

IN THE MATTER OF
GEORGE GATEWOOD, III, P.A.

Respondent

License Number: C02123

BEFORE THE
MARYLAND STATE BOARD

OF PHYSICIANS

Case Number: 7724-0082

FINAL DECISION AND ORDER

On May 1, 2025, Disciplinary Panel A (“Panel A”) of the Maryland State Board of Physicians (the “Board”) issued charges against George Gatewood, III, P.A. (the “Respondent”). Panel A charged the Respondent with violating provisions of the Maryland Physician Assistants Act (the “Act”).¹ Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. §§ 15-101—15-502 (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2024 Supp.). Specifically, the Respondent was charged under the following provisions of the Act:

Health Occ. § 15-314. Disciplinary grounds.

(a) Subject to the hearing provisions of § 15-315 of this subtitle, a disciplinary panel, on the affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum of the disciplinary panel, may reprimand any physician assistant, place any physician assistant on probation, or suspend or revoke a license if the physician assistant:

....

- (3) Is guilty of:
 - (ii) Unprofessional conduct in the practice of medicine;
- (4) Is professionally, physically, or mentally incompetent[.]

On September 29, 2025, the matter was delegated to the Office of Administrative Hearings (“OAH”) for a hearing to issue proposed findings of fact, proposed conclusions of law, and a proposed disposition.

¹ The Respondent’s license to practice as a physician assistant was summarily suspended, on April 29, 2025.

On October 8, 2025, OAH sent a Notice of Remote Scheduling Conference to both parties (the Respondent and the State) via the United States Postal Service at their respective addresses of record. COMAR 28.02.01.05C. The Notice of Remote Scheduling Conference informed the parties that the Remote Scheduling Conference (“Scheduling Conference”) was scheduled for November 7, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., and provided the login information for accessing the Webex videoconferencing platform (Webex) by video or by telephone. No notice was returned to OAH as undeliverable.

On November 7, 2025, an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) of OAH held the Scheduling Conference via Webex as scheduled. *See* COMAR 28.02.01.20B. An Administrative Prosecutor represented the State at the Scheduling Conference. After waiting at least fifteen minutes, the Respondent did not appear. The Administrative Prosecutor confirmed that the address of record the OAH had for the Respondent is the same as the address of record the State has successfully used in the past. The ALJ proceeded to conduct the Scheduling Conference in the Respondent’s absence. The ALJ scheduled a Prehearing Conference for December 16, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., to take place via Webex. The ALJ also scheduled the hearing on the merits to take place via Webex on January 20 and 21, 2026. On November 21, 2025, the ALJ mailed the parties a letter memorializing those dates. That letter included the following language:

Please note that failure to participate in the Prehearing Conference may result in the hearing proceeding in your absence, and your appeal being dismissed.

On November 19, 2025, OAH sent the parties a Notice of Remote Prehearing Conference stating the Prehearing Conference would be held, via Webex, on December 16, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. COMAR 28.02.01.17; COMAR 28.02.01.20B(1)(b). The Notice of Remote Prehearing Conference included instructions pertaining to the Prehearing Conference. The instructions

provided that, no later than fifteen calendar days before the Prehearing Conference, each party was required to submit a prehearing statement identifying, among other things, the issues to be represented at the hearing, any undisputed facts, the witnesses and exhibits for the hearing, any expert witnesses, any motions, and any discovery disputes. On December 5, 2025, the State filed its Prehearing Conference Statement. The Respondent did not file a Prehearing Conference Statement.

On November 21, 2025, the ALJ sent a letter by email to the parties. The letter stated that the scheduling conference took place on November 7, 2025, and that the Respondent did not appear. The letter further stated that a prehearing conference was scheduled for December 16, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., via Webex. The letter further informed the parties that the hearing on the merits was scheduled for January 20 and 21, 2026, at 9:30 a.m., which would be held via Webex.

On December 4, 2025, the State filed with OAH its Prehearing Conference Statement.

On December 11, 2025, OAH received return mail from the Respondent's address of record. The returned mail included the Notice of Remote Prehearing Conference and the separate notice for the January 20-21, 2026, hearing.

On December 12, 2025, an OAH docketing specialist reached out to the Respondent by phone and email, requesting an updated mailing address, but did not receive a response.

