

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

In the Matter of	§	AGREED
Vocational Nurse License Number 213827	§	
issued to HEATHER KATHLEEN THOMAS	§	ORDER

On this day the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, considered the matter of HEATHER KATHLEEN THOMAS, Vocational Nurse License Number 213827, 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)(1), Texas Occupations Code. Respondent waived notice and hearing and agreed to the entry of this Order approved by Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN, Executive Director, on August 4, 2016.

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 notice and hearing, and agreed to the entry of this Order.
3. Respondent's license to practice as a vocational nurse in the State of Texas is in current status.
4. Respondent received a Certificate in Vocational Nursing from Delcastle Tech Adult School, Wilmington, Delaware, on June 1, 2001. Respondent was licensed to practice vocational nursing in the State of Texas on January 10, 2008.
5. Respondent's nursing employment history is unknown.

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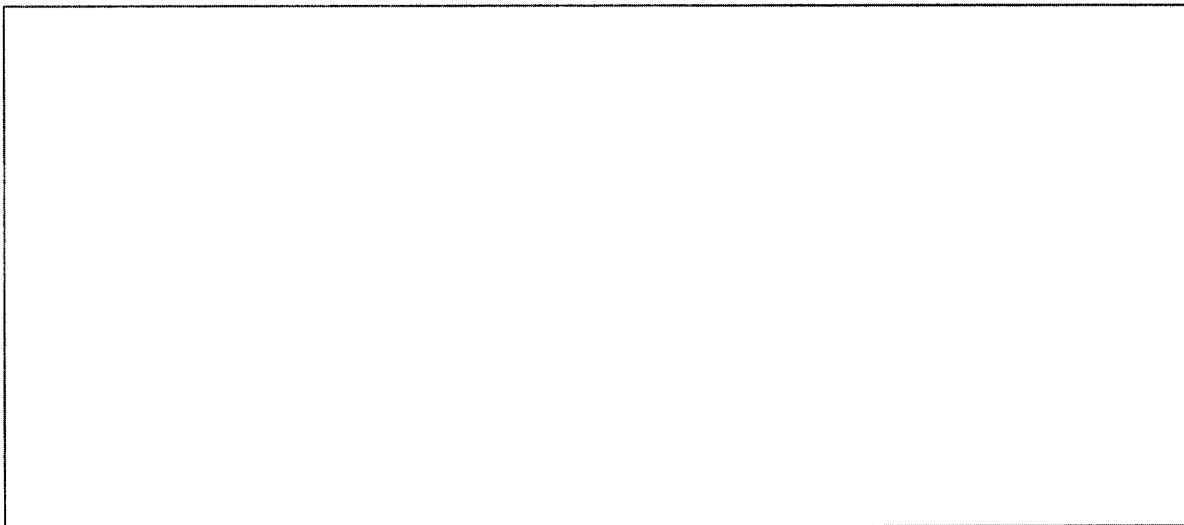
8. On or about October 15, 2014, Respondent was arrested by the Travis County Sheriff's Office, Austin, Texas, for DRIVING W/LIC INV W/PREV CONV/SUSP/W/O FIN RES, a Class B misdemeanor offense. On or about April 10, 2015, Respondent entered a plea of No contest and was convicted of DRIVING WHILE LICENSE INVALID, a Class B misdemeanor offense in the County Court at Law No. 4 of Travis County, Texas, under Cause No. C1CR14153588. As a result of the conviction, Respondent was sentenced to confinement in the Travis County Jail for a period of two (2) days.

9. On or about July 11, 2016, Respondent submitted a Delinquent (expired License Renewal Form) Licensed Vocational Nurse to the Texas Board of Nursing in which you answered "Yes" to the question:

"Have you, within the past 24 months or since your last renewal, for any criminal offense, including those pending appeal:

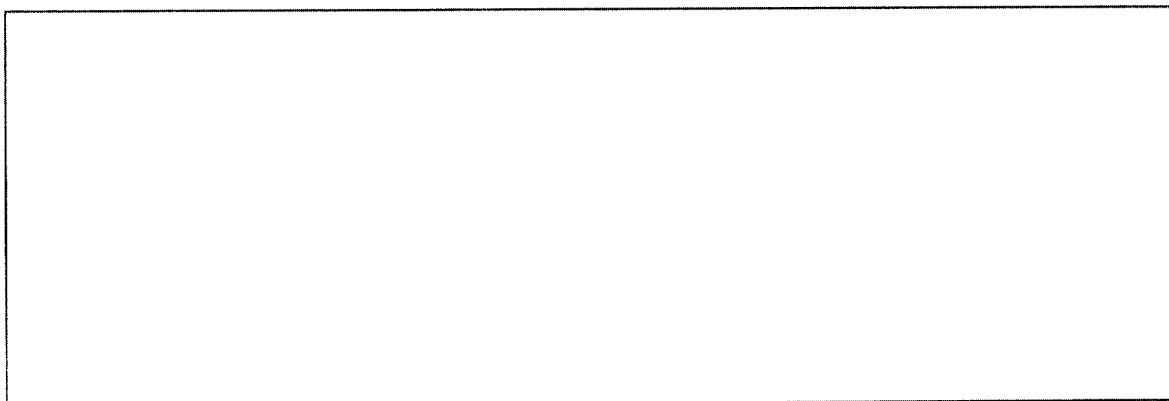
- A. been convicted of a misdemeanor?
- B. been convicted of a felony?
- C. pled nolo contendere, no contest, or guilty?
- D. received deferred adjudication?
- E. been placed on community supervision or court-ordered probation, whether or not adjudicated guilty?
- F. been sentenced to serve jail or prison time? court-ordered confinement?
- G. been granted pre-trial diversion?
- H. been arrested or have any pending criminal charges?
- I. been cited or charged with any violation of the law?
- J. been subject of a court-martial; Article 15 violation; or received any form of military judgment/punishment/action?"

