



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health Professions

Board of Nursing

Nancy K. Durrett, R.N., M.S.N.
Executive Director
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March 16, 2001

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

CERTIFIED MAIL
P 973 184 482

Dear Ms. Thomas:

This is official notification that an Informal Conference will be held, pursuant to § 9-6.14:11, § 54.1-2400(10) and § 54.1-3010 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, on April 17, 2001, at 9:00 a.m., in the offices of the Department of Health Professions, 6606 West Broad Street, Southern States Building, Fourth 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 § 54.1-3007(2), (5) and (6) of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(c) and (e) of the Regulations of the Board of Nursing, in that:

1. 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.
2. 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 bi-polar disorder, and did not realize the need for constant medication to maintain good judgment.
3. 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, 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.

PAULA KAYE THOMAS, L.P.N.

4. By your own admission, you had previously been employed in pediatric home health care, but became too close to a child and the family and had to leave.

Since the allegations listed above involve impairment, please be advised of the availability of making application to the Health Practitioners' Intervention Program ("Program") which is available to all health care practitioners licensed in Virginia. A brochure about the program is enclosed. Should you enter into a written agreement with the Program prior to your Informal Conference, the Committee will take that into consideration and could, among other options, decide to close your case with no disciplinary action.

Should you decide not to enter into a written agreement with the Program prior to your meeting with the Conference Committee, the Conference Committee is authorized, after meeting with you, to take one of 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.

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 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.

PAULA KAYE THOMAS, L.P.N.

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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jay Douglas".

Jay P. Douglas, R.N., M.S.M., C.S.A.C.
Assistant Executive Director

JPD/alt
Enclosures

cc: John W. Hasty, Director, Department of Health Professions
James L. Banning, Director for Administrative Proceedings
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, Senior Legal Assistant, Administrative Proceedings Division