



I do hereby certify this to be a complete, accurate, and true copy of the document which is on file or is of record in the offices of the Texas Board of Nursing.  
*Katherine A. Thomas*  
Executive Director of the Board

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

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In the Matter of § AGREED  
Registered Nurse License Number 555103 §  
issued to DEBBIE RUTH SIMS § ORDER

On this day the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board considered the matter of DEBBIE RUTH SIMS, Registered Nurse License Number 555103, hereinafter referred to as Respondent.

Information received by the Board produced evidence that Respondent may be subject to discipline pursuant to Section 301.452(b)(10)&(13) and 301.453, Texas Occupations Code. Respondent waived representation by counsel, informal proceedings, notice and hearing, and agreed to the entry of this Order approved by Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN, Executive Director, on June 24, 2013, subject to ratification by the Board.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Prior to the institution of Agency proceedings, notice of the matters specified below in these Findings of Fact was served on Respondent and Respondent was given an opportunity to show compliance with all requirements of the law for retention of the license(s).
2. Respondent waived representation by counsel, informal proceedings, notice and hearing, and agreed to the entry of this Order.
3. Respondent is currently licensed to practice professional nursing in the State of Texas.
4. Respondent received a Diploma in Nursing from Methodist Hospital, Lubbock, Texas, on May 25, 1989. Respondent was licensed to practice professional nursing in the State of Texas on August 25, 1989.

5. Respondent's nursing employment history includes:

1989 - 1994	Staff Nurse	South Plains Kidney Disease Center Lubbock, Texas
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Respondent's nursing employment history continued:

1991 - 1994	Assistant Charge Nurse	South Plains Kidney Disease Center Lubbock, Texas
1994 - 1996	Assistant DON	Pulse Home Health Care Lubbock, Texas
1996 - 1997	Home Health Nurse	CAHSA Health Services Lubbock, Texas
1998 - 1999	Unknown	
1999 - 2002	Substitute School Nurse	Mansfield ISD Mansfield, Texas
2002 - 2004	Special Services Nurse	Mansfield ISD Mansfield, Texas
2005 -2006	Administrator/DON	New Heights Home Health Agency Arlington, Texas
2006 - 2010	Director of Nursing /Alternate Administrator	Independent Care Home Health Grand Prairie, Texas
8/2010 - Unknown	RN Case Manager	Encompass Home Health Fort Worth, Texas
1/2013 - Present	Case Manager	Amerigroup Grand Prairie, Texas

6. At the time of the initial incident, Respondent was employed as a RN case manager with Encompass Home Health, Fort Worth, Texas, and had been in this position eleven (11) months.
7. On or about July 10, 2011, while working as a RN case manager at Encompass Home Health, Fort Worth, Texas, Respondent mistakenly documented Patient Medical Record Number FTW00006094201's diagnosis as Carbon Dioxide poisoning instead of the correct diagnosis of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning. Respondent's failure to accurately document deprived subsequent care givers of vital information on which to base further nursing care and interventions.
8. On or about July 10, 2011, while working as a RN case manager at Encompass Home Health, Fort Worth, Texas, Respondent failed to notify the supervisor of Patient Medical Record Number FTW00006094201's outbursts of anger. Additionally Respondent failed to notify the physician of the patient's re-admission to home health and recent change in psychological

status. Respondent's conduct deprived the physician and supervisor of vital information which would be required to institute timely medical interventions, thereby placing the patient at risk of complications.

9. In response to Findings of Fact Numbers Seven (7) and Eight (8), Respondent admits she mistakenly documented that the patient's diagnosis was Carbon Dioxide instead of Carbon Monoxide. Respondent denies that the patient complained of psychiatric issues and further states the patient was having issues with her COPD and was scheduled to see her psychiatrist later in the week. Respondent denies not scheduling the patient for another visit after the initial visit and states she was going to visit the patient on Thursday, but the patient requested to be seen the following day (Friday) instead. Respondent admits failing to notify the physician regarding the patient's re-admission to home health. Respondent states she called the physician's office and connected to his answering machine, however she did not leave a message because it was not an emergency.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Pursuant to Texas Occupations Code, Sections 301.451-301.555, the Board has jurisdiction over this matter.
2. Notice was served in accordance with law.
3. The evidence received is sufficient to prove violation(s) of 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §217.11(1)(A),(1)(B),(1)(D)&(1)(P) and 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §217.12(1)(A),(1)(B),(1)(C)&(4).
4. The evidence received is sufficient cause pursuant to Section 301.452(b)(10)&(13), Texas Occupations Code, to take disciplinary action against Registered Nurse License Number 555103, heretofore issued to DEBBIE RUTH SIMS, including revocation of Respondent's license(s) to practice nursing in the State of Texas.

#### ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE AGREED and ORDERED, subject to ratification by the Texas Board of Nursing, that RESPONDENT SHALL receive the sanction of a WARNING WITH STIPULATIONS, and RESPONDENT SHALL comply in all respects with the Nursing Practice Act, Texas Occupations Code, §§301.001 *et seq.*, the Rules and Regulations Relating to Nurse Education, Licensure and Practice, 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §211.1 *et seq.* and this Order.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED and ORDERED that, while under the terms of this Order, this Order SHALL apply to any and all future licenses issued to Respondent to practice nursing in the State of Texas.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED and ORDERED that this Order SHALL be applicable to Respondent's nurse licensure compact privileges, if any, to practice nursing in the State of Texas.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED and ORDERED that while Respondent's license(s) is/are encumbered by this Order, Respondent may not work outside the State of Texas pursuant to a nurse licensure compact privilege without the written permission of the Texas Board of Nursing and the Board of Nursing in the party state where Respondent wishes to work.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED that:

(1) RESPONDENT SHALL, within one (1) year of entry of this Order, successfully complete a course in Texas nursing jurisprudence and ethics. RESPONDENT SHALL obtain Board approval of the course prior to enrollment only if the course is not being offered by a pre-approved provider. Home study courses and video programs will not be approved. In order for the course to be approved, the target audience shall include nurses. It shall be a minimum of six (6) hours in length. The course's content shall include the Nursing Practice Act, standards of practice, documentation of care, principles of nursing ethics, confidentiality, professional boundaries, and the Board's Disciplinary Sanction Policies regarding: Sexual Misconduct; Fraud, Theft and Deception; Nurses with Substance Abuse, Misuse, Substance Dependency, or other Substance Use Disorder; and Lying and Falsification. Courses focusing on malpractice issues will not be accepted. RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE the sponsoring institution to submit a Verification of Course Completion form, provided by the Board, to the Office of the Board to verify RESPONDENT'S successful completion of the course. This course shall be taken in addition to any other courses

stipulated in this Order, if any, and in addition to any continuing education requirements the Board has for relicensure. *Board-approved courses may be found at the following Board website address:*

*<http://www.bon.texas.gov/disciplinaryaction/stipscourses.html>*

(2) RESPONDENT SHALL, within one (1) year of entry of this Order, successfully complete a course in nursing documentation. RESPONDENT SHALL obtain Board approval of the course prior to enrollment only if the course is not being offered by a pre-approved provider. Home study courses and video programs will not be approved. The course shall be a minimum of six (6) hours in length of classroom time. In order for the course to be approved, the target audience shall include Nurses. The course shall include content on the following: nursing standards related to accurate and complete documentation; legal guidelines for recording; methods and processes of recording; methods of alternative record-keeping; and computerized documentation. RESPONDENT SHALL cause the instructor to submit a Verification of Course Completion form, provided by the Board, to the Board's office to verify RESPONDENT'S successful completion of the course. This course shall be taken in addition to any other courses stipulated in this Order, if any, and in addition to any continuing education requirements the Board has for relicensure. *Board-approved courses may be found at the following Board website address:*

*<http://www.bon.texas.gov/disciplinaryaction/stipscourses.html>*

(3) RESPONDENT SHALL, within one (1) year of entry of this Order, successfully complete the course "Sharpening Critical Thinking Skills," a 3.6 contact hour online program provided by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Learning Extension. In order to receive credit for completion of this program, RESPONDENT SHALL SUBMIT the continuing education certificate of completion for this program to the Board's office, to the attention of Monitoring. This course is to be taken in addition to any continuing education requirements the

Board may have for relicensure. *Board-approved courses may be found at the following Board website address: <http://www.bon.texas.gov/disciplinaryaction/stipscourses.html>.*

