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Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
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October 17, 2025

Via First Class and Certified Mail No. : 9589 0710 5270 0876 5969 01

Return Receipt Requested

Nick Pollard, Esq.
Duddy, Goodwin & Pollard
2 Center Plaza, Suite 610
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Re: In the Matter of Lisa Teehan O'Brien
Docket Nos. NUR-2020-0072
License No. RN259572

Dear Attorney Pollard and Ms. O'Brien:

Enclosed please find the Final Decision and Order after Full Adjudicatory Hearing issued by the Board of Registration in Nursing on October 17, 2025 and **effective October 27, 2025**. This constitutes full and final disposition of the above-referenced Complaint, as well as the final agency action of the Board. Your appeal rights are noted on page 8.

You may contact Meghan Bresnahan, Board Counsel at Meghan.bresnahan@mass.gov with any questions that you may have concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

Julia Matthews on behalf of

Heather Cambra, BSN, RN, JD
Executive Director
Board of Registration in Nursing

Encl.

cc: Ernest L. Sarason, Esq., Administrative Magistrate
Andrew Lawendowski, Esq., Prosecuting Counsel

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

SUFFOLK COUNTY

BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN
NURSING

Board of Registration in Nursing,)
Petitioner)
)
v.)
)
LISA TEEHAN O'BRIEN)
License No. RN259572)
License Expires 12/22/2026)
Respondent)
_____)

Docket No. NUR-2020-0072

FINAL DECISION AND ORDER AFTER FULL ADJUDICATORY HEARING

Procedural History

On November 5, 2021, the Board of Registration in Nursing ("Board") issued and duly served on Lisa Teehan O'Brien ("Respondent"), a Registered Nurse ("RN"), an Order to Show Cause ("OTSC") on why it should not take action against her license and right to renew. On November 23, 2021, Respondent filed an Answer and request for a hearing.

On January 30, 2023 and January 31, 2023, the Board held a full adjudicatory hearing ("Hearing") before Administrative Magistrate Martha Sesnovich ("Magistrate Sesnovich"). Prosecuting Counsel, Respondent's Counsel, and Respondent were present.

On September 22, 2023, both Prosecuting Counsel and Respondent's Counsel filed a Post-Hearing Brief. On June 16, 2025, Administrative Magistrate Ernest Sarason ("Magistrate Sarason") issued a Tentative Decision After Full Adjudicatory Hearing ("Tentative Decision")¹.

¹ In order to issue this Tentative Decision, Magistrate Sarason reviewed the transcripts and exhibits of the Hearing. 801 CMR 1.01 (11)(e) states, "When a Presiding Officer becomes unavailable before completing the preparation of the initial decision, the Agency shall appoint a successor to assume the case and render the initial decision. If the presentation of evidence has been completed and the record is closed, the successor shall decide the case on the basis of the record. Otherwise, the successor may either proceed with evidence or require presentation of evidence again from the beginning." *But see, City of Salem vs. MCAD*, 404 Mass. 170 (1989) "When a decision depends on choosing between conflicting versions of the material events, as in this case, the review examiner needs more than

The Board has reviewed and carefully considered the Tentative Decision. The Board adopts the Tentative Decision in full, including all findings of fact, credibility determinations, conclusions of law and discussion contained therein, as the Board's Final Decision. The Tentative Decision is attached and incorporated herein by reference.

Discussion/Rational for Sanction

The Board is charged with protecting the public health, safety, and welfare and, to this end, the Board has broad authority to regulate the conduct of nursing professionals including the ability to sanction professionals for conduct that undermines public confidence in the integrity of the profession. *See Kvitka v. Board of Registration in Medicine*, 407 Mass. 140 cert. denied, 498 U.S. 823 (1990); *Raymond v. Board of Registration in Medicine*, 387 Mass. 708, 713 (1982).

As outlined in the Tentative Decision, Respondent's conduct involved multiple failures in the proper handling, documentation, and administration of controlled substances, including: (1) leaving the premises with a controlled substance, (2) failing to document pain assessments before and after administration of controlled substances, (3) administering controlled substances to patients assigned to another nurse without documenting the reasons for doing so, (4) failing to document administration or waste of controlled substances in her possession, and (5) withdrawing a larger amount of a controlled substance than required pursuant to the prescriber's order. It was determined that this conduct is not in accordance with 244 CMR 9.03(5), (9), (35), (39), (44), and (47) and constitutes unprofessional conduct and conduct which undermines public confidence in the integrity of the profession and therefore subjects Respondent to discipline under Massachusetts General Laws ("M.G.L.") c. 112, § 61. *See Giroux v. Board of Dental Examiners*, 322 Mass. 251, 252 (1958). The Board's discussion and order are limited to the findings proven at hearing.

