

IN THE MATTER OF

*** BEFORE THE MARYLAND**

Sara Cook-Pulizzotto, Radiographer

*** STATE BOARD OF**

Respondent.

*** PHYSICIANS**

License No. R03620

*** Case No. 7722-0019**

*** * * * ***

ORDER AFTER SHOW CAUSE HEARING

The issue in this case is whether Sara Cook-Pulizzotto, Radiographer, has violated a Disposition Agreement into which she entered with the Maryland State Board of Physicians (the “Board”) on August 31, 2021. Pursuant to the Disposition Agreement, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto enrolled in the Maryland Professional Rehabilitation Program (“MPRP”), agreed to comply with all of MPRP’s recommendations, and agreed to fulfill all conditions of a Participant Rehabilitation Agreement that she signed with MPRP on September 13, 2021. On October 27, 2021, MPRP notified the Board that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto had failed to comply with the terms and conditions of the Participant Rehabilitation Agreement. On November 5, 2021, the Board received from Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto a written admission of her failure to comply and a description of the circumstances of her violation.

On December 16, 2021, the Board received another report from MPRP that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto had again failed to comply with her Rehabilitation Agreement. On April 28, 2022, Disciplinary Panel A (“Panel A”) of the Board issued a Violation of Board Order and Notice to Show Cause regarding Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto’s alleged violations of her Disposition Agreement. Panel A held a Show Cause hearing on July 13, 2022, at which Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto had the opportunity to argue why her license should not be subject to further discipline. At the Show Cause hearing, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto admitted her violations.

Panel A is issuing this Order after considering the entirety of the record evidence and presentations of the parties before the panel at the Show Cause hearing held on July 13, 2022.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Panel A makes the following Findings of Fact:

Background and Requirements of the Disposition Agreement

On November 10, 1993, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto was initially licensed by the Board to practice radiography in the State of Maryland. On August 31, 2021, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto entered into a non-public Disposition Agreement with the Board in lieu of further investigation into a possible violation of Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 14-5B-14. The Disposition Agreement states:

The Respondent shall comply with the Participant Rehabilitation Agreement into which she entered with the MPRP and will fulfill all conditions of the Participation Rehabilitation Agreement.

The Disposition Agreement further provides:

AGREED, that . . . if the Respondent fails to comply with any term or condition of this Agreement, this Agreement shall be treated as a public Consent Order, the violation of which authorizes the Board or a Board panel, after notice and opportunity to be heard, to take any action prescribed under § 14-5B -14(a) of the . . . Act, including a reprimand, probation, suspension or revocation of the Respondent's license; and/or fine.

On September 13, 2021, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto signed a Participant Rehabilitation Agreement with MPRP for an indefinite duration.

Violations of the Disposition and Participant Rehabilitation Agreements

Non-Compliance with MPRP Conditions

On October 27, 2021, MPRP reported to the Board that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto had failed to comply with her Rehabilitation Agreement. On November 5, 2021, in response to a letter from the Board regarding the MPRP report, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto admitted her violation and provided

a written explanation to the Board of events leading to her failure to comply with her Rehabilitation Agreement. In her written response, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto indicated that she understood “the importance of MPRP and [her] participation in this program.”

On December 16, 2021, MPRP reported to the Board that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto had again failed to comply with her Rehabilitation Agreement in early December.

Show Cause Hearing – July 13, 2022

On April 28, 2022, Panel A issued a Violation of Board Order and Notice to Show Cause based on these alleged violations and conducted a Show Cause hearing on July 13, 2022 to grant Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto the opportunity to show cause as to why the panel should not issue sanctions based on her violations of the August 31, 2021 Disposition Agreement.

At the hearing, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto admitted her 2021 violations of her Disposition Agreement with the Board and her Rehabilitation Agreement with MPRP. Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto provided additional detailed information to the Panel regarding her ongoing commitment to fulfilling the terms and conditions of her Agreements going forward. With respect to the concerns raised by Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto’s repeated violations, the State recommended continued enrollment in and monitoring by MPRP and reiterated the importance of Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto’s compliance with MPRP’s recommendations.

Based upon all of the reports from MPRP and the information presented at the Show Cause hearing, Panel A finds that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto failed to comply with the conditions of her August 31, 2021 Disposition Agreement and September 13, 2021 Rehabilitation Agreement. Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto’s violations are undisputed. In her answers to questions from panel members, she conveyed remorse for her violations and poor judgment, and demonstrated a

strong dedication to her job and profession, as well as a resolve to adhere to all MPRP and Board requirements and conditions in the future.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Panel A concludes that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto violated the terms and conditions of the August 31, 2021 Disposition Agreement by failing to comply with the terms of her MPRP Participant Rehabilitation Agreement.

ORDER

It is, on an affirmative vote of a majority of a quorum of Disciplinary Panel A, hereby **ORDERED** that the August 31, 2021 Disposition Agreement is terminated; and it is further

ORDERED that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto is **REPRIMANDED**; and it is further

ORDERED that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto is placed on **PROBATION**¹ for a minimum period of **TWO (2) YEARS**. During the probationary period, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto shall comply with the following terms and conditions:

1. Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto shall remain enrolled in MPRP and continue in her Participant Rehabilitation Agreement and Participant Rehabilitation Plan with MPRP;
2. Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto shall fully and timely cooperate and comply with all MPRP 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;
3. Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto's failure to comply with any term or condition of the Participant Rehabilitation Agreement(s) or Participant Rehabilitation Plan(s) shall constitute a violation of this Order;
4. Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto shall sign and update the written release/consent forms requested by the Board and MPRP, including release/consent forms to authorize

¹ If Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto's license expires during the period of probation, the probation and any conditions will be tolled.

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. A failure to, or withdrawal of, consent, is a violation of this Order;

5. Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto 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 Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto's current therapists and treatment providers) verbal and written information concerning Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto and to ensure that MPRP is authorized to receive the medical records of Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto, including, but not limited to, mental health and drug or alcohol evaluation and treatment records; and it is further

ORDERED that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto shall not apply for early termination of probation; and it is further

ORDERED that after a minimum of two years has passed and Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto has fully and satisfactorily complied with all terms and conditions of probation, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto may submit a written petition for termination of probation. After consideration of the petition, the probation may be terminated through an order of a disciplinary panel. Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto may be required to appear before the disciplinary panel to discuss her petition for termination. The disciplinary panel may grant the petition to terminate the probation through an order of the disciplinary panel, if Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto has successfully complied with all of the probationary terms and conditions and if there are no pending complaints related to her violations of her Disposition Agreement with the Board and her Participant Rehabilitation Agreement with MPRP; and it is further

ORDERED that if Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto allegedly fails to comply with any term or condition imposed by this Order, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto shall be given notice and an opportunity for a hearing. If the disciplinary panel determines that 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. If the disciplinary panel determines that there is no genuine dispute as to a material

fact, Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto 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 Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto has failed to comply with any term or condition imposed by this Order, the disciplinary panel may reprimand Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto, place Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto on probation with appropriate terms and conditions or suspend or revoke Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto's license to practice radiography in Maryland. The disciplinary panel may, in addition to one or more of the sanctions set forth above, impose a civil monetary fine upon Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto; and it is further

ORDERED that Ms. Cook-Pulizzotto is responsible for all costs incurred in fulfilling the terms and conditions of this Order; and it is further

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

ORDERED that this is a **PUBLIC DOCUMENT** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. §§ 1-607 and 14-411.1, and Gen. Prov. § 4-333(b) (2014 & 2018 Supp.).

08/03/2022
Date

Signature On File

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