



**Executive Director of the Board**

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

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In the Matter of § AGREED ORDER  
Registered Nurse License Number 840515 §  
issued to JOSEPH BUCK ARLEDGE §  
§

On this day the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, considered the matter of JOSEPH BUCK ARLEDGE, Registered Nurse License Number 840515, 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), Texas Occupations Code.

Respondent waived notice and hearing and agreed to the entry of this Agreed Order approved by Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN, Executive Director, on January 20, 2021.

## 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 Agreed Order.
3. Respondent's license to practice as a professional nurse in the State of Texas is in current status.
4. Respondent received a Diploma in Nursing from Covenant School of Nursing, Lubbock, Texas, on May 31, 2013. Respondent was licensed to practice professional nursing in the State of Texas on July 11, 2013.
5. Respondent's nursing employment history includes:

7/2013 – 01/2020	RN	Covenant Medical Center Lubbock, Texas
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Respondent's nursing employment history continued:

09/2017 – 09/2019	Flight RN	AeroCare Lubbock, Texas
02/2020 – Present	RN	Medical Solutions Omaha, Nebraska
10/2020 – Present	RN	Lubbock Heart Hospital Lubbock, Texas

6. At the time of the initial incident, Respondent was employed as a Registered Nurse with Covenant Medical Center, Lubbock, Texas, and had been in that position for six (6) years and six (6) months.
7. On or about January 4, 2020, while employed as a Registered Nurse with Covenant Medical Center, Lubbock, Texas, and assigned as a Charge Nurse, Respondent failed to follow policy and procedure when a nurse invoked Safe Harbor by not immediately addressing the issue with management. Additionally, management claimed they never received the Safe Harbor paperwork. Respondent's conduct denied appropriate staff information needed to regulate a safe environment and effective delivery of nursing care.
8. On or about January 15, 2020, while employed as a Registered Nurse with Covenant Medical Center, Lubbock, Texas, and assigned as a Charge Nurse, Respondent failed to document in the medical record of Patient LPS that he increased the patient's Propofol bolus drip rate. Instead, Respondent told the patient's primary nurse that he had increased the patient's Propofol. Respondent's conduct resulted in an inaccurate medical record and could have injured the patient in that subsequent care givers would not have complete information on which to base their care decisions.
9. In response to Finding of Fact Number Seven (7), Respondent states he immediately changed the assignment of the nurse who made the safe harbor invocation. The nurse indicated she was okay with the change in assignment and so Respondent understood the issue to be resolved. Nevertheless, he states he gave a copy of the safe harbor paperwork to his assistant manager. In response to Finding of Fact Number Eight (8), Respondent states the physician's orders were not to infuse at a certain rate, but rather to titrate in order to keep the patient's sedation at a certain level and, therefore, none of the nurses consistently documented the drip rates or changes thereto. Nevertheless, he informed the patient's primary nurse of the change in drip rate with the expectation that she would document it in the patient's medical record, which she did.
10. Formal Charges were filed on September 16, 2020.

#### 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)(S)&(1)(T) and 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §217.12(1)(A),(1)(B),(1)(C),&(1)(D).
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 840515, heretofore issued to JOSEPH BUCK ARLEDGE.
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 **REPRIMAND 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. As a result of this Order, RESPONDENT'S license(s) will be designated "single state" as applicable and RESPONDENT may not work outside the State of Texas in another nurse licensure compact party state using a Texas compact license.

#### **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 Nursing Education, Licensure and Practice, 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §§211.1 *et seq.*, and this Agreed Order.

### III. UNDERSTANDING BOARD ORDERS

Within thirty (30) days of entry of this Order, RESPONDENT must successfully complete the Board's online course, "Understanding Board Orders", which can be accessed on the Board's website from the "Discipline & Complaints" drop-down menu or directly at: <http://www.bon.texas.gov/UnderstandingBoardOrders/index.asp>. Upon successful completion, RESPONDENT must submit the course verification at the conclusion of the course, which automatically transmits the verification to the Board.

### IV. 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 and video programs will not be approved.
- B. **A Board-approved course in nursing documentation** that shall be a minimum of six (6) hours in length. The course's content shall include: 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. Home study courses and video programs will not be approved.

- C. **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](http://www.bon.texas.gov/compliance).*

**V. 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. 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:** Except as detailed below in section (V)(D), incident reporting, while under the terms of this order, 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 of 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. **Incident Reporting:** For the one-year duration of this order and while employed as a Registered Nurse at Lubbock Heart Hospital, RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each employer to immediately submit any and all incident, counseling, variance, unusual occurrence, and medication or other error reports involving RESPONDENT, as well as documentation of any internal investigations regarding action by RESPONDENT, to the attention of Monitoring at the Board's office. In the event that RESPONDENT ceases employment at Lubbock Heart Hospital, section (V)(D), incident reporting, will no longer apply, and section (V)(C), indirect supervision, will govern the remainder of the term of the order.
- E. **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 individual who supervises the RESPONDENT and these reports shall be submitted by the supervising individual 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.

## VI. RESTORATION OF UNENCUMBERED LICENSE(S)

Upon full compliance with the terms of this Agreed Order, all encumbrances will be removed from RESPONDENT'S license(s) and/or privilege(s) to practice nursing in the State of Texas and, subject to meeting all existing eligibility requirements in Texas Occupations Code Chapter 304, Article III, 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 Order. 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 this Order is subject to ratification by the Texas Board of Nursing and a copy of this Order will be mailed to me once the Order becomes effective. 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) and/or privileges to practice nursing in the State of Texas, as a consequence of my noncompliance.

Signed this 20 day of January, 2021.

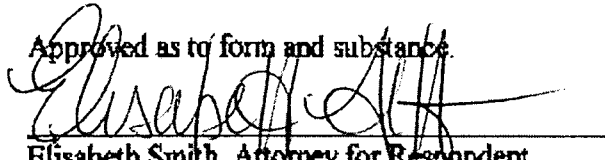
  
JOSEPH BUCK ARLEDGE, RESPONDENT

Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

SEAL.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public in and for the State of \_\_\_\_\_

Approved as to form and substance.

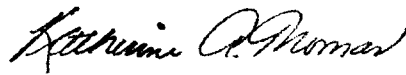
  
Elisabeth Smith, Attorney for Respondent

Signed this 20th day of January, 2021.



WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, the Texas Board of Nursing does hereby ratify and adopt the Agreed Order that was signed on the 20th day of January, 2021, by JOSEPH BUCK ARLEDGE, Registered Nurse License Number 840515, and said Agreed Order is final.

Effective this 23rd day of March, 2021.

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

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