



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

David E. Brown, D.C.  
Director

## Department of Health Professions

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## NOTICE OF INFORMAL CONFERENCE BEFORE AN AGENCY SUBORDINATE

April 14, 2014

Laurie Ann Estness, R.N.  
792 Darden Drive  
Newport News, Virginia 23602

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**71969008911191940108**

**RE: VA License No.: 0002-033071**  
**Expiration Date: June 30, 2015**

Dear Ms. Estness:

This letter is official notification that an informal conference of the Virginia Board of Nursing ("Board") will be held on **May 28, 2014, at 9:00 a.m.**, at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 201, Henrico, Virginia. In accordance with §§ 2.2-4019, 2.2-4021, and 54.1-2400(10) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended ("Code"), this informal conference will be held before an agency subordinate of the Board of Nursing. This informal conference will be convened as a public meeting pursuant to § 2.2-3700 *et seq.* of the Code. The agency subordinate will inquire into allegations that you may have violated certain laws governing nursing practice in Virginia.

Specifically, you may have violated § 54.1-3007(6) of the Code in that you may be unable to safely practice nursing due to substance abuse and/or mental illness, as evidence by the following:

1. From on or about November 15, 2011, until November 18, 2011, you received treatment at the Virginia Beach Psychiatric Center, Virginia Beach, Virginia. You were admitted under a temporary detention order because of depression with suicide ideation. You were subsequently diagnosed with alcohol dependence, continuous, severe, and major depression.

2. From or about April 29, 2013, until May 29, 2013, you received inpatient alcohol treatment at the Farley Center at Williamsburg Place ("Farley Center"), Williamsburg, Virginia. While there you consumed alcohol while out on a weekend pass.

3. On or about May 29, 2013, you signed a Participation Contract with the Health Practitioners Monitoring Program ("HPMP"). On or about July 29, 2013, you were urgently dismissed from the HPMP for non-compliance with your contract. You failed to call the test line after your account was activated, admitted drinking wine the evening before your orientation with the HPMP, and failed to enter residential treatment as recommended.

4. On or about August 23, 2013, you were re-admitted to the Farley Center after remaining sober for approximately one month.

In its deliberations, the agency subordinate may use the Sanction Reference Points System, as contained in the Sanction Reference Manual. The manual, which is a guidance document of the Board, may be accessed at <http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing>. Please click on *Guidance Documents*, then select #90-7. You may also request a paper copy from the Board office by calling (804) 367-4515.

After consideration of all information, the agency subordinate may:

- If the agency subordinate finds that there is insufficient evidence to warrant further action or that the charges are without foundation, notify you by mail that your record has been cleared of any charge which might affect your right to practice nursing in the Commonwealth; or
- Recommend findings of fact, conclusions of law and a sanction, to include a reprimand, placing you on probation with terms, suspension or revocation of your license, or imposing a monetary penalty pursuant to § 54.1-2401 of the Code.

Further, the agency subordinate may refer this matter for a formal administrative proceeding pursuant to § 2.2-4020 of the Code.

### **Board's Review of Agency Subordinate's Recommended Decision**

If you **appear in person or by counsel at the informal conference**, the recommendation of the agency subordinate will be presented to a quorum of the Board. The Board may accept or modify the recommendation, or reject the recommendation and move the case to formal hearing. If you do not agree with the decision of the Board, you have the right to a formal administrative hearing before the Board.

If you **fail to appear in person or by counsel at the informal conference**, the recommendation of the agency subordinate will be presented to a quorum of the Board. The Board may accept or modify the recommendation, or reject the recommendation. The Board's decision regarding the agency subordinate's recommendation is a final order that can only be appealed to circuit court as provided by Rule 2A:2 of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

You have the right to information that will be relied upon by the agency subordinate in making a decision. Therefore, I enclose a copy of the documents that will be distributed to the agency subordinate, and

will be considered when discussing the allegations with you and when deliberating upon your case. **These documents are enclosed only with the original notice sent by certified mail, which you may be required to claim at the post office. Please bring these documents with you to the informal conference.**

To facilitate this proceeding, you should submit five copies of any documents you wish the agency subordinate to consider to the Board of Nursing, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Richmond, VA 23233, by May 21, 2014. Your documents may not be submitted by facsimile or email.

You may be represented by an attorney at the informal conference. If you obtain counsel, you should do so as soon as possible, because absent good cause to support a request for a continuance, the informal conference will be held on **May 28, 2014**. A request to continue this proceeding must state **in detail** the reason for the request and must establish good cause. Such request must be made, in writing, to me at the address listed on this letter and must be received by 12 noon on May 21, 2014. Only one such motion will be considered. Absent critical circumstances, such as personal or family illness, a request for a continuance after May 21, 2014, will not be considered.

Relevant sections of the Administrative Process Act, which govern proceedings of this nature, as well as laws relating to the practice of nursing and other healing arts in Virginia cited in this notice can be found on the Internet at <http://leg1.state.va.us>. To access this information, please click on the *Code of Virginia* for statutes and *Virginia Administrative Code* for regulations.

Please advise the Board, in writing, of your intention to be present. If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact this office, at (804) 367-4543.

Sincerely,



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

Enclosures

cc: Anne G. Joseph, Deputy Director, Administrative Proceedings Division  
Cynthia E. Gaines, Adjudication Specialist  
J. W. Turner, Senior Investigator (Case No. 152859)  
Agency Subordinate  
Peggy Wood, Monitoring Program Manager