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**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
CONSUMER SERVICES DIVISION**

IN THE MATTER OF DETERMINING
Whether there has been a violation of the Escrow
Agent Registration Act of Washington by:

C-17-2178-17-TD01

GREATER PUGET SOUND ESCROW, INC.
and
DAREN DOUGLAS HAMILTON,
Owner and Designated Escrow Officer,

TEMPORARY ORDER TO
CEASE AND DESIST

Respondents.

THE STATE OF WASHINGTON TO: GREATER PUGET SOUND ESCROW, INC.
DAREN DOUGLAS HAMILTON

COMES NOW the Director of the Washington State Department of Financial Institutions (Director), by and through her designee Charles E. Clark, Division Director, Division of Consumer Services (designee), and finding that the public interest will be irreparably harmed by delay in issuing an order to cease and desist, enters this temporary order to cease and desist pursuant to chapter 18.44 RCW, the Escrow Agent Registration Act (Act), based on the following findings:

I. FACTUAL FINDINGS

1.1 Respondent Greater Puget Sound Escrow, Inc. (GPSE) was licensed by the Department to conduct business as an Escrow Agent on or about November 15, 2006, and continues to be licensed to date.

1.2 Respondent Daren Douglas Hamilton was licensed by the Department to conduct business as an Escrow Officer on or about January 26, 2007, and was designated as the Designated Escrow Officer (DEO) on or about December 22, 2014. Respondent Hamilton failed to renew his Escrow Officer license for 2017. Consequently, Respondent Hamilton's Escrow Officer licensed expired and was cancelled effective April 4,

1 2017. As a result, Respondent GPSE currently has no Designated Escrow Officer and is no longer authorized
2 to conduct the business of an Escrow Agent.

3 **1.3 Pending Escrow Transactions.** On April 4, 2017, the Department contacted a representative
4 of GPSE and was informed that Respondent GPSE has about 20 escrow transactions pending.

5 **II. GROUNDS FOR ENTRY OF ORDER**

6 **2.1 Requirement for a Designated Escrow Officer.** Pursuant to RCW 18.44.071 and WAC 208-
7 680-243, all escrow transaction conducted by a licensed Escrow Agent must be supervised by a licensed
8 Escrow Officer designated as the DEO.

9 **2.2 Unlicensed Escrow Agent Activity.** Based on the Factual Allegations set forth in Section I
10 above, Respondent GPSE is in apparent violation of RCW 18.44.071 for engaging in the business of an Escrow
11 Agent without a licensed Designated Escrow Officer.

12 **2.3 Unlicensed Designated Escrow Officer Activity.** Based on the Factual Allegations set forth
13 in Section I above, Respondent Hamilton is in apparent violation of RCW 18.44.071 for engaging in the
14 business of a Designated Escrow Officer without a license to do so.

15 **III. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE TEMPORARY ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST**

16 **3.1 Authority to Issue Temporary Order to Cease and Desist.** Pursuant to RCW 18.44.440, the
17 Director is authorized to issue a temporary order to cease and desist whenever the Director makes a finding, in
18 writing, that the public interest will be irreparably harmed by delay in issuing a cease and desist order due to
19 any violation of the Act. Based on the Factual Findings and Grounds for Entry of Order set forth above, it
20 appears that Respondents are currently conducting unlicensed activity. As a result, the Director finds that the
21 public interest will be irreparably harmed by a delay in issuing an order to cease and desist order and
22 permitting Respondents to continue conducting the business of an Escrow Agent and Escrow Officer without a
23 licensed Designated Escrow Officer.

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1 **IV. ORDER**

2 Based on the above Factual Findings, Grounds for Entry of Order, and Authority to Issue Temporary
3 Order to Cease and Desist, and pursuant to RCW 18.44.400, the Director finds that the public interest will be
4 irreparably harmed by delay in issuing a cease and desist order. Therefore, the Director ORDERS that:

5 **4.1** Respondent Greater Puget Sound Escrow, Inc. shall immediately cease and desist from
6 conducting business as an Escrow Agent for property located in Washington.

7 **4.2** Respondent Greater Puget Sound Escrow, Inc. shall immediately notify all pending escrow
8 clients of this order and shall assist each client with the transfer of his/her escrow transaction, including related
9 escrow funds, to another licensed Escrow Agent or other entity authorized to perform escrow services in
10 Washington pursuant to an exemption to the Act.

11 **4.3** Respondent Daren Douglas Hamilton shall immediately cease and desist conducting business
12 as an Escrow Officer; EXCEPT to the extent necessary to comply with section 4.2 of this Order.

13 **4.4** This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect unless set aside, limited, or
14 suspended in writing by an authorized court.

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NOTICE

PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 18.44 RCW, YOU ARE ENTITLED TO A HEARING WITHIN 14 DAYS OF REQUEST TO DETERMINE WHETHER THIS ORDER SHALL BECOME PERMANENT. IF YOU DESIRE A HEARING, THEN YOU MUST RETURN THE ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION FOR ADJUDICATIVE HEARING, INCORPORATED HEREIN BY THIS REFERENCE. FAILURE TO COMPLETE AND RETURN THE APPLICATION FOR ADJUDICATIVE HEARING FORM SO THAT IT IS RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS WITHIN 20 DAYS OF THE DATE THAT THIS ORDER WAS SERVED ON YOU WILL CONSTITUTE A DEFAULT AND WILL RESULT IN THE LOSS OF YOUR RIGHT TO A HEARING. SERVICE ON YOU IS DEFINED AS POSTING IN THE U.S. MAIL, POSTAGE PREPAID, TO YOUR LAST KNOWN ADDRESS. BE ADVISED THAT DEFAULT WILL RESULT IN THIS ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST BECOMING PERMANENT ON THE 21ST DAY FOLLOWING SERVICE OF THIS ORDER UPON YOU.

WITHIN TEN DAYS AFTER YOU HAVE BEEN SERVED WITH THIS TEMPORARY ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST, YOU MAY APPLY TO THE SUPERIOR COURT IN THE COUNTY OF YOUR PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS FOR AN INJUNCTION SETTING ASIDE, LIMITING, OR SUSPENDING THIS ORDER PENDING THE COMPLETION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS PURSUANT TO THIS NOTICE.

DATED this 6th day of April, 2017.

/s/
CHARLES E. CLARK
Director
Division of Consumer Services
Department of Financial Institutions

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