

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE: NICOLE DANIELLE COTTOM, L.P.N.,
License Number: 0002-083519
Case Number: 176313

AMENDED ORDER

JURISDICTION AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 2.2-4019 and 54.1-2400(10), a Special Conference Committee of the Virginia Board of Nursing (“Board”) held an informal conference on June 12, 2017, in Henrico County, Virginia, to inquire into evidence that Nicole Danielle Cottom, L.P.N., may have violated certain laws and regulations governing the practice of practical nursing in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Nicole Danielle Cottom, L.P.N., appeared at this proceeding and was not represented by legal counsel.

NOTICE

By letter dated May 16, 2017, the Board sent a Notice of Informal Conference (“Notice”) to Ms. Cottom notifying her that an informal conference would be held on June 12, 2017. The Notice was sent by certified and first class mail to the legal address of record on file with the Board.

Upon consideration of the evidence, the Committee adopts the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and issues the Order contained herein.

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Nicole Danielle Cottom, L.P.N., was issued License Number 0002-083519 to practice practical nursing on October 6, 2010, which is scheduled to expire on August 31, 2018. At all times relevant to the findings contained herein, said license was current and active. Her primary state of residence is Virginia.

2. Ms. Cottom violated Virginia Code § 54.1-3007(5) and (8) in that during the course of her employment as a dosing nurse with Family Counseling Center for Recovery (“FCCR”), a methadone clinic in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on August 31, 2016, she dispensed 70 mg of methadone to a male patient who was prescribed 35mg. The error came to light when a female patient who was prescribed 70 mg of methadone later presented for her daily dose.

3. The male patient who took the 70 mg dose of methadone was contacted by the clinic after the discovery of the error. He reported becoming so sedated that he had to pull over during his drive home to rest. The clinic advised to seek medical treatment at a hospital immediately, and was later treated at the hospital with Narcan for low oxygen levels.

4. Ms. Cottom stated to the investigator for the Virginia Department of Health Professions that she did not recall verifying the patient’s identity on the computer screen that showed the patient’s name, photo, and dosage amount; at the informal conference, however, she refused to concede that she could have made a mistake in dispensing the medication. Further, upon questioning by the Committee, Ms. Cottom appeared to lack the appropriate knowledge of the side effects of methadone on clinic patients or of the danger of a methadone clinic patient receiving too large a dose of methadone.

5. Ms. Cottom’s two-month employment at the FCCR was terminated following this incident. Ms. Cottom has had five nursing employers in five years and was terminated from three of those positions.

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Virginia Board of Nursing hereby ORDERS as follows:

1. Nicole Danielle Cottom, L.P.N., is REPRIMANDED.
2. Ms. Cottom shall provide written proof of completion of the following NCSBN online courses within 90 days of the entry of this Order: *Professional Accountability & Legal Liability for*

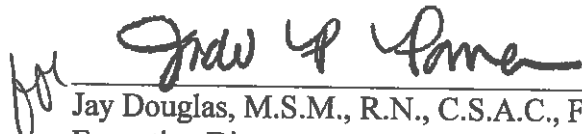
Nurses and Medication Errors: Detection & Prevention. Continuing education obtained through compliance with this term shall not be used toward licensure renewal.

3. Nicole Danielle Cottom, L.P.N., shall comply with all laws and regulations governing the practice of practical nursing in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

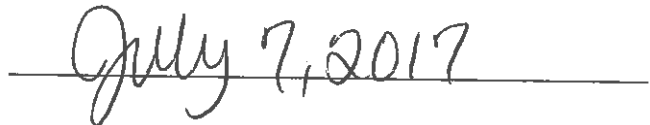
4. Any violation of the foregoing terms and conditions of this Order or any statute or regulation governing the practice of practical nursing shall constitute grounds for further disciplinary action.

Pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 2.2-4023 and 54.1-2400.2, the signed original of this Order shall remain in the custody of the Department of Health Professions as a public record, and shall be made available for public inspection and copying upon request.

FOR THE BOARD


Jay Douglas, M.S.M., R.N., C.S.A.C., F.R.E.
Executive Director
Virginia Board of Nursing

ENTERED AND MAILED:



NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 54.1-2400(10), Ms. Cottom may, not later than 5:00 p.m., on August 9, 2017, notify Jay P. Douglas, M.S.M., R.N., C.S.A.C., F.R.E., Executive Director, Board of Nursing, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, Virginia 23233, in writing that she desires a formal administrative hearing before the Board. Upon the filing with the Executive Director of a request for the hearing, this Order shall be vacated. This Order shall become final on August 9, 2017, unless a request for a formal administrative hearing is received as described above.

Certified True Copy

By 
Virginia Board of Nursing