**IT IS FURTHER AGREED, SHOULD RESPONDENT PRACTICE AS A NURSE IN THE STATE OF TEXAS, RESPONDENT WILL PROVIDE DIRECT PATIENT CARE AND PRACTICE IN A HOSPITAL, NURSING HOME, OR OTHER CLINICAL SETTING AND RESPONDENT MUST WORK IN SUCH SETTING A MINIMUM OF SIXTY-FOUR (64) HOURS PER MONTH UNDER THE FOLLOWING STIPULATIONS FOR ONE (1) YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT. RESPONDENT'S CURRENT POSITION AS A CASE MANAGER WITH AMERIGROUP, GRAND PRAIRIE, TEXAS, IS AN ACCEPTABLE POSITION FOR COMPLYING WITH AND COMPLETING THE TERMS OF THIS ORDER. THE LENGTH OF THE STIPULATION PERIOD WILL BE EXTENDED UNTIL SUCH TWELVE (12) MONTHS HAVE ELAPSED. PERIODS OF UNEMPLOYMENT OR OF EMPLOYMENT THAT DO NOT REQUIRE THE USE OF A REGISTERED NURSE (RN) OR A VOCATIONAL NURSE (LVN) LICENSE, AS APPROPRIATE, WILL NOT APPLY TO THIS STIPULATION PERIOD:**

(4) RESPONDENT SHALL notify each present employer in nursing of this Order of the Board and the stipulations on RESPONDENT'S license(s). RESPONDENT SHALL present a complete copy of this Order and all Proposals for Decision issued by the Administrative Law Judge, if any, to each present employer within five (5) days of receipt of this Order. RESPONDENT SHALL notify all future employers in nursing of this Order of the Board and the stipulations on RESPONDENT'S license(s). RESPONDENT SHALL present a complete copy of this Order and all Proposals for Decision issued by the Administrative Law Judge, if any, to each future employer prior to accepting an offer of employment.

(5) RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each present employer in nursing to submit the Notification of Employment form, which is provided to the Respondent by the Board, to the Board's office within ten (10) days of receipt of this Order. RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each future employer to submit the Notification of Employment form, which is provided to the Respondent by the Board, to the Board's office within five (5) days of employment as a nurse.

(6) RESPONDENT SHALL be supervised by a Registered Nurse, if licensed as a Registered Nurse, or by a Licensed Vocational Nurse or a Registered Nurse, if licensed as a Licensed Vocational Nurse, who is on the premises. The supervising nurse is not required to be on the same unit or ward as RESPONDENT, but should be on the facility grounds and readily available to provide assistance and intervention if necessary. The supervising nurse shall have a minimum of two (2) years experience in the same or similar practice setting to which the Respondent is currently working. RESPONDENT SHALL work only regularly assigned, identified and predetermined unit(s). RESPONDENT SHALL NOT be employed by a nurse registry, temporary nurse employment agency, hospice, or home health agency. RESPONDENT SHALL NOT be self-employed or contract for services. Multiple employers are prohibited.

(7) RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each employer to submit, on forms provided to the Respondent by the Board, periodic reports as to RESPONDENT'S capability to practice nursing. These reports shall be completed by the nurse who supervises the RESPONDENT. These reports shall be submitted by the supervising nurse to the office of the Board at the end of each three (3) month period for one (1) year(s) of employment as a nurse.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, that upon full compliance with the terms of this Order, all encumbrances will be removed from RESPONDENT'S license(s) to practice nursing in the State of Texas and RESPONDENT may be eligible for nurse licensure compact privileges, if any.

RESPONDENT'S CERTIFICATION

I understand that I have the right to legal counsel prior to signing this Agreed Order. I waive representation by counsel. I have reviewed this Order. I neither admit nor deny the violation(s) alleged herein. By my signature on this Order, I agree to the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Order, and any conditions of said Order, to avoid further disciplinary action in this matter. I waive judicial review of this Order. I understand that this Order is subject to ratification by the Board. When this Order is ratified, the terms of this Order become effective, and a copy will be mailed to me. I understand that if I fail to comply with all terms and conditions of this Order, I will be subject to investigation and disciplinary sanction, including revocation of my license(s) to practice nursing in the State of Texas, as a consequence of my noncompliance.

Signed this 05 day of September, 2013.

Debbie Ruth Sims  
DEBBIE RUTH SIMS, RESPONDENT

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 05 day of September, 2013.

SEAL

[Signature]  
Notary Public in and for the State of TEXAS





WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, the Texas Board of Nursing does hereby ratify and adopt the Agreed Order that was signed on the 5th day of September, 2013, by DEBBIE RUTH SIMS, Registered Nurse License Number 555103, and said Order is final.

Effective this 17th day of October, 2013.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katherine A. Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director on behalf  
of said Board