

STATE OF VERMONT
SECRETARY OF STATE
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION
BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE:)
SARA SERENA LOREN) Docket No. 2021-60
License No. 026.0139592)

VOLUNTARY INDEFINITE SUSPENSION STIPULATION

NOW COME the State of Vermont, by and through State Prosecuting Attorney Elizabeth A. St. James, and the Respondent, Sara Serena Loren, who stipulate and agree as follows:

1. To moot summary suspension proceedings under 3 V.S.A. § 814(c) in the matter captioned above, the State and Respondent request that license no. 026.0139592 be voluntarily suspended, for an indefinite period, pending adjudication of the above-captioned matter on the merits.
2. This Stipulation is neither an admission of responsibility by the Respondent nor a concession by the State of Vermont that its Request for Summary Suspension is not well-founded
3. Proceedings on the merits should be promptly instituted and determined.
4. Respondent understands that this agreement is a matter of public record and that this suspension pending adjudication on the merits may be reported to other licensing authorities as provided in 3 V.S.A. 129(a)(6).

ORDER

The Board of Nursing hereby suspends license no. 026.0139592 pending adjudication on the merits of the matter captioned above.

AGREED TO:

Dated: June 10, 2021

STATE OF VERMONT
SECRETARY OF STATE

By: E-SIGNED by Elizabeth St. James
on 2021-06-10 08:21:19 EDT
Elizabeth A. St. James
State Prosecuting Attorney

SARA SERENA LOREN
RESPONDENT

Dated: June 09, 2021

By: E-SIGNED by Sara Loren
on 2021-06-09 18:51:45 EDT
Sara Serena Loren

APPROVED AND SO ORDERED:

June 15, 2021
Dated: _____

By: E-SIGNED by Ellen Watson
on 2021-06-15 12:26:23 EDT
Board Chair

Date of Entry: 6/18/21

STATE OF VERMONT



Prosecuting Attorney
Office of
Professional Regulation
89 Main Street
3rd Floor
Montpelier, VT
05620-3402

**STATE OF VERMONT
SECRETARY OF STATE
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION
BOARD OF NURSING**

IN RE:)
SARA SERENA LOREN) **Docket No. 2021-60**
License No. 026.0139592)

REQUEST FOR SUMMARY SUSPENSION

NOW COMES the State of Vermont, by and through State Prosecuting Attorney Elizabeth A. St. James, and petitions the Board of Nursing to summarily suspend the license of Registered Nurse Sara Serena Loren. In support of such petition, the State alleges the following:

Board Authority

1. The Vermont Board of Nursing (the “Board”) has jurisdiction to investigate and adjudicate allegations of unprofessional conduct committed by nurses pursuant to 3 V.S.A. §§ 129, 129a; 26 V.S.A. Chapter 28; the Administrative Rules of the Board of Nursing (“ARBN”); and the Administrative Rules of Practice of the Office of Professional Regulation.
2. The Board of Nursing is authorized by 3 V.S.A. § 814 to summarily suspend the license of a nurse when it finds that the public health, safety, or welfare imperatively requires emergency action.

Statement of Facts

3. Sara Serena Loren (“Respondent”) of Issaquah, Washington, is licensed in the State of Vermont as a Registered Nurse under license number 026.0139592. This license was first issued on July 9, 2019, and expired on March 31, 2021.
4. Respondent is also licensed as a Registered Nurse in the State of New Hampshire, under license number 081782-21.
5. On March 15, 2021, the New Hampshire Board of Nursing suspended Respondent’s New Hampshire registered nursing license due to Respondent’s diversion of fentanyl and hydromorphone from Dartmouth-Hitchcock outpatient surgical center. Respondent admitted to diversion after she was subjected to a fitness-for-duty test due to her statistically significant higher level of controlled substance utilization and the discovery of a needle/syringe and blood-soaked paper towels in a staff bathroom. *See Attachment A.*
6. On March 17, 2021, the New Hampshire Board of Nursing accepted a Preliminary Agreement not to Practice, signed by Respondent, which is in effect until further order of the Board. *See Attachment B.*
7. As of the filing of this Request for Summary Suspension, Respondent’s New Hampshire registered nursing license is still suspended.

Violation One: 3 V.S.A. §129a(a)(5) Practicing the profession when medically or psychologically unfit to do so.

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Prosecuting Attorney
Office of
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89 Main Street
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05620-3402

8. The State re-alleges and incorporates Paragraphs 3 through 7 above.
9. As a Registered Nurse, Respondent shall only practice when she is medically or psychologically fit to do so.
10. Paragraphs 3 through 7 above demonstrate Respondent practiced the profession of nursing while medically or psychologically unfit to do so.
11. The act(s), omission(s), and/or circumstance(s) described above constitute grounds for summary suspension because the Respondent has committed unprofessional conduct in violation of 3 V.S.A. §129a(a)(5).

