

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE: **Sondra Marie Walters, R.N.**
 License Number: **0001-218745**
 Expiration Date: **January 31, 2018**
 Case Number: **161455**

**NOTICE OF INFORMAL CONFERENCE BEFORE AN AGENCY SUBORDINATE
AND STATEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS**

You are hereby notified that an informal conference has been scheduled before an Agency Subordinate of the Board of Nursing ("Board") regarding your license to practice professional nursing in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

TYPE OF PROCEEDING:	This is an informal conference before an Agency Subordinate of the Board of Nursing.
DATE AND TIME:	July 14, 2016 at 1:00 p.m.
PLACE:	Virginia Department of Health Professions Perimeter Center - 9960 Mayland Drive 2 nd Floor - Virginia Conference Center Henrico, Virginia 23233

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND JURISDICTION:

1. This informal conference is being held pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 2.2-4019 and 54.1-2400(10). This proceeding will be convened as a public meeting pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3700.

2. After consideration of all information, the Agency Subordinate is authorized to take any of the following actions:

- 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 professional 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 Virginia Code § 2.2-4020.

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 refer the case to a 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 and refer the case to a formal hearing. 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.

ABSENCE OF RESPONDENT AND RESPONDENT'S COUNSEL:

If you fail to appear at the informal conference, the Agency Subordinate may proceed to hear this matter in your absence and may take any of the actions outlined above.

RESPONDENT'S LEGAL RIGHTS:

You have the right to the information on which the Agency Subordinate will rely in making a decision, to be represented by counsel at this proceeding, to subpoena witnesses and/or documents, and to present relevant evidence on your behalf.

COMMONWEALTH'S EXHIBIT:

Enclosed is a copy of the documents that will be considered by the Agency Subordinate when discussing any allegations with you and when deliberating on your case. **These documents are enclosed only with the 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.**

FILING DEADLINES:

1. Deadline for filing exhibits: July 7, 2016. Submit five copies of all documents you want the Board to consider to Sylvia Tamayo-Suijk, Board of Nursing, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, Virginia 23233. Exhibits may not be sent by facsimile or e-mail.
2. Deadline for filing motions, including requests for continuance or objections to exhibits, in writing, to Sylvia Tamayo-Suijk at the above address: July 7, 2016. NOTE: the failure to object to exhibits does not deprive you of the right to contest their contents at the proceeding.

STATEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS


The Board of Nursing alleges that:


1. At all times relevant hereto, Sondra Marie Walters, R.N. was licensed to practice professional nursing in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
2. Ms. Walters violated Virginia Code 54.1-3007(6) of the Code in that she is unsafe to practice professional nursing due to chemical dependency and/or substance abuse, as evidenced by the following:
 - a. From on or about January 20 through 26, 2015, Ms. Walters received inpatient treatment at Lewis Gale Center for Behavioral Health, Salem, Virginia for suicidal ideations and detoxification of substance abuse. Ms. Walters' discharge diagnoses included polysubstance dependence, substance induced mood disorder, opiate dependence, and cocaine dependence.
 - b. By her own admission, prior to her January admission at Lewis Gale Center for Behavioral Health, Ms. Walters was abusing cocaine, hydrocodone, and oxycodone.
 - c. From in or about March through July 2015, Ms. Walters received outpatient psychological services and medication therapy at Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare for diagnoses including opioid dependence, major depressive disorder recurrent, and cocaine abuse.
 - d. On or about August 27, 2015, Ms. Walters' treatment provider at Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare told the investigator for the Department of Health Professions that he was "hard pressed" to say that Ms. Walters was safe to practice as a nurse if she was not receiving substance abuse treatment and psychological services elsewhere.
3. Ms. Walters violated Virginia Code 54.1-3007(2), (5), and (8) and 18 VAC 90-20-300(A)(2)(c), (e), and (f) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing in that during the course of her employment with Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital, Roanoke, Virginia:

a. On or about July 24, 2012, Ms. Walters falsely documented administration of four tablets of prescribed Lortab (hydrocodone-acetaminophen, C-II) to Patient A, who denied receiving the requested medication.

b. On or about July 31, 2012, Ms. Walters falsely documented administration of one tablet of prescribed Lortab to Patient B, who denied receiving the requested medication.

See Confidential Attachment I for the names of the patients referenced above.


Gloria Mitchell-Lively, R.N., M.S.N., M.B.A.
Deputy Executive Director
Virginia Board of Nursing


Date