

IN THE MATTER OF

JOSEPH P. GURRALA, M.D.

Applicant

*

BEFORE THE

*

MARYLAND STATE

*

BOARD OF PHYSICIANS

*

Case Number: 2224-0202A

* * * * *

CONSENT ORDER

On February 7, 2025, Disciplinary Panel A (“Panel A”) of the Maryland State Board of Physicians (the “Board”) issued a notice to **JOSEPH P. GURRALA, M.D.** (the “Applicant”) notifying Dr. Gurralla of Panel A’s intent to deny his *Application for Initial Medical Licensure*, filed on October 14, 2023, under the Maryland Medical Practice Act (the “Act”), codified at Md. Code Ann., Health Occupations (“Health Occ.”) §§ 14-101 *et seq.* (2021 Repl. Vol. and 2024 Supp.).

The pertinent provisions of the Act provide:

Health Occ. § 14-205. Miscellaneous powers and duties.

(b)(3) Subject to the Administrative Procedure Act and the hearing provisions of § 14-405 of this title, a disciplinary panel may deny a license to an applicant. . . for:

- (i) Any of the reasons that are grounds for action under § 14-404... of this title, as applicable[.]

Health Occ. § 14-404. Denials, reprimands, suspensions, and revocations – Grounds.

(a) Subject to the hearing provisions of § 14-405 of this subtitle, a disciplinary panel, on the affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum of the disciplinary panel, may reprimand any licensee, place any licensee on probation, or suspend or revoke a license if the licensee:

....

- (21) Is disciplined by a licensing or disciplinary authority or convicted or disciplined by a court of any state or country or disciplined by any branch of the United States uniformed services or the Veterans' Administration for an act that would be grounds for disciplinary action under this section[.]

The underlying grounds for disciplinary action under Health Occ. § 14-404(a)(21) include Health Occ. § 14-404(a):

....

- (3) Is guilty of:

- (ii) Unprofessional conduct in the practice of medicine; [and]

....

- (40) Fails to keep adequate medical records as determined by appropriate peer review[.]

On April 9, 2025, Panel A was convened as a Disciplinary Committee for Case Resolution ("DCCR") in this matter. Based on negotiations occurring as a result of this DCCR, the Respondent agreed to enter into this Consent Order, consisting of Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Order and Consent.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Panel A makes the following factual findings:

I. The Application

1. At all times relevant, the Applicant is not and has never been licensed to practice medicine in the State of Maryland.

2. The Applicant has an active license to practice medicine in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Applicant was licensed to practice medicine in the State of California until he surrendered his license on or about September 25, 2020.

3. On or about October 14, 2023, the Board received an *Application for Initial Medical Licensure* (the “Application”) from the Applicant.

4. In the Application under Part 6, which is entitled “Character and Fitness,” the Applicant disclosed that he was previously disciplined by the Virginia Board of Medicine (the “VA Board”) and the Medical Board of California (the “CA Board”) and that he surrendered his license to practice medicine in California on September 25, 2020.

5. Based on the Applicant’s disclosures in his Application, the Board initiated an investigation of the Applicant.

II. Board Investigation

6. As part of its investigation, the Board obtained the Applicant’s records from the VA Board, which revealed the following disciplinary history.

A. VA Disciplinary History

7. By order dated May 12, 2011 (the “VA 2011 Order”), the VA Board reprimanded the Applicant and imposed a \$1,000 monetary penalty against him. The VA Board found that from March to June 2007, while the Applicant was in a residency program, he provided psychotherapy/medication management to a patient and received payment from the patient outside of the residency program’s supervision. The VA Board further found that the Applicant failed to maintain adequate records for the patient that included failing to document patient visits and backdating records. Finally, the VA Board found

that the Applicant provided false information in his applications for licensure in Virginia and the District of Columbia in that he misrepresented his profile and the circumstances under which he resigned from his residency program in July 2007.

8. By amended order dated September 25, 2012 (the “VA 2012 Order”), the VA Board reprimanded the Applicant based on findings that from approximately April 2010 to February 3, 2011, the Applicant dispensed controlled dangerous substances to patients without holding a valid pharmacy license as required by law. The VA Board further found that the Applicant failed to document his rationale for administering injections and dispensing vitamins and supplements to a patient during multiple visits in September and October 2010.

