

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE:

**Karin F. Howland, R.N.
License No.: 0001-102225**

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 November 8, 2012, in Henrico County, Virginia. Karin F. Howland, 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 January 30, 2013, a quorum of the Board met to receive and act upon the Recommended Decision of the Agency Subordinate. Ms. Howland 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. Karin F. Howland, R.N., was issued License No. 0001-102225 to practice professional nursing in Virginia on August 15, 1986. The license is scheduled to expire on February 28, 2013. Her primary state of residence is Virginia.
2. By letter dated October 15, 2012, the Board of Nursing sent a Notice of Informal Conference ("Notice") to Ms. Howland notifying her that an informal conference would be held on November 8, 2012. The Notice was sent by certified and first class mail to 43443 Wild Dunes Square, Leesburg, Virginia 20176, the address of record on file with the Board of Nursing.
3. On three different occasions between November 2003, and February 2, 2004, Ms.

Howland obtained Percocet (oxycodone/APAP, Schedule II) by presenting a forged prescription.

4. On October 5, 2004, in the Circuit Court of Loudoun County, Virginia, Ms. Howland pled guilty to prescription fraud. Sentencing was deferred and Ms. Howland was placed on supervised probation for one year. On October 7, 2005, Ms. Howland was convicted of misdemeanor prescription fraud.

5. On April 29, 2004, Ms. Howland entered into a contract with the Health Practitioners' Monitoring Program ("HPMP") [formerly the Health Practitioners' Intervention Program], in which she acknowledged that her substance use disorder may impact her ability to practice safely. On August 20, 2004, Ms. Howland received a stay of disciplinary action for forging prescriptions as referenced above. On December 16, 2005, the stay was vacated due to Ms. Howland's relapse and use of Percocet, Ativan (lorazepam, Schedule IV), Ecstasy, and alcohol. On April 19, 2008, Ms. Howland resigned from the HPMP because she opened her own business and was no longer working in healthcare.

6. The stay of discipline that was vacated in 2004 and the dismissal from the HPMP in 2008 had not been adjudicated, but came to the Board's attention in 2012.

7. Ms. Howland reported a sobriety date of October, 2005. She continues to attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings three times a week and has a sponsor.

8. From October 11, 2011, to March 16, 2012, Ms. Howland was an independent contractor for several home health agencies. During interviews with the investigator from the Department of Health Professions, each agency provided positive reports regarding Ms. Howland and stated that they did not receive any patient complaints regarding her practice. On March 17, 2012, Ms. Howland became an employee of Caregivers Home Health Services, Falls Church, Virginia. The employer is aware of her substance abuse history, is very supportive of her recovery, and reported that she is a model employee.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Finding of Fact No. 3 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(2), (5), and (6) of the Code and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(c) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing.
2. Finding of Fact No. 4 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(4) of the Code.
3. Finding of Fact No. 5 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(6) of the Code.

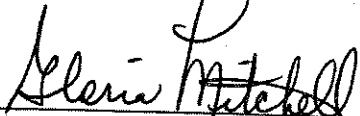
ORDER

WHEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED as follows:

1. Karin F. Howland, R.N., is hereby REPRIMANDED.
2. Ms. Howland shall maintain a course of conduct in her capacity as a professional nurse commensurate with the requirements of § 54.1-3000 *et seq.* of the Code and the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing.

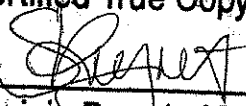
Pursuant to Section 54.1-2400(10) of the Code, Ms. Howland may, not later than 5:00 p.m., on March 20, 2013, notify Jay P. Douglas, R.N., M.S.M., C.S.A.C., Executive Director, Board of Nursing, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, Virginia 23233, in writing that she desires a formal administrative 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 Jay P. Douglas, R.N., M.S.M., C.S.A.C.
Executive Director
Virginia Board of Nursing

ENTERED: February 15, 2013

This Order shall become final on March 20, 2013 unless a request for a formal administrative hearing is received as described above.

Certified True Copy
By 
Virginia Board of Nursing