Violation Two: 26 V.S.A. §1582(a)(2) Diverting or attempting to divert drugs or equipment or supplies for unauthorized use.

12. The State re-alleges and incorporates Paragraphs 3 through 7 above.
13. As a Registered Nurse, Respondent is prohibited from diverting or attempting to divert drugs, equipment, or supplies for unauthorized use.
14. Respondent diverted or attempted to divert drugs for unauthorized use as demonstrated in Paragraphs 3 through 7 above.
15. The act(s), omission(s), and/or circumstance(s) described above constitute grounds for summary suspension because Respondent has committed unprofessional conduct in violation of 26 V.S.A. §1582(a)(2).

Violation Three: 26 V.S.A. §1582(a)(3) Engaging in conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public.

16. The State re-alleges and incorporates Paragraphs 3 through 7 above.
17. As a Registered Nurse, Respondent is prohibited from engaging in conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public.
18. Paragraphs 3 through 7 above demonstrate Respondent engaged in conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public.
19. The act(s), omission(s), and/or circumstance(s) described above constitute grounds for summary suspension because the Respondent has committed unprofessional conduct in violation of 26 V.S.A. §1582(a)(3).

Violation Three: 3 V.S.A. §129a(a)(15) Failing to exercise independent professional judgment in the performance of licensed activities when that judgment is necessary to avoid action repugnant to the obligations of the profession.

20. The State re-alleges and incorporates Paragraphs 3 through 7 above.
21. As a Registered Nurse, Respondent is required to exercise independent professional judgment in the performance of licensed activities.

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Office of
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3rd Floor
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05620-3402

22. Paragraphs 3 through 7 above demonstrate Respondent failed to exercise independent professional judgment in the performance of licensed activities when that judgment is necessary to avoid action repugnant to the obligations of the profession.
23. The act(s), omission(s), and/or circumstance(s) described above constitute grounds for summary suspension because the Respondent has committed unprofessional conduct in violation of 3 V.S.A. §129a(a)(15).

Violation Four: 3 V.S.A §129a(b)(1) Failure to practice competently by reason of any cause on a single occasion or on multiple occasions may constitute unprofessional conduct, whether actual injury to a client, patient, or customer has occurred. Failure to practice competently includes: (1) performance of unsafe or unacceptable patient or client care.

24. The State re-alleges and incorporates Paragraphs 3 through 7 above.
25. As a Registered Nurse, Respondent has an obligation to provide safe and acceptable patient care.
26. Paragraphs 3 through 7 above demonstrate that Respondent provided unsafe and unacceptable patient care.
27. The act(s), omission(s), and/or circumstance(s) described above constitute grounds for summary suspension because Respondent has committed unprofessional conduct in violation of 3 V.S.A. §129a(b)(1).

Relief Requested

28. Respondent currently has an unencumbered license. Members of the public, patients, and potential patients have no way of learning of Respondent's dangerous behavior and will remain unprotected pending suspension of Respondent's license. The facts as set out above establish that in order to protect the public health, safety, or welfare of the people of the State of Vermont, emergency action is imperative.

WHEREFORE, the State of Vermont respectfully requests that pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 814(c), the Respondent's Registered Nurse license, number 026.0139592, be summarily suspended, pending a hearing on the merits.

DATED this 24th day of May, 2021.

STATE OF VERMONT
SECRETARY OF STATE

By: **/s/ Elizabeth A. St. James**

Elizabeth A. St. James
State Prosecuting Attorney
Office of Professional Regulation
89 Main Street, 3rd Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620
P: (802) 828-1218
F: (802) 828-2389
elizabeth.st.james@vermont.gov

STATE OF VERMONT



Prosecuting Attorney
Office of
Professional Regulation
89 Main Street
3rd Floor
Montpelier, VT
05620-3402

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL
LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION**

BOARD OF NURSING

**In Re: Sara Loren,
RN Lic. #081782-21**

Docket No.: 2021-NUR-0021

**ORDER OF EMERGENCY
SUSPENSION - 03/11/21**

I. CASE SUMMARY/PROCEDURAL HISTORY:

On 03/10/21, the Board of Nursing ("Board") received a complaint alleging that Sara Loren ("Licensee") had diverted or attempted to divert medication from Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. OPLC Enforcement investigative staff conducted an expedited investigation. Pursuant to RSA 326-B:37(IV):

In cases involving imminent danger to public health, safety, or welfare, the board may order the immediate suspension of a license pending an adjudicative proceeding.

On 03/11/21, Tracey Collins was appointed to serve as presiding officer under N.H. Code Admin. R. Nur Rule 202.01(l) and 208.01(b)("Rules").