9. On or about May 3, 2018, the VA Board suspended the Applicant’s license to practice medicine in Virginia based on a *Decision and Order* from the CA Board, dated January 18, 2018, in which the CA Board revoked the Applicant’s California medical license, immediately stayed the revocation, and placed him on probation. *See infra*. By Consent Order dated May 3, 2018 (the “VA 2018 Consent Order”), the VA Board reinstated the Applicant’s Virginia medical license without restriction.

10. By order dated January 27, 2020 (the “VA 2020 Order”), the VA Board reprimanded the Applicant and placed him on indefinite probation of not less than 12 months, subject to terms and conditions, which included, *inter alia*, that he continued psychotherapy/medication management with a healthcare provider and successfully completed courses in professionalism/ethics/boundaries and medical recordkeeping.

11. In the VA 2020 Order, the VA Board found that the Applicant violated Virginia laws and regulations pertaining to the practice of medicine in his treatment and care of a patient between 2016 and 2018. Specifically, the VA Board found that on or about October 17, 2016, the Applicant began providing weight-loss treatment, including prescribing phentermine, to a patient with whom he had been dating for several months. In his treatment and care of this patient, the Applicant failed to document patient visits, physical examinations, diet plan, or medications prescribed. The Applicant also failed to review an electrocardiogram he ordered for the patient.

12. The VA Board further found that in or about April 2017, the Applicant married the patient after which he continued to treat and prescribe medications to the patient. Specifically, the VA Board found that in January and April 2018, the Applicant prescribed Adderall and Xanax to the patient without documenting the prescriptions or his rationale for prescribing these medications.

13. In the VA 2020 Order, the VA Board also found that in or around the summer of 2017, the Applicant prescribed antibiotics to a family member with whom the Applicant did not have a bona fide practitioner/patient relationship. Moreover, on or about February 12 to 13, 2019, during the VA Board's investigation, the Applicant willfully refused to submit to a random urine drug test as requested by the Board's investigation.

14. Finally, in the VA 2020 Order, the VA Board found the Applicant to have engaged in a pattern of erratic and unstable behavior in 2017 and 2018 that included, but were not limited to: being found guilty of driving under the influence of alcohol and driving

while his license was suspended; violating his probation for driving while under the influence of alcohol; and being the subject of a domestic violence complaint.

15. By *Order of Mandatory Suspension*, entered on December 1, 2020, the VA Board suspended the Applicant's license to practice medicine in Virginia after receiving information that the Applicant entered into an *Agreement for Surrender of License* with the CA Board, dated September 25, 2020. By *Order* dated February 24, 2021 (the "VA 2021 Order"), the VA Board reinstated the Applicant's license to practice medicine in Virginia, reprimanded him, and imposed a monetary penalty of \$2,500.

B. CA Disciplinary History

16. On or about October 5, 2012, the Applicant submitted an application for a Physician's and Surgeon's License in the State of California. In a *Decision and Order* dated December 11, 2013, the CA Board adopted a *Stipulation for a Probationary License* the Applicant entered into with the CA Board, dated November 5, 2013 (the "CA 2013 Stipulation"). Under the CA 2013 Stipulation, the CA Board granted the Applicant a license to practice medicine in California, subject to terms and conditions that included, but were not limited to: being placed on probation for a period of three years; completing a medical recordkeeping course; undergoing psychotherapy with a CA Board approved provider; notifying potential employers of the CA 2013 Stipulation; providing quarterly declarations of compliance with probationary terms and conditions; and notifying the CA Board of any period of non-practice in California lasting more than 30 days.

17. By *Decision* dated February 27, 2018 (the "CA 2018 Decision"), the CA Board adopted in whole a *Proposed Decision* issued by an administrative law judge on

January 29, 2018. In the CA 2018 Decision, the CA Board revoked the Applicant's California medical license, immediately stayed the revocation, and placed the Applicant on probation for three years that included similar terms and conditions as CA 2013 Stipulation. In the CA 2018 Decision, the CA Board found that the Applicant violated Condition 10 (Non-Practice While on Probation) of the CA 2013 Stipulation when he failed to practice medicine in California for a period of more than two years. The CA Board further found that the Applicant violated Condition 7 (Quarterly Reports) of the CA 2013 Stipulation when he failed to timely submit a Semi-Annual Declaration by January 10, 2017.

