



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Robert A. Nebiker  
Director

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Virginia Board of Nursing  
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**August 12, 2004**

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Paula Kaye Thomas, L.P.N.  
15064 Copper Turtle Place  
Woodbridge, Virginia 22193

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**71603901984831583073**

Dear Ms. Thomas:

This is official notification that an Informal Conference will be held, pursuant to §§ 2.2-4019, §2.2-4021, and §54.1-2400(7)(10) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended (the "Code"), on **August 30, 2004, at 10:30 a.m.**, in the offices of the Department of Health Professions, 6603 West Broad Street, Fifth Floor, Richmond, Virginia. You may be represented by an attorney at the Informal Conference.

The Special Conference Committee, which is comprised of two or three members of the Virginia Board of Nursing, will inquire into allegations that you may have violated certain terms and conditions of a Board Order entered on May 11, 2001 (the "Order"), and will re-examine allegations made in a notice of informal conference dated April 6, 2001, that you may have violated certain laws and regulations governing the practice of practical nursing in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Specifically:

1. In the Order, the Board decided to take no action against your license at that time, contingent on your compliance with all the terms and requirements of the Health Practitioners' Intervention Program (the "HPIP"). You may have violated Term No. 1 of the Order, in that:
  - a. You were dismissed from the HPIP on February 15, 2002 for multiple reasons, including: (i) your failure to sign a Recovery Monitoring Contract; (ii) your failure to sign and return authorization to release information forms; (iii) your failure to provide results of a substance abuse and mental health evaluation; (iv) your failure to submit any self-reports; and (v) your failure to respond to correspondence requesting that all delinquent documentation be submitted by December 3, 2001. You re-entered the HPIP in October 2002.
  - b. You were again dismissed from the HPIP on December 12, 2003 due to your failure to submit required urine toxicology screens on January 13, 2003, February 14, 2003, June 25, 2003, June 27, 2003, July 11, 2003, October 27, 2003, and November 7, 2003.
2. You may have violated § 54.1-3007(6) of the Code, in that:

PAULA KAYE THOMAS, L.P.N.

a. You acknowledged impairment due to your bipolar disorder in a Recovery Monitoring Contract that you executed with the HPIP on March 31, 2003. Further, you acknowledged impairment resulting from mental illness in a revised Recovery Monitoring Contract that you signed with the HPIP on October 6, 2003.

b. A psychiatric evaluation performed by a consulting psychiatrist on September 23, 2002 states that, due to your bipolar condition; you have periods of hyperactivity and episodes of poor judgment. This evaluation further notes that “[t]hese episodes are difficult to predict and make it difficult to justify a responsible medical position for [you].”

c. Your treating psychiatrist reported that you periodically become hypomanic and require monitoring.

3. You may have violated § 54.1-3007(4) of the Code, in that, in March 2002, you were arrested for shoplifting, a felony. Subsequently, on May 30, 2002, you were convicted of petit larceny, a misdemeanor, in Stafford County General District Court.

4. You may have violated § 54.1-3007(2), (5) and (6) of the Code, and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(c) and (e) of the Regulations of the Board, in that:

a. During the course of your employment with Westminster at Lake Ridge, Lake Ridge, Virginia, by your own admission, on or about July 10, 2000, you forged two (2) prescriptions for phentermine hydrochloride (Schedule IV) using an old prescription pad of Nalin Patel, M.D., the facility medical director, and the names of Residents A and B as patients. As a result, your employment was suspended indefinitely and subsequently terminated upon your resignation.

b. By your own admission, at the time of the above incident, you had discontinued self-administration of the medications required by your mental health diagnosis of bipolar disorder and did not realize the need for constant medication to maintain good judgment.

c. On or about July 12, 2000, you were arrested and charged with a felony, to wit: “make or utter a false or forged prescription or written order.” On or about September 28, 2000, in the Circuit Court of Prince William County, Virginia, you pled guilty to a misdemeanor charge of possession of paraphernalia. You were sentenced to six (6) months in jail, with six (6) months suspended, placed on probation for six (6) months, and required to undergo a substance abuse screening and assessment and treatment if deemed necessary.

d. You falsified your application for employment with Woodbridge Nursing Center, Woodbridge, Virginia, dated July 25, 2000. Specifically:

i. You checked “no” to the question, “Do you have any pending charges?” despite your July 12, 2000, arrest on felony charges; and

ii. You indicated you had left employment at Westminster Lake Ridge because you were “unable to decrease hours to PRN status” when in fact your employment had been terminated upon your admission of forgery.

