

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

**IN RE: DENISE H. PATTERSON, R.N.
License No.: 0001-152244**

ORDER

In accordance with §§ 2.2-4019, 2.2-4021 and 54.1-2400(10) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended ("Code"), an informal conference was conducted on behalf of the Board of Nursing ("Board") on December 17, 2015, in Henrico County, Virginia. Ms. Patterson was not present nor was she represented by legal counsel. Allison Gregory, M.S., R.N., F.N.P.-B.C., serving as Agency Subordinate for the Board, submitted a Recommended Decision for consideration.

On March 23, 2016, a quorum of the Board met to receive and act upon the Recommended Decision of the Agency Subordinate. Ms. Patterson was not present nor was she represented by legal counsel.

Based upon its review of the Recommended Decision of the Agency Subordinate, the Board makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and issues the following Order.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Denise H. Patterson, R.N. was issued License No. 0001-152244 to practice professional nursing in Virginia on February 13, 1997. The license is scheduled to expire on February 8, 2018. Ms. Patterson's primary state of residence is Virginia.
2. By letter dated November 17, 2015, the Board of Nursing sent a Notice of Informal Conference ("Notice") to Ms. Patterson notifying her that an informal conference would be held on December 17, 2015. The Notice was sent by certified and first class mail to 1701 Westbury Ridge Drive, Midlothian, Virginia 23114, the address of record on file with the Board of Nursing. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned to the Board office. The Notice sent by first class mail was not returned

to the Board office. The Agency Subordinate concluded that adequate notice was provided to Ms. Patterson and the informal conference proceeded in her absence.

3. During the course of her employment with Vibra Hospital of Richmond, Virginia, on June 16, 2014, Ms. Patterson left her shift and the three patients to whom she was assigned without notifying management. Ms. Patterson left her shift because she was sick following a weekend of drinking.

4. As a result of this incident, Ms. Patterson's employment with Vibra Hospital of Richmond was terminated on June 30, 2014.

5. Ms. Patterson has a history of chemical dependency and mental illness, as evidenced by the following:

a. Ms. Patterson was voluntarily admitted and received inpatient treatment at Tucker Pavilion, CJW Medical Center, Richmond, Virginia, from March 16, 2015 through March 23, 2015 after she reported to the emergency department with a blood alcohol content of 0.46 and suicidal ideations. Her discharge diagnoses included depression NOS and alcohol dependence.

b. From March 24 through April 14, 2015, Ms. Patterson received inpatient treatment for alcohol dependence at the Life Center of Galax, Galax, Virginia.

c. Ms. Patterson reported to a medical provider that she occasionally abused prescription medication.

d. Ms. Patterson has had a "drinking problem" off and on throughout her life and began drinking heavily again in the past few years.

6. On June 23, 2015, Ms. Patterson told an investigator with the Department of Health Professions that she was not currently working.

7. At the time of the investigation, Ms. Patterson had not enrolled in the Health Practitioners' Monitoring Program.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Finding of Fact No. 3 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(2), (5), (6), and (8) of the Code and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(f) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing.
2. Findings of Fact Nos. 5(a) through (d) constitute a violation of § 54.1-3007(6) of the Code.

ORDER

WHEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED as follows:

1. License No. 0001-152244 of Denise H. Patterson, R.N. is INDEFINITELY SUSPENDED.
2. The license will be recorded as suspended and no longer current.
3. At such time as Ms. Patterson shall petition the Board for reinstatement of her license, an administrative proceeding will be convened to determine whether she is capable of resuming the safe and competent practice of professional nursing. Ms. Patterson shall be responsible for any fees that may be required for the reinstatement and renewal of the license prior to issuance of the license to resume practice.
4. This suspension applies to any multistate privilege to practice professional nursing.

Pursuant to § 54.1-2400.2 of the Code, 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.

Since Ms. Patterson failed to appear at the informal conference, this Order shall be considered final. Ms. Patterson has the right to appeal this Order directly to the appropriate Virginia circuit court. As provided by Rule 2A:2 of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Ms. Patterson has thirty (30) days from the date of service (the date she actually received this decision or the date it was mailed to her, whichever occurred first) within which to appeal this decision by filing a Notice of Appeal with Jay P. Douglas, MSM, RN,

CSAC, FRE, Executive Director, Board of Nursing, at Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300,
Richmond, Virginia 23233. In the event that this decision is served by mail, three (3) days are added to
that period.

FOR THE BOARD

for *Alana Mitchell-Lindly*
Jay P. Douglas, MSM, RN, CSAC, FRE
Executive Director
Virginia Board of Nursing

Entered: *April 27, 2016*

Certified True Copy
By *dgraham*
Virginia Board Of Nursing