

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE: PAULA HIGH, R.N., Reinstatement Applicant
License No.: 0001-188504

NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to §§ 2.2-4020, 2.2-4024(F), and 54.1-2400(11) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended (“Code”), Paula High, R.N., who prior to its suspension by the Department of Health Professions on June 25, 2013, held License No. 0001-188504 to practice professional nursing in Virginia, is hereby given notice that a formal administrative hearing will be held in the presence of a panel of the Board of Nursing. The hearing will be held on July 14, 2014, at 1:00 p.m., at the offices of the Department of Health Professions, Board of Nursing, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 201, Henrico, Virginia 23233, at which time Ms. High will be afforded the opportunity to be heard in person or by counsel.

At the hearing, Ms. High has the following rights, among others: the right to representation by counsel; the right to have witnesses subpoenaed and to present witnesses on her behalf; the right to present documentary evidence; and the right to cross-examine adverse witnesses. If Ms. High desires any witnesses to appear on her behalf, she must notify the Director of Administrative Proceedings, Department of Health Professions, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, Virginia 23233, in accordance with the Instructions for Requesting Subpoenas.

The purpose of the hearing is to inquire into evidence that Ms. High may have violated certain laws and regulations governing professional nursing practice in Virginia as more fully set out in the Statement of Particulars below. The Board will also receive and act upon Ms. High’s application for reinstatement of her license to practice professional nursing in Virginia, which was mandatorily suspended by Order of the Department of Health Professions entered June 25, 2013.

The burden rests upon Ms. High, as the petitioner, to demonstrate that she is capable of resuming the safe and competent practice of professional nursing in Virginia.

Pursuant to § 54.1-2409 of the Code, reinstatement of Ms. High's license requires the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members of the Board in attendance at the hearing.

STATEMENT OF PARTICULARS

The Board alleges that:


1. Paula High, R.N. may have violated §54.1-3007(2), (4), (5) and (6) of the Code and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(c) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing in that on or about May 24, 2013, in the United States District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia, Ms. High was convicted of one felony count of acquiring and obtaining a controlled substance by misrepresentation, fraud, forgery, deception, and subterfuge. The conviction arose from an investigation during the course of her employment with the VA Hospital in Martinsburg, West Virginia. By her own admission, between 2006 and 2009, Ms. High diverted Dilaudid and Vicodin or Percocet for her personal use. This conviction formed the basis of the mandatory suspension of Ms. High's license by the Virginia Department of Health Professions.

2. Ms. High may have violated §54.1-3007(5) of the Code in that during the course of her employment with Sentara Healthcare Virginia Beach General Hospital, Virginia Beach, Virginia, an audit of her medication withdrawals for April, May, July, and August 2012 revealed that she was above the mean with regard to narcotic overrides, narcotic pulls without physician orders, and narcotic wastes. The audit also indicated that Ms. High failed to document narcotics given to patients. Most of the violations involved Dilaudid, Schedule II. By her own admission, Ms. High indicated that she made errors when charting and did not enter all the necessary documentation.

3. Ms. High may have violated §54.1-3007(6) of the Code in that during the month of June,

2012, Ms. High voluntarily entered into inpatient treatment at the Virginia Beach Psychiatric Center, Virginia Beach, Virginia to detox from the effects of alcohol. Upon her discharge, Ms. High was diagnosed with alcohol and opioid dependency and major depression. Ms. High re-entered inpatient treatment with Virginia Beach Psychiatric on or about March 25, 2013. Upon her release, Ms. High went to Centra Health, Virginia Baptist Hospital, Pathways, Lynchburg, Virginia and received inpatient treatment from April 1, 2013 to April 24, 2013. Ms. High originally entered into a Participation Contract with the Health Practitioners' Monitoring Program ("HPMP") on December 5, 2012. Ms. High was dismissed from HPMP on July 19, 2013 for non-compliance due to three missed calls, two missed screens, and four positive screens. Ms. High signed a new participation contract with HPMP on June 5, 2014. Ms. High denied going to work intoxicated; however she admitted frequently going to work hung-over.

FOR THE BOARD



Jay P. Douglas, MSM, RN, CSAC, FRE
Executive Director for the
Board of Nursing

ENTERED: 