The Respondent did not notify OAH of any change of mailing address. COMAR 28.02.01.03E. Accordingly, the ALJ found that the Respondent received proper notice of the Prehearing Conference. *See Maryland State Bd. of Nursing v. Sesay*, 224 Md. App. 432, 448 (2015) ("Generally, notice by mail is presumed to provide constitutionally sufficient notice."); *see also* Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-208; COMAR 28.02.01.05. Further, the Respondent was also sent notice of the prehearing conference by email, on November 21, 2025.

On December 16, 2025, the ALJ convened the prehearing conference as scheduled. The Administrative Prosecutor appeared on behalf of the State. The Respondent was not present. After waiting more than fifteen minutes, the Respondent did not appear. The ALJ then commenced the prehearing conference in the Respondent's absence, and the State requested that the ALJ issue a proposed default order against the Respondent. COMAR 28.02.01.23A; *see also* COMAR 28.02.01.12B(1). The ALJ granted the motion and advised that a written proposed default order would be issued.

Pursuant to COMAR 10.32.02.04D(1), OAH's Rules of Procedure were applicable to the proceeding. OAH's Rules of Procedure, COMAR 28.02.01.23, with respect to a failure to appear, provide:

A. If, after receiving proper notice ..., a party fails to attend or participate, either personally or through a representative, in a prehearing conference, hearing, or other stage of a proceeding, the ALJ may proceed in that party's absence or may, in accordance with the hearing authority delegated by the agency, issue a final or proposed default order against the defaulting party.

....

D. Proposed Default Orders. A proposed default order is reviewable in accordance with the delegating agency's regulations governing review of proposed decisions.

In this case, a Board disciplinary panel delegated to OAH the authority to render a proposed decision. COMAR 10.32.02.04D(5).

On December 22, 2025, the ALJ issued a written Proposed Default Order. The ALJ found that the Respondent received proper notice of the prehearing conference but failed to appear and that an entry of a proposed default order against was warranted under the circumstances. The ALJ thus proposed that the Respondent be found in default. The proposed default order, however, did

not propose a sanction, and it did not explicitly propose that the Panel adopt the allegations of fact in the charges as findings of fact nor explicitly make proposed conclusions of law.

The proposed default order notified the parties that they may file exceptions, and, if they do, they must do so within 15 working days of the date of the proposed default order. The proposed default order was mailed and emailed to the parties at their respective addresses of record.

On December 30, 2025, the Board mailed a letter to the parties, notifying the parties that the ALJ issued a Proposed Default Order and that any exceptions to the proposed default order must be filed with the Board by January 9, 2026. The letter also stated that responses to any exceptions to the proposed default order were due to the Board by January 27, 2026. The letter further notified the parties that, if exceptions are filed, an exceptions hearing would be held before Panel B on February 25, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. The letter provided the location of the exceptions hearing before Panel B. The letter was not returned to the Board undelivered. The letter was also emailed to the Respondent.

On January 5, 2026, the State filed exceptions to the ALJ's Proposed Default Order. The State argued in its exceptions that, based upon the ALJ's Proposed Default Order, the Panel ("Panel B" or the "Panel") should find that the Respondent defaulted. The State also argued that Panel B should adopt the Allegations of Fact as Findings of Fact, conclude that the Respondent violated Health Occ. 15-314(a)(3)(ii), and (4), and revoke the Respondent's license. According to the Certificate of Service, the State's exceptions were mailed to the Respondent on January 5, 2026.

On January 16, 2026, the Respondent left a message with the Board's intake unit asking how he could be reinstated and stating that he would like another hearing. He also mentioned that he had lost his mailbox key and did not receive notices.

On January 21, 2026, the Respondent had a telephone conversation with a Board Compliance Analyst. The Respondent stated that he had received the State's exceptions and was told by the Board Compliance Analyst that he had until January 27, 2026, to file a response to the State's exceptions. The Board Compliance Analyst also notified the Respondent that the December 30, 2025, letter would be resent and that an exceptions hearing was scheduled for February 25, 2026.

On January 21, 2026, the Board, by email and regular mail, sent the Respondent the Board letter, dated December 30, 2026, concerning the requirements for filing of exceptions, submitting a response to exceptions, and notifying the parties of the February 25, 2026, exceptions hearing date. The letter was not returned to the Board undelivered.

On January 28, 2028, the Respondent forwarded an email to the Board indicating that he had plans that would begin on February 3, 2026.

