



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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Director

Department of Health Professions  
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Virginia Board of Nursing  
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November 13, 2013

Kristen Sowada, R.N.  
D6 Juniper East  
Yarmouth, Maine 04096

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**71603901984922005927**

Re: Virginia License No.: 0001-237344  
Expiration Date: February 02, 2013

Dear Ms. Sowada:

This is official notification that an informal conference will be held pursuant to §§ 2.2-4019, 2.2-4021, and 54.1-2400(10) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended ("Code"), **on December 10, 2013, at 9:00 a.m.** at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 201, Henrico, Virginia 23233. You may be represented by an attorney at the conference. This informal conference will be convened as a public meeting pursuant to § 2.2-3700 *et seq.* of the Code.

The Special Conference Committee ("Committee"), which is comprised of at least two members of the Virginia Board of Nursing ("Board"), will inquire into allegations that you may have violated certain laws and regulations governing professional nursing practice in Virginia.

Specifically:

1. You may have violated § 54.1-3007(2), (5), (6), and (7) of the Code and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(c) and (e) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing ("Regulations") in that you may be unsafe to practice professional nursing due to substance abuse as evidenced by the Consent Agreement entered by the Maine Board of Nursing ("Maine Board") on January 23, 2013, which placed you on probation subject to terms and conditions for five years. In the Consent Agreement, you admitted that you used stolen prescription forms to commit forgery and obtain Adderall (dextroamphetamine, Schedule II) for your personal and unauthorized use, and that you had become addicted to the medication. Finally, you admitted that you failed to disclose the Maine Board's investigation in your application for licensure as a professional nurse by endorsement in Virginia.

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2. You may have violated § 54.1-3007(1) of the Code and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(1)(b) of the Regulations in that on your application for licensure as a professional nurse by endorsement in Virginia dated May 22, 2012:

a. You falsely answered "No" to the question regarding whether you have been the subject of an investigation by a licensing authority when the Maine Board had been investigating your prescription fraud since November 2011.

b. You falsely answered "No" to the question regarding whether you have a mental, physical or chemical dependency condition which could interfere with your current ability to practice nursing when you have admitted an addiction to Adderall.

In its deliberations, the Committee 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 the informal conference, the Committee is authorized by § 54.1-2400(10) of the Code to take any of the following actions:

- 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;
- The Committee may place you on probation for such time as it may designate and subject to such terms and conditions as it may deem appropriate;
- The Committee may reprimand you; or
- The Committee may impose a monetary penalty.

Further, the Committee may refer the case to the Board of Nursing or a panel thereof for a formal hearing. If the Committee is of the opinion that suspension or revocation may be justified, the Committee may offer you a Consent Order for suspension or revocation in lieu of a formal hearing.

If you fail to appear at the informal conference, the Committee may proceed to hear the case in your absence and may take any of the actions outlined above. At least ten days prior to the scheduled date of the conference, please inform this office at (804) 367-4515, or in writing at the address listed above, of your telephone number and whether you intend to appear at the informal conference.

To facilitate this proceeding, you should submit five copies of any documents you wish the Committee to consider to the Department of Health Professions, Board of Nursing, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, Virginia 23233, by December 3, 2013. Your documents may not be submitted by facsimile or email.

You have the right to the information on which the Board will rely in making its decision. Therefore, I have enclosed a copy of the documents that will be distributed to the members of the Committee and will be

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considered by the Committee when discussing any allegations with you and when deliberating on 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.**

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.

In the event of inclement weather, please be advised that Board of Nursing hearings will be held unless state offices are closed. Please listen to television or radio announcements to provide information about official state closings or delays. If there is a delayed opening, hearings will begin at the time of the agency opening. A recorded announcement pertaining to closings or delays will also be available by calling the main telephone number for the Department of Health Professions at (804) 367-4400.

Sincerely,



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

GDM/yrf

Enclosures

cc: Anne G. Joseph, Deputy Director, Administrative Proceedings Division  
Special Conference Committee Members  
James E. Rutkowski, Adjudication Specialist  
Ron Houser, Senior Investigator (Case no. 149157)  
Peggy Wood, HPMP Manager