

## BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

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In the Matter of	§	AGREED ORDER
Registered Nurse License Number 885551	§	
& Vocational Nurse License Number 312648	§	
issued to YOLANDA ISABEL CORTEZ	§	
	§	

On this day the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, considered the matter of YOLANDA ISABEL CORTEZ, Registered Nurse License Number 885551, and Vocational Nurse License Number 312648, 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.

An informal conference was conducted on March 2, 2021, in accordance with Section 301.464, Texas Occupations Code. Respondent appeared by telephone. Respondent was represented by Laura Cavaretta, Attorney at Law.

### 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 vocational nurse in the State of Texas is in current status. Respondent's license to practice as a professional nurse in the State of Texas is in current status.
4. Respondent received a Certificate in Vocational Nursing from St Philip's College, San Antonio, Texas, on December 14, 2012. Respondent received an Associate Degree in Nursing from San Antonio College, San Antonio, Texas, on December 12, 2014. Respondent was licensed to practice vocational nursing in the State of Texas on February 14, 2013. Respondent was licensed to practice professional nursing in the State of Texas on August 20, 2015.

5. Respondent's nursing employment history includes:

2/2013 – 10/2015	Unknown	
10/2015 – 11/2016	Registered Nurse	Methodist Specialty and Transplant Hospital San Antonio, Texas
11/2016 -6/2018	Registered Nurse	Medtrust Staffing / Wilford Hall Medical Center Lackland AFB, Texas
7/2018 - Present	Registered Nurse	University Hospital San Antonio, Texas

6. At the time of the incident, Respondent was employed as a Registered Nurse with University Hospital, San Antonio, Texas, and had been in that position for two (2) years and eight (8) months.
7. On or about March 2, 2020, while employed as a Registered Nurse with University Hospital, San Antonio, Texas, Respondent failed to completely and accurately document in the nursing notes events during the post-operative phase for Patient Number 00784907, including pain levels, administration of Phenergan, all administrations of Dilaudid, the efficacy of administered pain medications, and communications with provider. Respondent also failed to assess the patient's vital signs the last hour the patient was in the post-anesthesia unit. Approximately two hours after Respondent was instructed to leave the facility and the patient was transported to the floor, rapid response was initiated; the patient required intubation and additional surgery for abdominal hemorrhage. Respondent's conduct created an incomplete medical record and exposed the patient to risk of harm from undetected and untreated changes in blood pressure.
8. In response to the incident in Finding of Fact Number seven (7), Respondent states she appropriately intervened to make the patient more comfortable, and also states she assessed the patient's pain level and notified the physician the patient was bleeding. Respondent established her compliance with Hospital Policies in effect at the time regarding the timing of vital signs and the charting of patient response to medications using the RASS system per Hospital policies. The PACU was closed at 1700 and Respondent was the only nurse assigned to the Unit. Respondent states she expected the patient to be transferred to a room when she removed the vital sign monitors at approximately 1745 and also states the patient remained in the PACU awaiting an available bed on the admitting floor. Respondent also states she was then instructed by her nurse manager to depart the PACU; that her nurse manager took over the care of the patient and she had no further involvement with the patient. Respondent was instrumental in creating new procedures for charting and assessment of patients in the PACU to be followed in the PACU and an additional RN position was created for this unit.

### 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)(M)&(3)(A) 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 885551, and Vocational Nurse License Number 312648, heretofore issued to YOLANDA ISABEL CORTEZ.
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. 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.
- D. **The course "Professional Accountability,"** a 4.6 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. **Incident Reporting:** While employed as a Registered Nurse with University Hospital, San Antonio, Texas, 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.

- Indirect Supervision:** Should Respondent's employment as a Registered Nurse with University Hospital, San Antonio, Texas, cease or change, the following terms shall apply for the remainder of the order, if any: 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.

- 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

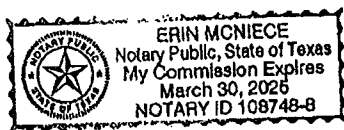
I understand that I have the right to legal counsel prior to signing this Order. I have reviewed this Order. I neither admit nor deny the violation(s) alleged herein. By my signature on this Order, I agree to the entry of this Order, and any conditions of said Order, to avoid further disciplinary action 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 6 day of May, 2021.

Yolanda Isabel Cortez  
YOLANDA ISABEL CORTEZ, RESPONDENT

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 6<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021.

SEAL



Erin Moniece  
Notary Public in and for the State of Texas

Approved as to form and substance.


Laura Cavaretta  
Laura Cavaretta, Attorney for Respondent

Signed this 6<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021.



WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, the Texas Board of Nursing does hereby ratify and adopt the Agreed Order that was signed on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021, by YOLANDA ISABEL CORTEZ, Registered Nurse License Number 885551, and Vocational Nurse License Number 312648, and said Agreed Order is final.

Effective this 8<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Katherine A. Thomas", written over a horizontal line.

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