These violations reflect a significant departure from accepted standards of nursing practice and demonstrate lapses in accountability, documentation, and safeguarding of controlled substances. The Board recognizes that such conduct has the potential to

just the record and a tape recording or transcript of the hearing." Having reviewed the transcripts and exhibits, Magistrate Sarason found sufficient materials to support issuance of a tentative decision as successor Presiding Officer with respect to this matter.

compromise patient safety, undermine the integrity of medication management systems, and erode public trust in the nursing profession. While these violations are serious, they appear to be rooted in poor judgment and inadequate documentation, rather than intentional misconduct or exploitation of controlled substances. Further, the Board considers the mitigating circumstances established in the record that contributed to Respondent's conduct. During the relevant period, Respondent faced severe personal hardship which she admitted took a significant toll on her mental state and may have contributed to errors in the workplace. Despite these challenges, Respondent did not divert or unlawfully possess controlled substances, did not fail any drug screenings, was never observed impaired at work, and affirmatively offered to undergo drug testing when questions arose.

The Board also notes that several of the proven violations occurred in the context of systemic and cultural practices at the employing institution (Brigham and Women's Hospital ("BWH")). Testimony established that Omnicell machine malfunctions and user-interface flaws contributed to errors in waste documentation, and that other nurses in the emergency department ("ED") occasionally encountered similar issues. Moreover, it was common practice in the BWH ED for nurses to administer medication to patients assigned to others, particularly in the high-volume emergency setting, without consistently documenting the justification. Respondent credibly testified that she was not aware of new policies regarding waste within one hour because illness prevented her from attending the relevant training session. Although these explanations do not excuse Respondent's failure to adhere to required documentation standards, they provide context for understanding her conduct.

In determining the appropriate sanction, the Board is mindful of its obligation to protect the public while considering both aggravating and mitigating factors. Here, the proven violations demonstrate poor judgment and inadequate adherence to documentation and controlled substance protocols. However, the Magistrate did not find evidence of diversion or impairment. For these reasons, the Board concludes that probation for a period of **one year** is sufficient to protect the public, uphold professional standards, and provide Respondent the opportunity to remediate and safely continue her practice.

The Board voted to adopt the within **Final Decision** at its meeting held on October 8, 2025, by the following vote:

In favor: *A. Alley, MSN, RN, S. Abshir, LPN, K. Crowley, DNP, RN, A. Joseph, MD, L. Kelly, DNP, RN, CNP, L. Keough, PhD, RN, CNP, D. Nikitas, BSN, RN, K. Pelletier, ADN, RN, K. Sanclemente, BSN, RN, R. Sesay, ASN, RN, H. Underwood, LPN*

Opposed: *None*

Abstained: *None*

Recused: *None*

Absent: *R. Reynolds, PhD, MSN, RN*

ORDER

1. Based on its Final Decision, the Board orders that Respondent's license to practice as a Registered Nurse in Massachusetts, License No. RN259572 be placed on **PROBATION** for no less than **one (1) year** commencing on the Effective Date of this Order ("Effective Date").
2. During the Probationary Period, the Respondent shall comply with all of the following requirements to the Board's satisfaction:
 - a. Comply with all laws and regulations governing the practice of nursing.
 - b. Notify the Board in writing within ten (10) days of each change in their name and/or address.
 - c. Timely renew their license to practice nursing.
 - d. Respond to inquiries from Board staff in a timely manner.
 - e. Disclose the terms of this Order to the Program Administrator of any Nursing Education Program at which they are enrolled during the Probationary Period.
 - f. Maintain active employment (Active Practice Requirements) in a position that requires a nursing license, in a facility setting where the Licensee receives

consistent, on-site supervision by a qualified licensed nurse² for a minimum average of twenty (20) hours per week throughout the Probationary Period.

- i. A qualified licensed nurse is defined as a nurse who 1) possesses a Massachusetts³ nursing license in good standing or authority to practice under federal law, or both; 2) is employed in a supervisory role; 3) possesses a minimum of one year full-time experience in nursing, or its equivalent, within the last five years; 4) is educationally prepared at or above the level of the Respondent; and 5) has no open complaints with the Board and no open criminal matters.
- g. Refrain from the practice of nursing in any of the following employment settings during the Probationary Period:
 - i. Settings where structured, consistent on-site supervision is not in place including but not limited to, home care agencies or private home care;
 - ii. Travel nurse agencies; or
 - iii. Temporary staffing agencies.
- h. Review this Order with each of their nursing supervisors, and arrange for each nursing supervisor to submit directly to the Board:
 - i. a completed and signed "Supervisor Verification Form" (**Form 1**), provided with this Order, within thirty (30) days of
 - (1) the Effective Date *and*
 - (2) any subsequent employment commenced during the Probationary Period.
 - ii. *quarterly* written reports⁴, using the "Supervision Report Form" (**Form 2**) provided with this Order attesting to the quality of the Respondent's nursing practice, reliability and attendance and specifically addressing Respondent's proper administration and documentation of medications. The Board may take action in the event that any quarterly report reveals a practice issue the Board deems significant.

² The Licensee must receive direct supervision from a qualified licensed nurse who is employed in a supervisory role and is physically located at all times in each facility in which the Licensee practices nursing.

³ Or a license to practice in the jurisdiction in which the Respondent is employed.

