



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Sandra Whitley Ryals  
Director

*Department of Health Professions*  
6603 West Broad Street, 5th Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23230-1712

[www.dhp.virginia.gov](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov)  
TEL (804) 662 9900  
FAX (804) 662 9943  
TDD (804) 662 7197

Virginia Board of Nursing  
Jay P. Douglas, RN, MSM, CSAC  
Executive Director

Board of Nursing (804) 662-9909  
Nurse Aide Registry (804) 662-7310  
FAX (804) 662-9512

May 23, 2007

Ruth French R.N.  
139 Shoher Lane  
Monroe, VA 24574

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**71603901984990869070**

Dear Ms. French:

Enclosed is a certified true copy of the Order which was accepted by a quorum of the Virginia Board of Nursing. The Order Indefinitely Suspends your license to practice as a Registered Nurse in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Please be advised that since you failed to appear at the Informal Conference this Order is final.

Please, return both the large and small sections of your license to the Board office upon receipt of this letter.

If you have any questions, you may contact this office at, (804) 662-9951.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gloria D. Mitchell".

Gloria D. Mitchell, R.N., M.S.N., M.B.A.  
Deputy Executive Director, Discipline

GDM/bl  
Enclosure

cc: Sandra Whitley Ryals, Director, Department of Health Professions  
Anne G. Joseph, Deputy Director of Administrative Proceedings  
James Banning, Director, Administrator Proceeding Division  
James A. Wall Investigator (104773)

**VIRGINIA:**

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING**

**IN RE: RUTH FRENCH, R.N.**  
**License No.: 0001-186398**

**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 March 6, 2007, in Henrico County, Virginia. Ms. French was not present nor was she represented by legal counsel. E. Jane Elliott, R.N., Ph.D., serving as Agency Subordinate for the Board, submitted a Recommended Decision for consideration.

On May 15, 2007, the Board met to receive and act upon the Recommended Decision of the Agency Subordinate. Ms. French 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. Ruth French, R.N., was issued license number 0001-186398 to practice professional nursing in the Commonwealth of Virginia on July 23, 2003. The license is current.
2. By letter dated February 1, 2007, the Board of Nursing sent a Notice of Informal Conference ("Notice") to Ms. French notifying her that an informal conference would be held on March 6, 2007. The Notice was sent by certified and first class mail to 139 Shober Lane, Monroe, Virginia 24574, the address on file with the Board of Nursing. Ms. French's certified mail receipt was returned to the Board signed by Ms. French.

3. Ms. French is unsafe to practice due to mental health diagnoses which have precipitated three recent hospitalizations, one in 2005 and two in 2006.

4. While employed at Virginia Central Training Center, Madison Heights, Virginia, Ms. French was counseled for two medication errors:

- a. On January 31, 2005, she administered medications to the wrong patient.
- b. On February 10, 2005, she failed to administer medications to a patient.

5. Mr. Harold French, Ms. French's husband, appeared at the informal conference and stated that his wife had been in the emergency room on March 5, 2007, until 12:00 midnight, and he felt she could not make the trip to Richmond for the informal conference. Mr. French stated that Ms. French had back pain and became confused on March 5 as a result of the anxiety because of the pending informal conference. According to Mr. French, his wife's illness has been classified psychosomatic.

6. Ms. French was treated as an outpatient at the Virginia Baptist Hospital, Lynchburg, Virginia for Electric Shock Therapy ("ECT"), approximately seven times. Ms. French stated to the investigator for the Department that she had lost some memory subsequent to having ECT therapy.

7. Ms. French stated to the investigator for the Department that two of her hospitalizations were a result of overdosing on prescribed medication. Although she had suicidal ideations, the overdosing was an attempt to relieve pain, not an attempt to kill herself.

8. Ms. French is currently under the care of a psychiatrist, who, in a letter of August 22, 2005, stated: "[Ms. French] is not ready at this point to function as a Registered Nurse...and she and I both hope that one day, maybe a year or two down the road, she will be adequately healthy to function once again as a registered nurse."

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Board concludes that:

1. Finding of Fact #8 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(6) of the Code.
2. Finding of Fact #4 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(5) of the Code.

### ORDER

WHEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED that the license of Ruth French, R.N., be, and hereby is, INDEFINITELY SUSPENDED for not less than two (2) years, and until such time as she can demonstrate to the Board that she is capable of resuming the safe and competent practice of nursing.

The license will be recorded as suspended and no longer current.

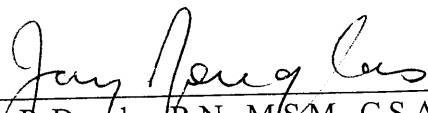
At such time as Ms. French shall petition the Board for reinstatement of her license, an administrative proceeding will be convened to determine whether she is capable of resuming the safe and competent practice of nursing. Ms. French shall be responsible for any fees that may be required for the reinstatement and renewal of the license prior to issuance of the license to resume practice.

This Order shall be applicable to Ms. French's multistate licensure privileges, if any, to practice professional nursing in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Since Ms. French failed to appear at the informal conference, this Order shall be considered final. Ms. French 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. French 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, R.N., M.S.M., C.S.A.C., Executive Director, Board of Nursing, at 6603 West Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23230. In the event that this decision is served by mail, three (3) days are added to that period.

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.

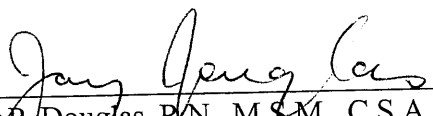
FOR THE BOARD

  
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Jay P. Douglas, R.N., M.S.M., C.S.A.C.  
Executive Director  
Board of Nursing

Entered: May 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2007

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that a true copy of the foregoing Order was mailed this day to Ruth French, at 139 Shober Lane, Monroe, Virginia 24574, her current address.

  
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Jay P. Douglas, R.N., M.S.M., C.S.A.C.  
Executive Director  
Board of Nursing

May 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2007  
DATE