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STATE OF WISCONSIN
BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF
DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS AGAINST

DEBBIE G. SWENSON, RN, ORDER GRANTING STAY

Respondent

On January 12, 1996, the Board of Nursing issued its Final Decision and Order in the above-captioned matter. By the terms of the board's order, respondent's license to practice as a registered nurse in Wisconsin was suspended for an indefinite period. The Order provided that Ms. Swenson could petition at any time for a stay of the suspension, and could apply for consecutive three month extensions of the stay upon submission of satisfactory evidence of having complied during the prior three month period with all terms and limitations on the license. Among these were that respondent participate in a recognized program for the treatment of chemical dependency, that she participate in psychotherapy a minimum of four times each month, and that she participate in program of random witnessed monitoring for controlled substances and alcohol in her blood or urine on a frequency of not less than four times per month.

By letter dated April 25, 1998, respondent requested that the stay of the suspension of her license be stayed. The board considered the request at its meeting of July 9, 1998, and denied the petition by its Order dated July 18, 1998. The basis for the denial was explained by the board as follows:

Paragraph (a) of the board's January 12, 1996, Final decision and Order in this matter states in part as follows:

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Ms. Swenson may petition the board at any time for a stay of the suspension of her licensure. In conjunction with a petition by Ms. Swenson, the board shall require documentation of Ms. Swenson's rehabilitation, such as: 1) documentation acceptable to the board of continuous abstinence from the consumption of alcohol and controlled substances . . . ; 2) documentation of successful participation in a program for the treatment of chemical dependency to the completion of recommended therapy or for a period of at least three months immediately prior to the submission of the petition; and 3) submission of a current chemical dependency assessment from a health care provider acceptable to the board certifying that Ms. Swenson is fit to safely return to practice as a nurse. To be considered current, the assessment shall occur within 30 days from the date of its submission.

The board invited Ms. Swenson to renew her request at such time as she was able to submit a current assessment.

On September 18, 1998, the board considered Ms. Swenson's further request for a stay of the suspension of her license. She appeared before the board on September 18, 1998, in support of her request and provided the board with a current assessment at that time. The board granted the stay by its Order dated September 28, 1998.

On May 19, 2000, the board considered Ms. Swenson's request for a further stay, and her further request that the number of required therapy sessions be reduced to two per month. The board also considered that Ms. Swenson had violated the terms of her limited license in having failed to attend therapy sessions or submit to urine screens consistent with the number required under the Order. Accordingly, the board denied the request for a stay by its Order dated June 6, 2000.

On September 1, 2000, Ms. Swenson appeared before the board in support of her request for renewal of the stay, and her further request that the number of required urine screens and therapy sessions be reduced. Based upon all information of record herein, the board orders as follows:

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that the petition of Debbie G. Swenson, R.N. for a three month stay of the suspension of her license is granted. Ms. Swenson may request further three month stays of the suspension upon satisfactory demonstration of having complied with all the terms and conditions of the board's Order during the preceding three month period.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that paragraph #1 of the Order set forth in the board's Final Decision and Order in this matter dated January 12, 1996, is hereby modified to reduce the number of required therapy sessions from four per month to two per month.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that paragraph #6 of the Order set forth in the board's Final Decision and Order in this matter dated January 12, 1996, is hereby modified to reduce the number of required urine screens from four per month to two per month.

Dated this 8th day of September, 2000.

STATE OF WISCONSIN
BOARD OF NURSING

Ann Brewer, R.N.

Chair