

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

IN RE:)
MICHELLE RAE SKINNER) **Docket No. 2016-612**
License No. 075.0017807)

STIPULATION AND CONSENT ORDER

STIPULATION

Board Authority

1. The Vermont State Board of Nursing (the "Board") has authority to issue warnings or reprimands; suspend, revoke, limit, or condition current licenses; or prevent the renewal of lapsed licenses if, after disciplinary hearing, the Board finds that the Respondent has engaged in unprofessional conduct. 3 V.S.A. § 129(a); 3 V.S.A. § 129a; 3 V.S.A. § 814(d); 26 V.S.A. Chapter 28; the Administrative Rules of the Board of Nursing (the "ARBN"); and the Rules of the Office of Professional Regulation.

Stipulated Facts

2. Michelle Rae Skinner ("Respondent") of Concord, Vermont is licensed by the State of Vermont as a Licensed Nursing Assistant ("LNA") under license number 075.0017807. This license was originally issued on June 27, 2008 and expires on November 30, 2018.
3. At all relevant times, Respondent was employed as an LNA at The Pines Rehabilitation and Health Center (the "Facility") in Lyndonville, Vermont.
4. From approximately February 2016 through December 2016, Respondent sold heroin to at least three Licensed Practical Nurses working with her at the Facility.
5. Respondent would text with staff at the Facility regarding the sale of heroin. Respondent was often the first to initiate contact, letting staff know she had heroin for purchase.
6. Respondent also sold Suboxone to at least one Licensed Practical Nurse working with her at the Facility.
7. Respondent admitted to using heroin herself for approximately one year, but reports she has been clean for approximately one year. Respondent was actively licensed as an LNA during the period she reports active heroin use.

STATE OF VERMONT



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

Violation One: 3 V.S.A §129a(b)(2) 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: (2) failure to conform to the essential standards of acceptable and prevailing practice.

8. The State re-alleges and incorporates Paragraphs 2 through 7 above.
9. The essential standards of acceptable and prevailing practice prohibit Licensed Nursing Assistants from engaging in criminal activity while working.
10. Respondent failed to meet this standard by engaging in the conduct described in Paragraphs 3 through 6 above.
11. The essential standards of acceptable and prevailing practice prohibit Licensed Nursing Assistants from encouraging and enabling substance abuse among their nursing co-workers.
12. Respondent failed to meet this standard by engaging in the conduct described in Paragraphs 3 through 6 above.
13. The act(s), omission(s), and/or circumstance(s) described above constitute grounds for discipline because Respondent has committed unprofessional conduct in violation of 3 V.S.A. §129a(b)(2).

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

14. The State re-alleges and incorporates Paragraphs 2 through 7 above.
15. As a Licensed Nursing Assistant, Respondent has a responsibility not to engage in conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public.
16. Respondent engaged in conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public as demonstrated in Paragraphs 3 through 7 above.
17. The act(s), omission(s), and/or circumstance(s) described above constitute grounds for discipline because Respondent has committed unprofessional conduct in violation of 26 V.S.A. §1582(a)(3).

Understandings

18. Respondent acknowledges that the facts above are true and that the conditions set out in the Consent Order below are appropriate and necessary to protect the public.

STATE OF VERMONT



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

19. Respondent understands that the Nursing Board must review and accept the terms of the Consent Order. If the Board rejects any portion, the entire Stipulation and Consent Order shall be null and void.
20. Respondent specifically waives any claims that any disclosures made to the full Board during its review of this agreement have prejudiced Respondent's rights to a fair and impartial hearing if this agreement is not accepted by the Board and proceeds to a contested hearing.
21. Respondent has read and reviewed this entire document and agrees that it contains the entire agreement between the parties.
22. Respondent is not under the influence of any drugs or alcohol at the time Respondent signs this Stipulation and Consent Order.
23. Respondent voluntarily enters into this agreement after the opportunity to consult with legal counsel and is not being coerced by anyone into signing this Stipulation and Consent Order.
24. Respondent voluntarily waives Respondent's right to a contested hearing before the Board of Nursing and waives any right to appeal from this Stipulation and Consent Order.
25. Respondent agrees that the Order set forth below may be entered by the Board.