Respondent disclosed the following:



On or about October 15, 2014, Respondent was arrested by the Travis County Sheriff's Office, Austin, Texas, for DRIVING W/LIC INV W/PREV CONV/SUSP/W/O FIN RES, a Class B misdemeanor offense. On or about April 10, 2015, Respondent entered a plea of No contest and was convicted of DRIVING WHILE LICENSE INVALID, a Class B misdemeanor offense in the County Court at Law No. 4 of Travis County, Texas, under Cause No. C1CR14153588. As a result of the conviction, Respondent was sentenced to confinement in the Travis County Jail for a period of two (2) days.

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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 §217.12(13).
4. The evidence received is sufficient cause pursuant to Section 301.452(b)(10), Texas Occupations Code, to take disciplinary action against Vocational Nurse License Number 213827, heretofore issued to HEATHER KATHLEEN THOMAS.
5. Pursuant to Section 301.463(d), Texas Occupations Code, this Agreed Order is a settlement agreement under Rule 408, Texas Rules of Evidence, in civil or criminal litigation.

TERMS OF ORDER

I. SANCTION AND APPLICABILITY

IT IS THEREFORE AGREED and ORDERED that RESPONDENT SHALL receive the sanction of **WARNING WITH STIPULATIONS** in accordance with the terms of this Order.

- A. This Order SHALL apply to any and all future licenses issued to Respondent to practice nursing in the State of Texas.
- B. This Order SHALL be applicable to Respondent's nurse licensure compact privileges, if any, to practice nursing in the State of Texas.
- C. Respondent may not work outside the State of Texas in another nurse licensure compact party state without first obtaining the written permission of the Texas Board of Nursing and the Board of Nursing in the nurse licensure compact party state where Respondent wishes to work.

II. COMPLIANCE WITH LAW

While under the terms of this Order, RESPONDENT agrees to 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.

III. REMEDIAL EDUCATION COURSE(S)

In addition to any continuing education requirements the Board may require for

licensure renewal, RESPONDENT SHALL successfully complete the following remedial education course(s) **within one (1) year of the effective date of this Order, unless otherwise specifically indicated:**

- A. **A Board-approved course in Texas nursing jurisprudence and ethics** that 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. Home study courses and video programs will not be approved.
- B. **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/these course(s), RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE the instructor to submit a Verification of Course Completion form or SHALL submit the continuing education certificate, as applicable, to the attention of Monitoring at the Board's office. RESPONDENT SHALL first obtain Board approval of any course prior to enrollment if the course is not being offered by a pre-approved provider. *Information about Board-approved courses and Verification of Course Completion forms are available from the Board at www.bon.texas.gov/compliance.*

IV. **EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS**

In order to complete the terms of this Order, RESPONDENT must work as a nurse in the State of Texas, providing direct patient care in a clinical healthcare setting, **for a minimum of sixty-four (64) hours per month** for four (4) quarterly periods [one (1) year] of employment. This requirement will not be satisfied until four (4) quarterly periods of employment as a nurse have elapsed. Any quarterly period without continuous employment with the same employer for all three (3) months **will not count towards completion of this requirement.** 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 period and will not count towards completion of this requirement.

- A. **Notifying Present and Future Employers:** RESPONDENT SHALL notify each present employer in nursing and present each with a complete copy of this Order, including all attachments, if any, within five (5) days of receipt of this Order. While under the terms of this Order, RESPONDENT SHALL notify all future employers in nursing and present each with a complete copy of this Order, including all attachments, if any, prior to accepting an offer of employment.
- B. **Notification of Employment Forms:** RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each present employer in nursing to submit the Board's "Notification of Employment" form to the Board's office within ten (10) days of receipt of this Order. RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each future employer to submit the Board's "Notification of Employment form" to the Board's office within five (5) days of employment as a nurse.
- C. **Indirect Supervision:** 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.
- D. **Nursing Performance Evaluations:** 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 and these reports shall be submitted by the supervising nurse to the office of the Board at the end of each three (3) month quarterly period for four (4) quarters [one (1) year] of employment as a nurse.

V. RESTORATION OF UNENCUMBERED LICENSE(S)

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.

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RESPONDENT'S CERTIFICATION

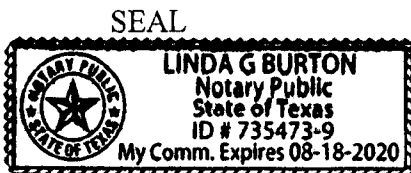
I understand that I have the right to legal counsel prior to signing this Agreed Order.

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 entry of this 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 when this Order becomes final and the terms of this Order become effective, 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 possible revocation of my license(s) to practice nursing in the State of Texas, as a consequence of my noncompliance.

Signed this 26 day of August, 2016.

Heather Kathleen Thomas
HEATHER KATHLEEN THOMAS, Respondent

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 26 day of August, 2016.



Linda G. Burton

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 26th day of August, 2016, by HEATHER KATHLEEN THOMAS, Vocational Nurse License Number 213827, and said Order is final.

Effective this 27th day of October, 2016.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Katherine A. Thomas".

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