealing from a service user and committing fraud, you have acted dishonestly, carried out criminal behaviour, abused the trust and confidence placed in you as a social service worker, taken advantage of access to a vulnerable service user's personal belongings and you have caused a service user harm. You have also placed a service user at risk of emotional harm. Your conduct is extremely serious, represents a substantial departure from the SSSC Codes of Practice and is fundamentally incompatible with registration.
  - b. given the attitudinal nature of your behaviour and lack of insight shown by you, the risk of repetition is assessed as high. There is a need to protect service users from the behaviour being repeated. Your conduct also gives rise to concerns about your personal and professional values and therefore is more difficult to remediate. Your conduct has a significant impact on the public interest as the reputation of the profession could be damaged by your actions.
2. You have failed to follow parts 1.5, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.6, 3.8, 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.6 and 6.7 of the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers in force from 1 May 2024.

### **Sanction**

After referring to our Decisions Guidance, we decided to impose a Removal Order, removing your registration from the SSSC Register.

## **Reasons for the sanction**

When making our decision we considered the following factors:

### **Factors of concern**

- you have failed to show regret or insight into your behaviour
- your behaviour was premeditated and intentional and took place during the course of your normal employment
- your behaviour took place inside work while caring for a vulnerable service user
- your behaviour was part of a pattern and not an isolated incident
- actual harm was caused to a service user
- stealing from a service user and committing fraud amounts to an abuse of trust placed in you as a social service worker
- you have failed to cooperate with the SSSC or provide comments about your behaviour

### **Factors in your favour**

- no previous concerns have been raised over your conduct

### **Reasons why other sanctions are not appropriate**

- A warning would not be appropriate as it would not adequately address the impairment of your fitness to practice. The behaviour is extremely serious, and a warning would give no protection to service users or the public.
- A condition would not be appropriate because there are no conditions which could be placed on you which would address why your fitness to practise is impaired. The type of behaviour at issue is not the type of behaviour which conditions would rectify. You are not currently working in the sector and so a condition would not be workable or enforceable. There is no evidence to suggest that you would comply with any condition placed on you by the SSSC.
- A warning plus conditions would not be appropriate due to the reasons outlined above.
- A Suspension Order would not be appropriate as your behaviour/impairment of your fitness to practise is fundamentally incompatible with continuing registration. The interests of people who use services and the public would not be sufficiently protected by any period of suspension. There is no evidence a period of suspension would allow you to

remedy the cause of the impairment of your fitness to practise. There is little evidence you acknowledge your failings, and the pattern of behaviour and lack of insight suggest the behaviour is likely to be repeated.

- For the reasons outlined above a Suspension Order plus conditions would not be appropriate.
- The SSSC considers a Removal Order is the most appropriate sanction as it is both necessary and justified in the public interest and to maintain the continuing trust and confidence in the social service profession and the SSSC as the regulator of the profession.

### **Documents we have referred to**

- The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021.
- Decisions Guidance for Fitness to Practise Panels and Scottish Social Service Council staff.

### **Imposing the Removal**

Under the Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021, we can impose a Removal Order if you do not ask for a hearing before a Fitness to Practise Panel.

We wrote to you on 1 April 2025 to tell you we wanted to place a Removal Order on your registration. After explaining the consequences and recommending you take legal advice, you have not asked for the case to be referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel. We are therefore permitted by the Rules to impose this Removal Order.

### **Date of effect**

The notice comes into effect on 15 May 2025.