II. EVIDENCE PRESENTED AND CONDUCT OF HEARING:

This Board was presented with sworn testimony from Michael Porter, Esq., Administrator III, OPLC Enforcement and Investigator Briana Miller. A review of the evidence presented, and the reasonable inferences taken there from, allows the Board to find as follows: Licensee was employed as a clinical nurse at Dartmouth-Hitchcock outpatient surgical center since March 2020. On or about 02/23/21, a needle/syringe and blood-soaked paper towels were found in a staff bathroom at the facility. After doing a review of controlled substances utilization, Licensee stood out as having a statistically

significant higher level of controlled substance utilization. On or about 03/05/21, staff at Dartmouth-Hitchcock confronted Licensee and she was subjected to a fitness-for-duty test. Licensee admitted to diverting drugs, including fentanyl and hydromorphone, and that she was responsible for the needle/syringe and bloody paper towels.

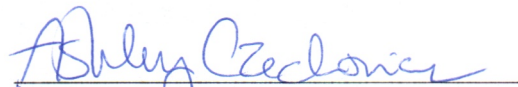
III. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS OF FACTS / CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The Board finds, by a preponderance of the evidence, that OPLC Enforcement has met its burden of proof on an emergency basis. There are sufficient facts to prove, by a preponderance of the evidence that Licensee has engaged in drug diversion involving dangerous and highly addictive controlled substances such as fentanyl and hydromorphone. Such conduct appears to be a clear violation of RSA 326-B:37(II)(n), and (p)(1). Such conduct also appears to be a criminal offense. Due to the nature of the Licensee's actions on their face, OPLC Enforcement has demonstrated an imminent threat to the public health, safety, and welfare, so as to warrant immediate emergency suspension pursuant to RSA 541-A:30(III) and RSA 326-B:37(IV).

IV. CONCLUSION AND DECISION:

Pursuant to RSA 541-A:30(III) and 326-B:37(IV), the Board hereby orders the immediate emergency suspension of Sara Loren's license as a registered nurse, pending a follow up emergency hearing in this matter. A Notice of Emergency Hearing with an appropriate date/time shall follow forthwith.

DATED: 03/15/21



Ashley Czechowicz
Authorized Representative of the Board of Nursing-
New Hampshire Office of
Professional Licensure & Certification
7 Eagle Square
Concord, NH 03301

**State of New Hampshire
New Hampshire Board of Nursing
Concord, New Hampshire 03301**

In the Matter of:
Sara Loren
(License #081782-21)

Docket No. 2021-ENF-0320

PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT NOT TO PRACTICE

The New Hampshire Board of Nursing ("Board") first granted Sara Loren ("Ms. Loren" or "Respondent") a license to practice as a Registered Nurse ("RN") on December 6, 2019. Ms. Loren was issued license number 081782-21.

On or about March 10, 2021 the Board received a complaint alleging Ms. Loren engaged in diversion of fentanyl and hydromorphone at her place of employment while engaged in her duties as an RN.

Respondent enters into a Preliminary Agreement Not To Practice with the Board as follows:

1. Recognizing that professional misconduct allegations are now pending against me before the Board, I, Sara Loren, RN, voluntarily agree not to practice as a registered nurse effective upon my signing this Preliminary Agreement Not to Practice.
2. I admit to no violations of NH RSA 326-B or any administrative rules, ethical provisions, or any other laws, statutes, or regulations, adopted by the Board.
3. Understanding that this Preliminary Agreement and the restrictions herein shall remain until further order of the Board, I hereby specifically waive any

statute of limitations, or laches defense, which might be then available,

including but not limited to, those based on RSA 332-G: 8 and RSA 332-G:

9.

4. I understand that I may request a hearing on this Preliminary Agreement at any time and a hearing on this matter will be scheduled for the next available hearing date.
5. In the event that I apply for a renewal of my license while this agreement is in effect, I voluntarily agree to waive any statutory or administrative time deadlines regarding the Board's final action on any such license renewal application. I understand that by waiving such deadlines, the Board's final action on any such license renewal application will be automatically deferred until after the disposition of this Board matter and that my license will not expire while this Preliminary Agreement is in effect.
6. I voluntarily enter into this Preliminary Agreement with the Board and state that no promises or representations have been made to me other than those terms and conditions expressly stated herein.
7. I further understand that this document shall become a permanent part of my file, and will be maintained by the Board as a public document.
8. I have had the opportunity to seek and obtain the advice of an attorney of my choosing in connection with my decision to sign this Preliminary Agreement.

9. I am of sound mind and not under the influence of any substance that would impair my judgement at the time I sign this Preliminary Agreement.
10. I understand that my failure to comply with the terms of this Preliminary Agreement Not To Practice shall constitute unprofessional conduct under RSA 326-B: 37 and may subject me to discipline under RSA 326-B: 37

FOR RESPONDENT

Date: 3-12-21

Sara Loren
Respondent (Sara Loren)

FOR THE BOARD

This Preliminary Agreement is hereby accepted in accordance with the binding terms and conditions set forth above.

Date: 3-12-21

3/17/21 (APR)

Ashley Czechawicz
(Signature)
Sara Loren Administrator
Print Name
Authorized Representative of the
New Hampshire Board of Nursing