

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF REGULATION & LICENSING



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STATE OF WISCONSIN
BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF	:	
DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS AGAINST	:	
	:	ORDER GRANTING STAY
REBECCA L. THOMAS, R.N.,	:	
RESPONDENT	:	

On February 7, 2003, the Board of Nursing entered its Final Decision and Order in the above-captioned matter. By the terms of the board's Order, Ms. Thomas' license to practice as a professional nurse was limited for an indefinite period. The Order provided that Ms. Thomas could apply at any time for a stay of suspension for a period of three months, with provision for further three month stays, conditioned upon compliance with the conditions and limitations outlined below.

Ms. Thomas was to have completed an intensive outpatient, or a residential, treatment program before applying for her initial stay, and present an acceptable plan for control of her TMJ pain together with a statement from her Supervising Health Care Provider that she is capable of practicing with skill and safety to patient and public.

Ms. Thomas was to have enrolled in and continued successful participation in all components of a drug and alcohol treatment program at a treatment facility acceptable to the Board as respondent's Supervising Health Care Provider shall determine to be appropriate for respondent's rehabilitation. The rehabilitation program must include and respondent must participate in individual and/or group therapy sessions for the first year of the stayed suspension upon a schedule as recommended by the supervising physician or therapist, but not less than once weekly.

Ms. Thomas must attend Narcotics Anonymous and/or Alcoholic Anonymous meetings or an equivalent program for recovering professionals, upon a frequency as recommended by the supervising physician or therapist, but not less than one meeting per week. Attendance of Ms. Thomas at such meetings must be verified and reported monthly to the supervising physician or therapist.

Ms. Thomas must abstain from all personal use of alcohol and controlled substances, as defined in Sec. 161.01(4), Stats., except when necessitated by a legitimate medical condition and then only with the prior approval of the Supervising Health Care Provider.

Within thirty (30) days from the date of the signing of this Order, Ms. Thomas was to enroll and begin participation in a drug and alcohol monitoring program requiring testing of urine specimens at a frequency of not less than 52 times per year.

Ms. Thomas is required to refrain from access to or the administration of controlled substances in her work setting until such time as access or administration is approved by the Board, and must practice only under the general supervision of a licensed professional nurse or other licensed health care professional approved by the Board or in a work setting pre-approved by the Board or its designated agent, which shall not include independent practice sites such as home health or home hospice.

Finally, Ms. Thomas was required to arrange for her employer to provide formal written reports to the Department

Monitor in the Department of Regulation and Licensing, Division of Enforcement, assessing Ms. Thomas’ work performance.

On March 7, 2003, the board granted Ms. Thomas’ petition for an initial three month stay of the suspension.

On June 6, 2003, the board considered Ms. Thomas’ request for a further three month stay of the suspension, and her further request for reduction in the number of therapy sessions, urine screens and AA/NA meetings. The board had questions regarding Ms. Thomas’ compliance with the terms of her limited license and with her employment status since January, 2003, and therefore ordered that the stay be extended for one month until those questions could be resolved.

On August 8, 2003, the board considered Ms. Thomas’ explanation of the confusion which existed pertaining to her status. Based upon all information of record herein, the board orders as follows:

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that the suspension of the license of Rebecca L. Thomas, RN, is hereby stayed for a period of three months.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the number of required therapy sessions is hereby reduced to two per month.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that there be no reduction in the number of urine screens of AA/NA meetings at this time

Dated this 14th day of August, 2003.

STATE OF WISCONSIN

BOARD OF NURSING

Linda M. Sanner, RN

Chair