⁴ The Respondent is responsible for ensuring that these reports on the required form are received by the Board commencing ninety (90) days after the Effective Date and on the first day of every third month thereafter.

- i. Within thirty (30) days of the Effective Date, notify the Board in writing if the Respondent is not employed in accordance with paragraph 2f.
 - j. If not employed in accordance with paragraph 2f within thirty (30) days of the Effective Date:
 - i. On a weekly basis: actively search for nursing employment.
 - ii. On a monthly basis: submit to the Board a detailed description of their nursing job search activities and the status of their nursing employment.
 - k. Complete the Active Practice Requirements within a period up to a maximum of double the length of the Probationary Period⁵.
 - l. Notify the Board in writing within seven (7) days of any change in the Respondent's employment status, including each change in Employer, each resignation or termination, and the name, address, and telephone number of each new Employer.
 - m. Notify the Board in writing within seven (7) days of any complaint filed against their nursing license in any jurisdiction in which they hold such a license.
3. Board staff may, pending review by the Board, take immediate action to restrict nursing practice privileges following:
- a. A report from an out of state employer that the Respondent is under investigation for a practice issue which violates Board regulations at 244 CMR 9.00 *et seq.*
- Immediate action that Board staff may take includes notifying the Respondent and any employer where the Respondent may be engaged in nursing practice, that the Respondent's nursing practice privileges have been restricted by the Board. Board staff shall inform the Respondent of the factual basis for taking immediate action. In the event that the Respondent disputes the factual basis, the Respondent agrees to refrain from the practice of nursing pursuant to their Massachusetts license until such time as the Board either determines that there is no violation, or takes action pursuant to paragraph 5.
4. If Respondent has complied to the Board's satisfaction with all the requirements contained in this Order, the Probationary Period will terminate **one (1) year** after the Effective Date.
5. If the Respondent does not comply with each requirement of this Order, or if the Board opens a Subsequent Complaint⁶ during the Probationary Period, the Respondent agrees to the following:

⁵ The Probationary Period is defined in paragraph 1.

⁶ The term "Subsequent Complaint" applies to a complaint opened after the Effective Date, which (1) alleges that the Respondent engaged in conduct that violates Board statutes or regulations, and (2) is substantiated by evidence,

- a. The Board may upon written notice to the Respondent, as warranted to protect the public health, safety, or welfare:
 - i. EXTEND the Probationary Period; and/or
 - ii. MODIFY the Probation Order requirements; and/or
 - iii. IMMEDIATELY SUSPEND the Respondent's nursing license.
 - b. If the Board suspends the Respondent's nursing license pursuant to paragraph 5(a)(iii), the suspension shall remain in effect until:
 - i. the Board gives the Respondent written notice that the Probationary Period is to be resumed and under what terms; or
 - ii. the Board and the Respondent sign a subsequent agreement; or
 - iii. the Board issues a written final decision and order following adjudication of the allegations (1) of noncompliance with this Order, and/ or (2) contained in the Subsequent Complaint.
6. If the Board suspends Respondent's nursing license in accordance with paragraph 5(a)(iii), Respondent will no longer be authorized to engage in the practice of nursing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and shall not in any way represent themselves as a Registered Nurse until such time as the Board reinstates their nursing license or right to renew such license⁷.

The Board voted to adopt the within **Final Order** at its meeting held on October 8, 2025, by the following vote:

In favor: *A. Alley, MSN, RN, S. Abshir, LPN, K. Crowley, DNP, RN, A. Joseph, MD, L. Kelly, DNP, RN, CNP, L. Keough, PhD, RN, CNP, D. Nikitas, BSN, RN, K. Pelletier, ADN, RN, K. Sanclemente, BSN, RN, R. Sesay, ASN, RN, H. Underwood, LPN*

Opposed: *None*

as determined following the complaint investigation during which the Respondent shall have an opportunity to respond.

⁷ Any evidence of unlicensed practice or misrepresentation as a Registered Nurse after the Board has notified the Respondent of their license suspension shall be grounds for further disciplinary action by the Board and the Board's referral of the matter to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for prosecution, as set forth in G.L. c. 112, §§ 65 and 80.

Abstained: None

Recused: None

Absent: R. Reynolds, PhD, MSN, RN

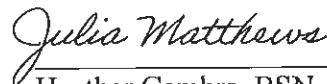
EFFECTIVE DATE OF ORDER

This Final Decision and Order becomes effective upon the tenth (10th) day from the date it is issued (see "Date Issued" below).

RIGHT TO APPEAL

Respondent is hereby notified of the right to appeal this Final Decision and Order to the Superior Court for Suffolk County or the county where Respondent resides pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 14, within thirty (30) days of receipt of notice of this Final Decision and Order.

Board of Registration in Nursing,

 on behalf of
Heather Cambra, BSN, RN, JD
Executive Director
Board of Registration in Nursing

Date Issued: October 17, 2025

Notified:

FIRST CLASS AND CERTIFIED MAIL NO.
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

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