

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE: KARIN FINK HOWLAND, R.N. REINSTATEMENT APPLICANT
License Number: 0001-102225
Suspension Date: April 29, 2015
Case Number: 174654

**NOTICE OF FORMAL ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING
AND STATEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS**

You are hereby notified that a Formal Hearing has been scheduled before the Board of Nursing ("Board") regarding your application for reinstatement of your license to practice professional nursing in the Commonwealth of Virginia following its mandatory suspension by the Department of Health Professions.

TYPE OF PROCEEDING:	This is a formal administrative hearing before a panel of the Board.
DATE AND TIME:	September 20, 2017 11:00 A.M.
PLACE:	Virginia Department of Health Professions Perimeter Center - 9960 Mayland Drive 2 nd Floor - Virginia Conference Center Henrico, Virginia 23233

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND JURISDICTION:

1. This formal hearing is being held pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 2.2-4020, 2.2-4024(F), and 54.1-2400(11). This proceeding will be convened as a public meeting pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3700.

2. The burden rests on you, as the applicant, to demonstrate that you are prepared to resume the safe and competent practice of professional nursing.

3. In considering your application, the Board will consider evidence that grounds exist to deny your application for reinstatement of your license to practice professional nursing, as more fully set out in the enclosed Statement of Allegations.

4. At the conclusion of the proceeding, the Board is authorized to take any of the following actions:

- Approve your application and issue an unrestricted license to practice professional nursing;
- Approve your application and issue a reprimand, a monetary penalty, and/or a restricted license subject to terms and conditions;
- Deny your application and continue your license on suspension or revoke your license;

ABSENCE OF APPLICANT AND APPLICANT'S COUNSEL:

If you fail to appear at the formal hearing, the Board may proceed to hear this matter in your absence and may take any of the actions outlined above.

APPLICANT'S LEGAL RIGHTS:

You have the right to the information on which the Board will rely in making its decision, to be represented by counsel at this proceeding, to subpoena witnesses and/or documents, and to present relevant evidence on your behalf.

COMMONWEALTH'S EXHIBITS:

Enclosed is a copy of the documents that will be distributed to the members of the Board and will be considered by the Board when discussing any allegations with you and when deliberating on your case. **These documents are enclosed only with the notice sent by certified mail, which you may be required to claim at the post office. Please bring these documents with you to the formal hearing.**

FILING DEADLINES:

1. Deadline for filing exhibits: **September 6, 2017**. Submit 15 copies of all documents you want the Board to consider to Darlene Graham, Board of Nursing, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, Virginia 23233. Exhibits may not be sent by facsimile or e-mail. Please note that any documentation or evidence that you previously submitted for an informal conference that is not already part of the Commonwealth's evidence must be resubmitted as an exhibit if you want the Board to consider it at the hearing.

The Commonwealth must file any objections to your submissions in writing, addressed to Darlene Graham at the Board office, no later than **September 11, 2017**. If no objections have been received by **September 11, 2017**, the evidence will be distributed to the Board members for their review, and will be considered by the Board as evidence when it deliberates upon your case. If the Commonwealth raises objections, you have until **September 15, 2017**, to file your response to the objections, in writing and addressed to Darlene Graham at the Board office. The Chair of the proceeding will rule on the motion.

2. Deadline for filing motions: **September 6, 2017**, addressed to Darlene Graham at the above address.

3. Deadline for filing any objections to the Commonwealth's exhibits, in writing, to Darlene Graham at the above address: **September 6, 2017**. If you do not file objections by this date, the exhibits will be distributed to the Board members for their review prior to your hearing, and will be considered by the Board as evidence when it deliberates on your case. If you do file objections, the Commonwealth has until **September 11, 2017** to file a response to the objections, in writing, and addressed to Darlene Graham at the Board office. The Chair of the proceeding will rule on the motion.

NOTE: failure to object to the distribution of the Commonwealth's exhibits prior to the proceeding will not affect your right to contest any information contained in those exhibits at the proceeding.

REQUEST FOR A CONTINUANCE:

Absent exigent circumstances, such as personal or family illness, a request for a continuance after **September 6, 2017** will not be considered. If you obtain counsel, you should do so as soon as possible, as a motion for a continuance due to the unavailability of counsel will not be considered unless received by **September 6, 2017**.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 54.1-2409(D), reinstatement of your license requires the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members of the Board in attendance at the hearing.

STATEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS

The Board alleges that grounds exist to refuse to reinstate the license of Karin Fink Howland, R.N. Reinstatement Applicant, to practice professional nursing in that:

1. Ms. Howland violated Virginia Code § 54.1-3007(7) in that:

a. On or about April 20, 2015, her license to practice professional nursing in the District of Columbia was suspended by the District of Columbia Board of Nursing (“D.C. Board”) after she failed to comply with a December 5, 2014, D.C. Board Order requiring her to be evaluated within 90 days by the Committee on Impaired Nurses and pay a \$500.00 fine.

b. On or about October 13, 2016, her license to practice professional nursing in the state of Maryland was summarily suspended by the Maryland Board of Nursing (“Maryland Board”). On or about October 27, 2016, the Maryland Board continued Ms. Howland’s license on summary suspension.

2. Ms. Howland violated Virginia Code § 54.1-3007(6) in that she is unsafe to practice professional nursing due to substance abuse and/or mental and/or physical illness, as evidenced by the following:

a. By her own admission, she has a history of prescription drug abuse, and on her June 2016 application for reinstatement of her Virginia license she stated that she has a mental, physical or chemical dependency condition that could interfere with her current ability to practice nursing.

b. Ms. Howland reports that she has been diagnosed with depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and adult attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, conditions for which she receives ongoing medication management.

3. Ms. Howland violated Virginia Code § 54.1-3007(2), (5), and (8) and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(f) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing (currently found at 18 VAC 90-19-230(A)(2)(f) of the Board of Nursing Regulations, effective February 24, 2017) (“Regulations”) in that during the course of her employment with Americare In Home Nursing, Springfield, Virginia:

a. On or about November 10, 2015, the daughter of a patient complained that Ms. Howland “was not ready to be working with a patient and had obviously been off for some time” since she did not know how to operate the blood pressure cuff, had problems collecting urine and performing venipuncture, did not have the necessary supplies, and threw a used butterfly needle into the regular trash.

b. On or about February 26, 2016, Ms. Howland failed to reposition a client, change the client, or evaluate his wounds as ordered or implement the standard of care for assessment, treatment, and prevention of further skin breakdown.

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 54.1-2400.2(K), the Board considered whether to disclose or not disclose Ms. Howland’s health records or health services.



Jay Douglas, M.S.M, R.N., C.S.A.C., F.R.E.

Executive Director

Virginia Board of Nursing

August 25, 2017
Date