ORDER

Based on the Stipulation above, it is **ORDERED AND ADJUDGED** as follows:

- A. The Board of Nursing hereby **REINSTATES and CONDITIONS** the Respondent's license for a **MINIMUM OF THREE (3) YEARS, commencing on the date of entry of this order.** The **CONDITIONS** shall be as follows:
 1. Re-issuance of License. Upon the commencement of these conditions, Respondent shall be issued a license labeled "conditioned."
 2. Length of Time of Conditions Imposed. The conditions shall remain in place until Respondent has completed all conditions ordered. Respondent shall be subject to the conditions until Respondent completes a **minimum of three (3) years** of supervised licensed nursing assistant practice in which Respondent works at least forty (40) hours every two (2) weeks as a licensed nursing assistant. Part time hours of fewer than forty (40) hours every two (2) weeks shall be credited on a prorated basis. Respondent shall be prohibited from working more than forty (40) hours per week.
 3. Monitoring. The Office of Professional Regulation, through the Enforcement Case Manager, shall be responsible for monitoring Respondent's compliance with these

STATE OF VERMONT



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

Conditions. All reports or correspondence regarding compliance with these conditions shall be submitted to the Case Manager in accordance with the Conditions listed below.

4. Completion of Substance Abuse Counseling, Treatment Plan, Treatment Reports and recovery groups. Respondent shall continue substance abuse counseling and comply with the substance abuse treatment plan until the pre-approved treating professional certifies in writing to the Board that such counseling is no longer necessary. Within ten (10) days of the date of entry of this Order, Respondent shall provide a copy of this Stipulation and Consent Order to her treatment provider and inform him or her of Respondent's conditional license status and the accompanying conditions. Respondent's treating professional shall submit to the Board, on forms provided by the Board, acknowledgement of receipt of the Stipulation and Consent Order along with Respondent's current treatment plan.

Respondent shall authorize Respondent's treating professional to submit to the Board **monthly** reports on forms issued by the Board. Respondent shall authorize Respondent's treating professional to provide all information requested by the Nursing Board, either orally or in writing, at any time during the period this Consent Order is in effect.

If Respondent takes prescribed medications as part of her substance abuse counseling and treatment, Respondent's monthly treating professional reports must also indicate Respondent's current dosage and whether Respondent is appropriately taking her medication as prescribed. Respondent must continue to take such medications as prescribed, until her treating professional certifies in writing to the Board that such medication is no longer necessary.

Respondent shall participate as recommended by Respondent's treating professional in substance abuse recovery group(s), and, if recommended, shall submit **quarterly** reports documenting such attendance on forms issued by the Board.

5. Random Drug and Alcohol Testing. Respondent shall submit to random drug and alcohol testing through the Board pre-approved entity. All testing shall be done on a random, unannounced basis and analyzed by a lab qualified to analyze samples for forensic purposes and approved by the Board. All urine specimens collected for tests shall be collected in an observed setting. All screens shall be negative.

Failure to appear for, refusal to provide, adulteration of, dilution of, or tampering with a sample for any urine screen shall cause that screen to be presumed positive. Any positive screen shall constitute a violation of this Order. Failure to call-in to determine whether Respondent is selected for testing on any given day, regardless of whether Respondent is actually selected that day, may be considered a violation of this Order.