On January 29, 2026, the Respondent left a voicemail message with the Board stating that he would not be attending the Exceptions hearing. The Respondent did not request a postponement or request other arrangements to participate, such as by participating by telephone.

On January 30, 2026, the Board Compliance Analyst emailed the Respondent, notifying the Respondent that the exceptions hearing was scheduled for February 25, 2026, at 11:30 a.m., before Panel B. The email further stated that, if the Respondent planned to request a postponement of the February 25, 2026, exceptions hearing, the Respondent had to submit his request by email to either the Board's Compliance Analyst or the Board's executive director with an explanation of the circumstances that require the postponement and any supporting documentation. The email further stated that if the postponement request is not submitted and the Board does not grant a postponement, the exceptions hearing will be held on February 25, 2026, at 11:30 a.m.

Also, on January 30, 2026, the Board Compliance Analyst sent by mail, to the Respondent's address of record, the date and location of the exceptions hearing. The letter was not returned to the Board undelivered.

The Respondent neither filed exceptions to the ALJ's Proposed Default Order nor filed a reply to the State's exceptions. The Respondent also never requested a postponement of the exceptions hearing.

On February 25, 2026, an exceptions hearing was held before Panel B. The exceptions hearing commenced at 11:34 a.m. The Respondent did not attend the exceptions hearing. The Administrative Prosecutor, representing the State, did attend. The Administrative Prosecutor argued his exceptions before the Panel.

On April 30, 2026, the Board notified the Respondent, by email and regular mail, that an exceptions hearing was held on February 25, 2026, but that, because it was not clear whether the Respondent had meant to request a postponement, Panel B had scheduled a second exceptions hearing, which was scheduled for June 24, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., at 4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21215. Also, on April 30, 2024, the Board sent the Respondent the transcript of the February 25, 2026, exceptions hearing. On May 28, 2026, the Board sent another notice, by regular mail and by email, to the Respondent, notifying the Respondent again that the exceptions hearing was scheduled for June 24, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at 4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21215. The Respondent did not notify the Board whether he intended to appear at the second exceptions hearing, and the Respondent did not request a postponement.

On June 24, 2026, at 4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland, Panel B held an exceptions hearing. The exceptions hearing commenced at 10:50 a.m. An Administrative

Prosecutor appeared and represented the State. Neither the Respondent nor an attorney on the Respondent's behalf appeared. The State argued its exceptions.

EXCEPTIONS

The State's exceptions argued that the ALJ, after finding the Respondent in default, should have proposed that the Allegations of Fact in the charges be converted into Findings of Fact; that the ALJ should have proposed that the Panel conclude that the Respondent was in violation of Health Occ. § 15-314(a)(3)(ii) and (4), as charged; and that the ALJ should have issued a recommended sanction, which the State proposed should be the revocation of the Respondent's license to practice medicine as a physician assistant in Maryland. The Respondent did not file exceptions to the ALJ's Proposed Default Order, nor did the Respondent file an opposition to the State's exceptions, and the Respondent did not appear at either exceptions hearing. Panel B finds the State's exceptions reasonable and accepts and grants the State's exceptions.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Because Disciplinary Panel B ("Panel B") of the Board concludes that the Respondent defaulted, the following findings of fact are adopted from the Allegations of Fact set forth in the charges and are deemed proved by the preponderance of the evidence:

BACKGROUND/LICENSING INFORMATION

1. The Respondent was originally licensed to practice as a physician assistant in Maryland on February 11, 1999. On April 29, 2025, the Respondent's license was summarily suspended.²

² The Respondent's license expired on June 30, 2025. However, pursuant to Health Occ. § 15-312(a), a license may be revoked after its expiration, if an investigation or charges was pending at the time of expiration. The charges, which were issued on May 1, 2025, were thus pending at the time the Respondent's license expired.

THE DISPOSITION AGREEMENT

2. On or about May 1, 2024, the Respondent and the Board entered into a non-public Disposition Agreement.³ The Respondent and the Board entered into the Disposition Agreement after it “came to the Board’s attention that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] indicated to Panel A that that the Respondent and the public would benefit from the Respondent entering into a Disposition Agreement.”

