

VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE: PAULA K. THOMAS, L.P.N.
License No.: 0002-040099

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 July 30, 2013, in Henrico County, Virginia. Paula K. Thomas, L.P.N., was not present nor was she represented by legal counsel. Janet Younger, R.N., P.N.P., Ph.D., serving as Agency Subordinate for the Board, submitted a Recommended Decision for consideration.

On September 18, 2013, a quorum of the Board met to receive and act upon the Recommended Decision of the Agency Subordinate. Ms. Thomas 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. Paula K. Thomas, L.P.N., was issued License No. 0002-040099 to practice practical nursing in Virginia on May 25, 1988. The license is valid in Virginia only and is scheduled to expire on May 31, 2014. Her primary state of residence is Virginia.

2. By letter dated July 2, 2013, the Board of Nursing sent a Notice of Informal Conference ("Notice") to Ms. Thomas notifying her that an informal conference would be held on July 30, 2013. The Notice was sent by certified and first class mail to 15064 Copper Turtle Place, Woodbridge, Virginia 22193, the address of record on file with the Board of Nursing. According to the United States Postal Service, the notice of the certified mailing was left at Ms. Thomas' address of record on July 3, 2013. As

of the date of the informal conference, the Notice sent by certified mail had not been returned to the Board office, nor had the certified mail receipt. The Notice sent by first class mail was not returned to the Board office. The Agency Subordinate concluded that adequate notice was provided to Ms. Thomas, and the informal conference proceeded in her absence.

3. Ms. Thomas has been the subject of two prior Board Orders. By Order entered May 11, 2001, based on allegations of impairment and/or the diversion of controlled substances for personal use, the Board made no conclusions of law and took no action against Ms. Thomas contingent upon her compliance with the Health Practitioners' Monitoring Program ("HPMP"). By Order entered October 22, 2004, the Board again took no action against Ms. Thomas contingent upon her remaining compliant with the HPMP. This Order was based on findings that Ms. Thomas was unable to safely practice due to mental illness, that she had forged prescriptions for controlled substances, that she was convicted of a misdemeanor related to this forgery, and that she had falsified employment applications. Further, the Board found that Ms. Thomas had been dismissed from and re-entered the HPMP. Ms. Thomas successfully completed the HPMP in April 2009.

4. During the course of her employment with Woodmont Center Genesis Health Care, Fredericksburg, Virginia, on November 30, 2011, by her own admission, Ms. Thomas removed a card containing 25 pills of a resident's Ambien (Zolpidem, schedule IV) from the facility for her personal and unauthorized use. Ms. Thomas resigned her employment from this facility.

5. During the course of her employment with Envoy of Woodbridge, Woodbridge, Virginia, on December 30, 2012, by her own admission, Ms. Thomas diverted Tramadol, depakote, and tessalon perles for the unauthorized use of her family members. Her employment was terminated due to this incident.

6. On April 4, 2013, in the Circuit Court of Prince William County, Virginia, Ms. Thomas

was convicted of misdemeanor larceny in connection with the theft of drugs from Envoy of Woodbridge.

7. There was no harm to patients as a result of Ms. Thomas' theft of drugs.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Findings of Fact Nos. 4 and 5 constitute violations of § 54.1-3007(2), (3), (5), and (8) of the Code and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(c) and (k) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing.
2. Finding of Fact No. 6 constitutes a violation of § 54.1-3007(4) of the Code.

ORDER

WHEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED as follows:

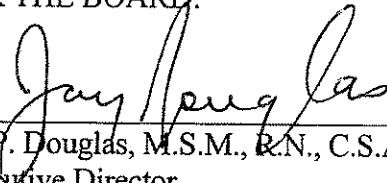
1. License No. 0002-040099 of Paula K. Thomas, L.P.N., is INDEFINITELY SUSPENDED.
2. The license will be recorded as suspended and no longer current.
3. At such time as Ms. Thomas shall petition the Board for reinstatement of her license, an administrative proceeding will be convened to determine whether she is capable of resuming the safe and competent practice of nursing. Ms. Thomas 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.
4. This suspension applies to any multistate privilege to practice practical nursing.

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.

Since Ms. Thomas failed to appear at the informal conference, this Order shall be considered final. Ms. Thomas 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. Thomas 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, M.S.M., R.N., C.S.A.C., F.R.E., Executive Director, Board of Nursing, at Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, Virginia 23233. In the event that this decision is served by mail, three (3) days are added to that period.

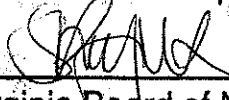
FOR THE BOARD:



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

Entered: October 8th, 2013

Certified True Copy

By 
Virginia Board of Nursing