

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE: SUZANNE M. JEFFERSON, R.N.
License No.: 0001-223043

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 February 24, 2016 in Henrico County, Virginia. Suzanne M. Jefferson, R.N. was present and was not represented by legal counsel. Jane Elliott, R.N., Ph.D., serving as Agency Subordinate for the Board, submitted a Recommended Decision for consideration.

On May 18, 2016, a quorum of the Board met to receive and act upon the Recommended Decision of the Agency Subordinate. Ms. Jefferson 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. Suzanne M. Jefferson, R.N. was issued License No. 0001-223043 to practice professional nursing in Virginia on February 5, 2010. The license expired on December 31, 2015. Her primary state of residence is Virginia.

2. By letter dated January 21, 2016, the Board of Nursing sent a Notice of Informal Conference ("Notice") to Ms. Jefferson notifying her that an informal conference would be held on February 24, 2016. The Notice was sent by certified and first class mail to 10522 Oakforest Court, Chesterfield, Virginia 23832, the address of record then on file with the Board of Nursing. The Notice was also sent to 26296 Signboard Road, Ruther Glen, Virginia 22546, a secondary address.

3. On June 24, 2015, Ms. Jefferson was admitted to Poplar Springs Hospital for treatment of major depression, anxiety, opiate use, and opiate withdrawal. She acknowledged using alcohol, marijuana, and heroin just prior to her admission. She was readmitted on October 8, 2015, for the same issues. Her treating psychiatrist indicated that as of November 2015, he could not determine whether Ms. Jefferson was safe to practice.

4. At the informal conference, Ms. Jefferson stated that between admissions at Poplar Springs, she attended inpatient substance abuse rehabilitation in Kentucky for one month. She stated that she now attends Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous meetings a couple of times a week, that she attends a 1.5-hour group for opiate users weekly, that she attends a 1.5-hour parenting class for recovering opiate users weekly, and that she has an outpatient psychiatrist through the Rappahannock Area Community Services Board. She stated that her sobriety date was July 7, 2015.

5. Ms. Jefferson was charged with felony possession of heroin and misdemeanor possession of marijuana in May 2015. Her trial date in the Chesterfield County, Virginia Circuit Court is scheduled for March 28, 2016. She stated at the informal conference that in relation to her possession charges, she was also convicted of two counts of misdemeanor contributing to the delinquency of a minor in the Chesterfield County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court. She was incarcerated from August 20 to September 11, 2015.

6. Ms. Jefferson was last employed as a nurse at the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System (“VCUHS”) from April 13 to June 12, 2014. Her employment was terminated during probation due to “non-adherence to the service behaviors of VCUHS,” inability to complete routine assignments in a timely and complete manner, poor basic medical/surgical skills, and patient neglect.

7. Upon first being licensed to practice professional nursing in 2010, Ms. Jefferson was employed at Chippenham-Johnson Willis Hospital. Her employment was terminated in the summer of

2012 for poor customer service. She then worked at HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital, where her employment was terminated in January 2014 for unsafe medication practices. She also briefly worked at Lexington Court assisted living facility. Ms. Jefferson stated that she started using drugs in the middle of 2013 to the point that it affected her practice.

8. On her application for employment with VCUHS dated January 31, 2014, Ms. Jefferson falsely stated that she left HealthSouth because of a “chronically low hospital census,” when, in fact, she had been dismissed from HealthSouth on January 9, 2014 due to unsafe medication administration practices.

9. At the informal conference, Ms. Jefferson stated that she was interested in entering the Health Practitioners’ Monitoring Program but that she was financially unable to comply with the program’s requirements. She stated orally and in writing that she was willing to surrender for indefinite suspension her license to practice professional nursing.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Finding of Fact No. 3 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(6) of the Code.
2. Finding of Fact No. 8 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(2) of the Code and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(e) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing.

ORDER

WHEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED as follows:

1. The Board ACCEPTS the VOLUNTARY SURRENDER FOR INDEFINITE SUSPENSION of Suzanne M. Jefferson’s right to renew License No. 0001-223043 to practice professional nursing in Virginia.
2. The license will be recorded as suspended and no longer current.
3. At such time as Ms. Jefferson 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 nursing. Ms. Jefferson 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.

Pursuant to Section 54.1-2400(10) of the Code, Ms. Jefferson may, not later than 5:00 p.m., on June 29, 2016, 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.

FOR THE BOARD:

for *Gloria Mitchell-Sively*
Jay P. Douglas, M.S.M., R.N., C.S.A.C., F.R.E.
Executive Director
Virginia Board of Nursing

ENTERED: *May 27, 2016*

This Order shall become final on June 29, 2016, unless a request for a formal administrative hearing is received as described above.

Certified True Copy

By *[Signature]*
Virginia Board of Nursing