18. By *Agreement for Surrender of License*, dated September 25, 2020 (the "CA 2020 Agreement"), the Applicant entered into an agreement with the CA Board to surrender his license to practice medicine in the State of California. In the CA 2020 Agreement, the Applicant acknowledged that prior to the surrender of his California medical license, the Applicant had three open and pending disciplinary actions against his license in California.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Pursuant to Health Occ. § 14-205(b)(3)(i), Panel A may deny a license to an applicant for any of the reasons that are grounds for action under Health Occ. § 14-404. The reasons for denial, as described in detail above, include: the Applicant's Disciplinary History with the Virginia Board (the VA 2011 Order, the VA 2012 Order, the VA 2018 Consent Order, the VA 2020 Order, and the VA 2021 Order); and the Applicant's Disciplinary History with the California Board (the CA 2013 Stipulation, the CA 2018

Decision, and the CA 2020 Agreement), which constitute grounds for a Board disciplinary panel to deny his Application for initial medical licensure pursuant to Health Occ. § 14-404 (a)(21): being disciplined by a licensing or disciplinary authority or convicted or disciplined by a court of any state or country or disciplined by any branch of the United States uniformed services or the Veterans' Administration for acts that would be grounds for disciplinary action under this section, with the underlying grounds of: being guilty of unprofessional conduct in the practice of medicine, in violation of Health Occ. § 14-404(a)(3)(ii); and failing to keep adequate medical records as determined by appropriate peer review, in violation of Health Occ. § 14-404(a)(40).

Panel A finds that the Applicant has violated these grounds, but that under the circumstances of this case, licensure with a Reprimand, Probation for a minimum period of three (3) years, enrollment in and full compliance with the Maryland Professional Rehabilitation Program ("MPRP"), and satisfactory completion of courses in Ethics and Professional Boundaries, as set forth in this Consent Order, is appropriate.

ORDER

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

ORDERED that Applicant Joseph P. Gurralla, M.D.'s application for a license to practice medicine in Maryland, which was submitted to the Board on or about October 14, 2023, is **GRANTED**; and it is further

ORDERED that the Applicant is **REPRIMANDED**; and it is further

ORDERED that the Applicant is placed on **PROBATION** for a minimum of **THREE (3) YEARS**.¹ During probation, the Applicant shall comply with the following terms and conditions of probation:

1. The Respondent shall enroll in the Maryland Professional Rehabilitation Program (“MPRP”) as follows:
 - (a) Within **5 business days** of the effective date of this Consent Order, the Applicant shall contact MPRP to schedule an initial consultation for enrollment;
 - (b) Within **15 business days** of the effective date of this Consent Order, the Applicant shall enter into a Participant Rehabilitation Agreement and Participant Rehabilitation Plan with MPRP;
 - (c) The Applicant 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, and shall fully participate and comply with all therapy, treatment, evaluations, and screenings as directed by MPRP;
 - (d) The Applicant shall sign and update the written release/consent forms requested by the Board and MPRP, including release/consent forms to authorize MPRP to make verbal and written disclosures to the Board and to authorize the Board to disclose relevant information from MPRP records and files in a public order. The Applicant shall not withdraw the release/consent;
 - (e) The Applicant shall also sign any written release/consent forms to authorize MPRP to exchange with (i.e., disclose to and receive from) outside entities (including all of the Applicant’s current therapists and treatment providers) verbal and written information concerning the Applicant and to ensure that MPRP is authorized to receive the medical records of the Applicant, including, but not limited to, mental health and drug or alcohol evaluation and treatment records. The Applicant shall not withdraw the release/consent;
 - (f) If, upon the authorization of MPRP, the Applicant transfers to a rehabilitation program in another state, the Applicant’s failure to comply with any term or condition of that state’s [the out-of-state’s] rehabilitation program, constitutes a violation of this Consent Order. The Applicant

¹ If the Applicant’s license expires during the period of probation, the probation and any conditions will be tolled.

shall also sign any out-of-state written release/consent forms to authorize the Board to exchange with (i.e. disclose to and receive from) the out-of-state program verbal and written information concerning the Applicant, and to ensure that the Board is authorized to receive the medical records of the Applicant, including, but not limited to, mental health and drug or alcohol evaluation and treatment records. The Applicant shall not withdraw the release/consent;

(g) The Applicant's failure to comply with any of the above terms or conditions including terms or conditions of the Participant Rehabilitation Agreement(s) or Participant Rehabilitation Plan(s) constitutes a violation of this Consent Order;

2. Within **SIX (6) MONTHS** of the effective date of this Consent Order, the Applicant is required to take and successfully complete (i) a course in **Ethics** and (ii) a course in **Professional Boundaries**. The following terms apply:

(a) it is the Applicant's responsibility to locate, enroll in and obtain the disciplinary panel's approval of the courses before the courses are begun;