PAULA KAYE THOMAS, L.P.N.

e. You falsified your application for employment with Woodbridge Nursing Center, Woodbridge, Virginia, dated May 12, 2001. Specifically:

- i. You failed to list your employment with Westminster Lake Ridge on the application;
- ii. You checked "no" to the question, "Have you ever been convicted of a crime or served a jail sentence?" despite your September 2000 misdemeanor conviction; and
- iii. You checked "no" to the question "Have you ever been discharged from a job?" despite your termination by Westminster Lake Ridge.

After the Informal Conference, the Committee is authorized to take the following actions:

1. If the Committee finds that there is insufficient evidence to warrant further action or that the charges are without foundation, the Committee shall notify you by mail that your record has been cleared of any charge which might affect your right to practice nursing in the Commonwealth;
2. The Committee may place your license on probation with such terms as it may deem appropriate;
3. The Committee may reprimand you;
4. The Committee may modify a previous Order;
5. The Committee may impose a monetary penalty pursuant to § 54.1-2401 of the Code; or
6. The Committee may refer the case to the Board of Nursing or a panel thereof for a formal hearing.

If the Conference Committee is of the opinion that a suspension or revocation of your license may be justified, the Committee may offer you a consent order in lieu of a formal hearing.

**If you fail to appear at the Informal Conference, the Conference Committee will proceed to hear the case in your absence, and may take any of the actions outlined above.**

**The Board hereby offers to enter into the enclosed Consent Order with you in lieu of an informal conference in this matter. Please review this document, and should you consent to its terms, sign it in the presence of a notary public. In order for this Consent Order to become effective, you must return the entire document bearing your witnessed signature to the Board office on or before August 24, 2004. Upon its receipt in the Board office, the Consent Order will be entered and the informal conference will be cancelled. You will receive a certified copy of the Consent Order, bearing the date of entry, shortly thereafter. Should the Board not receive this signed Consent Order from you by 5:00 p.m. on August 24, 2004, the Board will proceed with the informal conference as scheduled.**

**At least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled date of the conference, please inform this office of your telephone number and whether you intend to appear at the conference. This can be done by calling our offices, at (804) 662-9950 or by sending us a letter at the address listed above.**

**You have the right to information, which will be relied upon by the Board in making a decision. Therefore, I have enclosed a copy of the documents, which will be distributed to the members of the**

PAULA KAYE THOMAS, L.P.N.

Committee and will be considered by the Committee 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, and must be claimed at the post office. Please bring these documents with you.

If you have any additional documents to be presented to the Conference Committee, please bring five (5) copies of each document with you.

Also, enclosed are copies of the relevant sections of the Administrative Process Act, which govern proceedings of this nature, as well as laws and regulations relating to the practice of nursing in Virginia that are cited in this notice.

Sincerely,



Susan Bell Rosen, R.N., F.N.P., J.D.  
Deputy Executive Director, Discipline

SBR/jbm/jjr  
Enclosures

cc: Robert A. Nebiker, Director, Department of Health Professions  
James L. Banning, Director for Administrative Proceedings  
Lila Theberge, R.N., Investigator (Case No. 94702)  
Peggy W. Call, Investigator (Case Nos. 93224, 88797)  
Sue S. Zich, R.N., B.S.N., Senior Investigator (Case No. 78043)  
Donna P. Whitney, L.P.N., C.S.A.C, Intervention Program Committee Coordinator  
Committee members  
Ann L. Tiller, Compliance Manager  
Julia B. Messersmith, Senior Adjudication Analyst