STATE OF VERMONT



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

6. Abstain from Drug and Alcohol Use. Respondent shall abstain completely from the consumption or possession of alcohol and drugs.
7. Drug Use Exception. Respondent may take scheduled/controlled medications lawfully prescribed for a bona fide illness or condition by a health care practitioner disclosed to the Board in writing by Respondent within forty-eight (48) hours of the prescription. Respondent's health care practitioner shall inform the Board, in writing and on appropriate letterhead, of knowledge of Respondent's substance abuse issue(s) within seven (7) days of entering into the practitioner/patient relationship. Additionally, the practitioner shall inform the Board of all scheduled/controlled medications prescribed – and the anticipation of how long such prescriptions will need to be taken – within seven (7) days of the prescription.

The Board or its designee may request that the practitioner document the necessity for the prescribed scheduled/controlled medications or other medications known to have abuse potential. It is not anticipated that Respondent would be prescribed scheduled/controlled medication during the term of this Consent Order for a period greater than fourteen (14) days, but if so, then the conditions herein may be revoked by the Board.

Respondent shall provide the Board with a current medication list of any medications taken on a scheduled or as-needed basis on forms issued by the Board within seven (7) days of the date of reinstatement and shall update this list within forty-eight (48) hours of any change in these medications.

8. Notification to Employers/Nursing School. Respondent shall provide a copy of this Stipulation and Consent Order to all employers in any current or future setting in which Respondent practices as a nurse and inform them of Respondent's conditional license status. Within ten (10) days of the date of entry of this Consent Order or of any subsequent nursing employment, Respondent shall cause Respondent's immediate supervisor to submit to the Board an employer agreement form approved by the Board, acknowledging receipt of the Stipulation and Consent Order and the ability to comply with the conditions in the Consent Order.

In the event Respondent is attending a nursing program which has a clinical portion that involves actual patient care, Respondent shall provide a copy of the Stipulation and Consent Order to the Program Director. Respondent shall cause the Program Director to submit to the Board a nursing program agreement form approved by the Board, acknowledging receipt of the Stipulation and Consent Order and the ability of the program to comply with the conditions in the Consent Order during clinical experience.

9. Reports from Employers/Program Director. Within one (1) month of the date of reinstatement or within one (1) month of the commencement of licensed nursing assistant employment and **monthly** thereafter, Respondent shall cause every licensed nursing assistant employer Respondent has worked for during the month to submit to

STATE OF VERMONT



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

the Board an evaluation of Respondent's work performance and attendance during that month. Moreover, on a **quarterly** basis, these reports shall include the results of the employer's medication audits of Respondent's medication administration and practices, if and when Respondent engages in medication administration. In the event Respondent is attending a nursing program, Respondent shall cause the Program Director to submit to the Board, on a monthly basis, a written evaluation of Respondent's performance and attendance. These reports shall be submitted in writing on forms issued by the Board. All employer reports shall indicate satisfactory performance (ie., consistently meeting all standards of nursing practice) and attendance.

10. Practice Under Supervision. Respondent shall practice as a licensed nursing assistant only in a setting where Respondent has direct supervision for the entire shift by a licensed registered nurse or licensed practical nurse that is in good standing with the Board.
11. Administration of Medications. Respondent is prohibited from administering any controlled substances. This condition may be removed only by Respondent filing a petition with the Board after Respondent has worked as a licensed nursing assistant for six (6) months for at least forty (40) hours every two weeks (or the part time equivalent) after the date of reinstatement.

In any such petition, Respondent must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Nursing Board or its designee, that Respondent can safely and competently administer such medications. Respondent must include appropriate support from Respondent's treating professional and employer or nursing school administrator and a description of the documentation and inventory control procedures in place.

The removal of this prohibition shall not automatically result in the reinstatement of all medication privileges. The Board may gradually restore those privileges through whatever intermediary steps it determines are appropriate.

