

**VIRGINIA:**

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING**

**IN RE: SONJA STEELE, R.M.A.  
Registration No.: 0031-005759**

**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 August 5, 2014 in Henrico County, Virginia. Ms. Steele was present and was not represented by legal counsel. Judith Piersall, R.N., B.S.N., serving as Agency Subordinate for the Board, submitted a Recommended Decision for consideration.

On September 17, 2014, a quorum of the Board met to receive and act upon the Recommended Decision of the Agency Subordinate. Ms. Steele 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. Sonja Steele, R.M.A., was issued Registration No. 0031-005759 to practice as a medication aide on March 14, 2012. She also holds a certificate to practice as a nurse aide in Virginia. Her certificate and registration are both scheduled to expire on July 31, 2015.
2. By letter dated June 19, 2014, the Board of Nursing sent a Notice of Informal Conference ("Notice"), to Ms. Steele notifying her that an informal conference would be held on August 5, 2014. The Notice was sent by certified and first class mail to 4104 Bolling Road, Richmond, Virginia, 23223, the address of record on file with the Board of Nursing.
3. During the course of her employment with Parkside Assisted Living at Beth Sholom,

Richmond, Virginia, on June 10, 2013 and October 28, 2013, Ms. Steele presented falsified doctor's notes to her employer to excuse her absences from work. By her own admission, Ms. Steele had presented the original doctor's note to excuse an absence on October 11, 2012. Ms. Steele then presented copies of the original note with altered dates on June 10, 2013 and October 28, 2013. At the informal conference, Ms. Steele stated she did not think about what she was doing, and she altered the note and turned it in to her employer because she was "trying to keep her job". She has apologized over the telephone as well as in person to the doctor who wrote the work excuse.

4. Ms. Steele's employment with Parkside was terminated on November 7, 2013.

5. On her application for employment with Family Care Home Health, Inc. Richmond, Virginia, dated February 22, 2011, Ms. Steele failed to disclose her termination from Our Lady of Hope Health Center, Richmond, Virginia. Ms. Steele's employment with Our Lady of Hope had been terminated due to employee conduct and problems concerning inappropriate and unprofessional behavior.

6. On her application for employment with Parkside Assisted Living at Beth Shalom, dated June 1, 2011, Ms. Steele failed to disclose her termination from Our Lady of Hope Health Center.

7. Ms. Steele is currently employed full-time at Chestnut Grove and maintains part-time employment with Family Care, Inc.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Findings of Fact Nos. 3, 5, and 6, constitute a violation of § 54.1-3007(2) and (5) of the Code and 18 VAC 90-60-120(2)(e) of the Regulations Governing Medication Aides.

ORDER

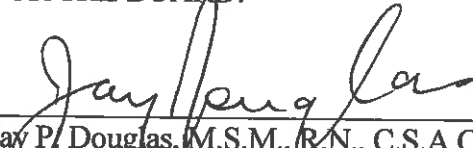
WHEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED as follows:

1. Sonja Steele, R.M.A., is hereby REPRIMANDED.
2. Ms. Steele shall maintain a course of conduct in her capacity as a medication aide commensurate with the requirements of § 54.1-3000 *et seq.* of the Code and the Board of Nursing Regulations.

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, Sonja Steele, R.M.A. may, not later than 5:00 p.m., on **November 11, 2014**, 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 he/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:

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

ENTERED: October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014

This Order shall become final on November 11, 2014; unless a request for a formal administrative hearing is received as described above.

Certified True Copy

By   
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Virginia Board Of Nursing