



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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Director

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## NOTICE OF INFORMAL CONFERENCE BEFORE AN AGENCY SUBORDINATE

August 2, 2013

Paula Cook, R.N.  
Post Office Box 2007  
Honaker, VA 24260

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**7196 9008 9111 9192 0957**

16033 Steinman Road  
Abingdon, VA 24210

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**7196 9008 9111 9192 0964**

**RE: VA License No.: 0001-122627**  
**Expiration Date: May 31, 2014**

Dear Ms. Cook:

This letter is official notification that an informal conference of the Virginia Board of Nursing (“Board”) will be held on **August 29, 2013, at 1:00 p.m.**, at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 201, Henrico, Virginia. In accordance with §§ 2.2-4019, 2.2-4021, and 54.1-2400(10) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended (“Code”), this informal conference will be held before an agency subordinate of the Board of Nursing. This informal conference will be convened as a public meeting pursuant to § 2.2-3700 *et seq.* of the Code. The agency subordinate will inquire into allegations that you may have violated certain laws and regulations governing nursing practice in Virginia.

Specifically:

1. During your employment at Johnston Memorial Hospital, Abingdon, Virginia, 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 Governing the Practice of Nursing in that you stole a prescription pad used by hospitalists at the facility, and between April and October, 2012, you used the prescription pad to forge and obtain prescriptions for medications, including oxycodone (Schedule II), hydrocodone (Schedule II), phenergan, and ciprofloxacin, for yourself and a family member.

2. You may have violated § 54.1-3007(6) of the Code in that you signed a Participation Contract with the Health Practitioners’ Monitoring Program (“HPMP”) on November 28, 2012, in which you acknowledged that you may be unable to safely practice due to your reported history of substance abuse. On or

about March 12, 2013, you were dismissed from the HPMP for failing to enter treatment for substance abuse as recommended. At the time of your dismissal from the HPMP, your diagnosis included opioid abuse r/o opioid dependency.

In its deliberations, the agency subordinate 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 consideration of all information, the agency subordinate may:

- If the agency subordinate finds that there is insufficient evidence to warrant further action or that the charges are without foundation, notify you by mail that your record has been cleared of any charge which might affect your right to practice nursing in the Commonwealth;
- Recommend findings of fact, conclusions of law, and a sanction, to include a reprimand, placing you on probation with terms, suspension or revocation of your license, or imposing a monetary penalty pursuant to § 54.1-2401 of the Code.

Further, the agency subordinate may refer this matter for a formal administrative proceeding pursuant to § 2.2-4020 of the Code.

#### **Board's Review of Agency Subordinate's Recommended Decision**

If you **appear in person or by counsel at the informal conference**, the recommendation of the agency subordinate will be presented to a quorum of the Board. The Board may accept or modify the recommendation, or reject the recommendation and move the case to formal hearing. If you do not agree with the decision of the Board, you have the right to a formal administrative hearing before the Board.

If you **fail to appear in person or by counsel at the informal conference**, the recommendation of the agency subordinate will be presented to a quorum of the Board. The Board may accept or modify the recommendation, or reject the recommendation. The Board's decision regarding the agency subordinate's recommendation is a final order that can only be appealed to circuit court as provided by Rule 2A:2 of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

You have the right to information that will be relied upon by the agency subordinate in making a decision. Therefore, I enclose a copy of the documents that will be distributed to the agency subordinate, and will be considered 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, which you may be required to claim at the post office. Please bring these documents with you to the informal conference.**

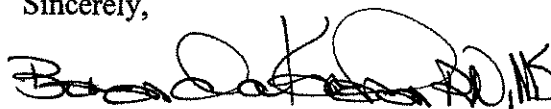
To facilitate this proceeding, you should submit six copies of any documents you wish the agency subordinate to consider to the Virginia Board of Nursing, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Richmond, VA 23233, by August 22, 2013. Your documents may not be submitted by facsimile or email.

You may be represented by an attorney at the informal conference. If you obtain counsel, you should do so as soon as possible, because absent good cause to support a request for a continuance, the informal conference will be held on August 29, 2013. A request to continue this proceeding must state **in detail** the reason for the request and must establish good cause. Such request must be made, in writing, to me at the address listed on this letter and must be received by 12 noon on August 22, 2013. Only one such motion will be considered. Absent critical circumstances, such as personal or family illness, a request for a continuance after August 22, 2013 will not be considered.

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.

Please advise the Board, in writing, of your intention to be present. If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact this office, at (804) 367-4617.

Sincerely,



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

GDM/sk

Enclosures

cc: Anne G. Joseph, Deputy Director, Administrative Proceedings Division  
Peter Opper, Adjudication Specialist  
Kimberly Whittemore, Senior Investigator (Case no. 147416)  
Agency Subordinate  
Peggy Wood, Monitoring Program Manager