12. Types of Employment Prohibited. Respondent shall not work in a supervisory role. Respondent shall not work for a nurse registry, traveling nurse agency, float-pool, home health care agency, temporary nursing employment agency, or as a private duty nurse or personal care provider requiring a nursing or nursing assistant license during the effective period of this Consent Order.
13. Interview with the Board or its Designee. Respondent shall appear in person for interviews with the Board or its designee upon request.
14. Out-of-State Practice. Before any out-of-state practice can be credited toward fulfillment of these terms and conditions, Respondent shall first obtain approval from the Board. The Board will approve out-of-state nursing practice so long as Respondent can still comply with the provisions of this Consent Order. If Respondent receives discipline on a nursing license held in another state during the

STATE OF VERMONT



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

conditioned period, Respondent must inform the Board of such, in writing, within ten (10) days of receiving such discipline.

15. Notification of Place of Employment/Personal Address/Telephone Number. Within ten (10) days of the date of entry of this Consent Order, Respondent shall notify the Board, in writing, of Respondent's current place of employment, personal address, and telephone number. Respondent shall further notify the Board, in writing, within forty-eight (48) hours of any change in employment (including resignation or termination), personal address, or telephone number.
16. Notification to Other States. In the event that Respondent is licensed in nursing in any other state(s), Respondent must inform the nursing licensing board of the state(s) in which Respondent is licensed of the conditional status of Respondent's Vermont nursing license within thirty (30) days of the date of entry of this Order.
17. License Renewal. This Order does not automatically extend the license and Respondent must comply with the requirements for license renewal.
18. Release of Information Forms. This Order requires Respondent to authorize drug and/or alcohol treatment providers to report information in verbal and/or written format and/or to discuss Respondent and any and all treatment rendered to Respondent for drugs and/or alcohol with the Board or its designee. Any and all of this information may be provided to the Office of Professional Regulation investigators, and that the information may be used for further prosecutions if so warranted or if the Office of Professional Regulation determines that said information violates the terms of this Order or any rules or laws governing the profession of nursing.

Respondent is entitled to revoke this consent at any time. However, any revocation shall be considered a violation of this Order. This consent expires when the conditions are removed from Respondent's nursing license.

This Stipulation and Consent Order shall itself constitute a valid written consent pursuant to the requirements of 42 C.F.R. § 2.31. Respondent understands that Respondent's treatment provider may require Respondent's to sign a separate and distinct consent meeting the requirements of 42 C.F.R. § 2.31.

19. Costs. Respondent shall bear all costs of complying with this Consent Order.
20. Violation of this Order. If Respondent violates this Order the Board, after giving Respondent notice and an opportunity to be heard, may rescind or modify this Order and impose additional appropriate disciplinary actions. If a complaint of unprofessional conduct is made against Respondent during the term of this Order, this Order shall be automatically extended until the unprofessional conduct matter is concluded.

STATE OF VERMONT



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

21. Completion of Conditional License Period. Respondent shall submit a petition to the Docket Clerk to remove any and all conditions on Respondent's license. The State will assent to or oppose Respondent's petition. The Board will conduct a hearing if necessary. Respondent bears the burden and must present proof that Respondent has fully complied with the terms of this Order and these conditions are no longer necessary to protect the public.

- B. Notwithstanding any provision above, the Respondent must continue to meet all Board requirements for maintaining a license, license renewal and license reinstatement.
- C. This Stipulation and Consent Order is a matter of public record and may be reported to other licensing authorities as provided in 3 V.S.A. §129(a).
- D. This Stipulation and Consent Order will remain part of Respondent's licensing file and may be used for purposes of determining sanctions in any future disciplinary matter.

AGREED TO:

STATE OF VERMONT
SECRETARY OF STATE

Dated: 10/27/17

By: Elizabeth A. St. James
Elizabeth A. St. James
State Prosecuting Attorney

MICHELLE RAE SKINNER
RESPONDENT

Dated: 10-27-17

By: Michelle Skinner
Michelle Rae Skinner

APPROVED AND SO ORDERED:

VERMONT BOARD OF NURSING

Dated: 11/13/2017

By: EW
Chairperson

Date of Entry: 11/14/17

STATE OF VERMONT



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