(b) the Applicant must provide documentation to the disciplinary panel that the Applicant has successfully completed the courses;

(c) the courses may not be used to fulfill the continuing medical education credits required for license renewal;

(d) the Applicant is responsible for the cost of the courses; and it is further

ORDERED that the Applicant shall not apply for early termination of probation; and it is further

ORDERED that a violation of probation constitutes a violation of this Consent Order; and it is further

ORDERED that this Consent Order shall not be amended or modified, and future requests for modification will not be considered by the Board or a disciplinary panel; and it is further

ORDERED that after the minimum period of probation imposed by the Consent Order has passed, and the Applicant has fully and satisfactorily complied with all terms and conditions of probation, and MPRP notifies the Board of the Applicant's compliance with all MPRP's referrals, rules, and requirements, the Applicant may submit a written petition for termination of probation. After consideration of the petition, the Applicant's probation may be terminated through an order of the disciplinary panel. The Applicant may be required to appear before the disciplinary panel to discuss his petition for termination. The disciplinary panel may grant the petition to terminate the probation, through an order of the disciplinary panel, if the Applicant has complied with all the probationary terms and conditions and there are no pending complaints relating to the *Notice of Intent to Deny Initial Application for Licensure* issued on February 7, 2025; and it is further

ORDERED that if the Applicant allegedly fails to comply with any term or condition imposed by this Consent Order, the Applicant shall be given notice and an opportunity for a hearing. If there is a genuine dispute as to a material fact, the hearing shall be before an Administrative Law Judge of the Office of Administrative Hearings followed by an exceptions process before a disciplinary panel; and if there is no genuine dispute as to a material fact, the Applicant shall be given a show cause hearing before a disciplinary panel; and it is further

ORDERED that after the appropriate hearing, if the disciplinary panel determines that the Applicant has failed to comply with any term or condition imposed by this Consent Order, the disciplinary panel may reprimand the Applicant, place the Applicant

on probation with appropriate terms and conditions, or suspend or revoke the Applicant's license to practice medicine in Maryland. The disciplinary panel may, in addition to one or more of the sanctions set forth above, impose a civil monetary fine on the Applicant, and it is further

ORDERED that the Applicant is responsible for all costs incurred in fulfilling the terms and conditions of this Consent Order; and it is further

ORDERED that the effective date of the Consent Order is the date the Consent Order is signed by the Executive Director of the Board or her designee. The Executive Director or her designee signs the Consent Order on behalf of the disciplinary panel which has imposed the terms and conditions of this Consent Order; and it is further

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

04/29/2025
Date

Signature on file

Christine A. Farrelly
Executive Director
Maryland State Board of Physicians

CONSENT

I, Joseph P. Gurrula, M.D., understand that I have the right to be represented by counsel in this matter. I have chosen to proceed without counsel, and I acknowledge that my decision to proceed without counsel is freely and voluntarily made.

By this Consent, I agree to be bound by this Consent Order and all its terms and conditions and understand that the disciplinary panel will not entertain any request for amendments or modifications to any condition.

I assert that I am aware of my right to a formal evidentiary hearing, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 14-405 and Md. Code Ann., State Gov't §§ 10-201 *et seq.* concerning the pending charges. I waive this right and have elected to sign this Consent Order instead.

I acknowledge the validity and enforceability of this Consent Order as if entered after the conclusion of a formal evidentiary hearing in which I would have had the right to counsel, to confront witnesses, to give testimony, to call witnesses on my behalf, and to all other substantive and procedural protections as provided by law. I waive those procedural and substantive protections. I acknowledge the legal authority and the jurisdiction of the disciplinary panel to initiate these proceedings and to issue and enforce this Consent Order.

I voluntarily enter into and agree to comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Consent Order as a resolution of the charges. I waive any right to contest the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and Order set out in the Consent Order. I waive all rights to appeal this Consent Order.

I sign this Consent Order, without reservation, and fully understand the language and meaning of its terms.

Signature on file

4/25/25
Date

Joseph P. Gurrula, M.D.
Applicant

NOTARY

STATE OF Virginia

CITY/COUNTY OF Fairfax

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 25th day of April 2025, before me, a Notary Public of the foregoing State and City/County, Joseph P. Gurralla, M.D., personally appeared and made oath in due form of law that signing the foregoing Consent Order was his voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESSETH my hand and notarial seal.

[Signature]
Notary Public

My Commission expires: 06/30/2029