3. The Disposition Agreement that the Respondent voluntarily entered into required him in part to enroll in the Maryland Professional Rehabilitation Program (“MPRP”) and “fully and timely cooperate with all MPRP’s referrals, rules, and requirements.”

BOARD INVESTIGATION

4. After entering into the Disposition Agreement, the Board received information from MPRP on November 12, 2014, that the Respondent was not in compliance with all of its rules, referrals, and requirements, including but not limited to the terms and conditions of his Participant Rehabilitation Plan and Agreement.

5. On or about December 11, 2024, the Board received information from MPRP that the Respondent signed a practice cessation agreement based in part on his non-compliance with his Participant Rehabilitation Plan and Agreement.

³ Condition 8 of the Disposition Agreement states, “If the disciplinary panel determines that the Respondent failed to comply with any term or condition of this Disposition Agreement, this Disposition shall be treated as a public Consent Order.” Condition 1(c) of the Disposition Agreement states, “The Respondent shall fully and timely cooperate and comply with all MPRP’s referrals, rules, and requirements, including, but not limited to, the terms and conditions of the Participant Rehabilitation Agreement(s) and Participant Rehabilitation Plan(s) entered with MPRP,”

6. On or about March 25, 2025, the Board received additional information that the Respondent was non-compliant with his Participant Rehabilitation Plan and Agreement. It also was reported that since being enrolled in MPRP, the Respondent failed to appear for multiple scheduled appointments. MPRP also informed the Board that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that negatively impacts his ability to safely practice medicine.⁴ The Respondent admitted to the Board in an April 8, 2025 email that he has not complied with all of the terms and conditions of his MPRP Participant Rehabilitation Plan and Agreement.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Panel B finds the Respondent in default based upon his failure to appear for, or participate in, the December 16, 2025, Prehearing Conference held by OAH in this matter. *See* State Gov't § 10-210(4); *see* COMAR 28.02.01.23. Panel B also concludes that the Respondent is guilty of unprofessional conduct in the practice of medicine, in violation of Health Occ. § 15-314(a)(3)(ii); and is professionally, physically, or mentally incompetent, in violation Health Occ. § 15-314(a)(4) (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2024 Supp.).

SANCTION

Charges were issued against the Respondent because of the concern that he could not practice medicine safely and because he did not comply with the measures agreed to that were meant to alleviate the safety concerns. Panel B finds that revocation is appropriate, because the Respondent did not comply with the measures in place necessary to ensure that he practices safely. The Panel finds that it is not safe for the Respondent to practice medicine as a physician assistant at this time. The summary suspension of the Respondent's license, which was issued, under State

⁴ [REDACTED]

Gov't § 10-226(c)(2) (a summary suspension may be issued upon the finding that the public health, safety, or welfare imperatively requires emergency action), is terminated as moot, because the Respondent's license has been revoked under this Final Decision and Order.

ORDER

It is, thus, on the affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum of Panel B, hereby

ORDERED that the license of Respondent George Gatewood, III, P.A., License Number C02123, to practice medicine as a physician assistant in Maryland is **REVOKED**; and it is further

ORDERED that the summary suspension of the Respondent's license to practice as a physician assistant in Maryland is terminated as moot, based upon the revocation of the Respondent's license under this Final Decision and Order; and it is further

ORDERED that this Final Decision and Order is a public document. *See* Health Occ. §§ 1-607, 14-411.1(b)(2); Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. § 4-333(b)(6).

07/13/2026
Date

Signature on File

Christine A. Farrelly, Executive Director
Maryland State Board of Physicians

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW

Pursuant to Health Occ. § 15-315(b), the Respondent has the right to seek judicial review of this Final Decision and Order. Any petition for judicial review shall be filed within thirty (30) days from the date of the mailing of this Final Decision and Order. The date of this Final Decision and Order is the date the Final Decision and Order was mailed. Any petition for judicial review

shall be made as provided for in the Administrative Procedure Act, Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-222 and Title 7, Chapter 200 of the Maryland Rules of Procedure.

If the Respondent files a petition for judicial review, the Board is a party and should be served with the court's process at the following address:

Maryland State Board of Physicians
Christine A. Farrelly, Executive Director
4201 Patterson Avenue, 4th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Notice of any petition should also be sent to the Board's counsel at the following address:

David Wagner
Assistant Attorney General
Maryland Department of Health
300 West Preston Street, Suite 302
Baltimore, Maryland 21201