



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Department of Health Professions

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Executive Director

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[www.dhp.virginia.gov/Boards/Nursing](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/Boards/Nursing)

June 7, 2023

Certified Article Number

9414 7266 9904 2198 8179 15

SENDER'S RECORD

Brigitte L. Casteel, MSN, RN  
Nursing Program Coordinator  
Virginia Highlands Community College  
P O Box 828  
Abingdon, VA 24212

**RE: Case Number 226764**

Dear Brigitte L. Casteel:

The recommendation made by the Education Special Conference Committee following your informal conference was presented to the Board of Nursing ("Board") on May 23, 2023. The recommendation was accepted, and enclosed is a certified true copy of the Order issued by the Board.

If you object to this Order and desire a formal hearing before the Board, a written request must be received by the Board **within 33 days from the date of service of the Order**. If no written request is received by that time, this Order will be final.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Jacquelyn Wilmoth at (804) 367-4527 or [Jacquelyn.Wilmoth@dhp.virginia.gov](mailto:Jacquelyn.Wilmoth@dhp.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn Wilmoth, R.N., M.S.N.  
Deputy Executive Director  
Virginia Board of Nursing

cc: Julia K. Bennett Deputy Director, Administrative Proceedings Division  
Melissa Armstrong, Adjudication Specialist  
Tonya James, Compliance Case Manager  
Nelle Shaw-Bell, Counsel for Respondent  
Arne W. Owens, Director, Department of Health Professions

**BEFORE THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF NURSING**

**IN RE: VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
PRACTICAL NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM  
Program Code: US28110800  
Case Number: 226764**

**RATIFICATION AND ORDER**

On May 23, 2023, a panel of the Board met to receive and act upon the Recommended Decision of the Education Special Conference Committee (“Committee”). Virginia Highlands Community College Practical Nursing Education Program (“Respondent”), was present and was represented by Noelle Shaw-Bell, Esquire.

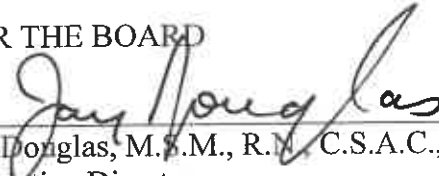
In consideration whereof, the Board of Nursing ACCEPTS the attached Recommended Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law of the Committee and ADOPTS the Recommended Order in its entirety.

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 54.1-2400.2, the signed original of this Order shall remain in the custody of the Department of Health Professions as a public record, and shall be made available for public inspection and copying upon request.

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 54.1-2400(10), Respondent may, not later than 5:00 p.m., on July 10, 2023, request a formal administrative hearing before the Board by notifying [Exec Name], Executive Director, Board of Nursing, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, Virginia 23233. Upon the filing with the Executive Director of a request for the hearing, this Order shall be vacated.

This Order shall become final on July 10, 2023, unless a request for a formal administrative hearing is received as described above.

FOR THE BOARD



Jay Douglas, M.S.M., R.N., C.S.A.C., F.R.E.  
Executive Director  
Virginia Board of Nursing

ENTERED AND MAILED ON:

June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**BEFORE THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF NURSING**

**IN RE: VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
PRACTICAL NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM  
Program Code: US28110800  
Case Number: 226764**

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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDUCATION SPECIAL CONFERENCE  
COMMITTEE**

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**Jurisdiction and Procedural History**

Pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 2.2-4019 and 54.1-2400(10), the Education Special Conference Committee (“Committee”) of the Virginia Board of Nursing (“Board”), held an informal conference on April 18, 2023 in Henrico County, Virginia, to inquire into evidence that Virginia Highlands Community College Practical Nursing Education Program (“Respondent”) may have violated certain laws and regulations governing the operation of associate degree nursing education programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Present at this proceeding on behalf of Respondent were members of the Virginia Highlands Community College administration and attorney Noelle Shaw Bell.

Upon consideration of the evidence, the Committee makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and recommends that the Board adopt the following Order.

**Recommended Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law**

1. Virginia Highlands Community College (“Respondent”) was licensed to operate a practical nursing education program in the Commonwealth of Virginia on December 7, 2018.
2. On February 7, 2022, Virginia Highlands’ license was placed on conditional approval after its pass rate for first-time test takers of the NCLEX-PN was below 80 percent for the preceding two calendar years of 2020 and 2021.

3. Virginia Highlands violated 18 VAC 90-27-210(A) and (B) of the Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing Education in that its pass rate for first-time test takers of the NCLEX-PN was below 80 percent for the past three calendar years, as follows:

- a. In 2020, the pass rate was 65%;
- b. In 2021, the pass rate was 66.67%; and
- c. In 2022, the pass rate was 77.27%.

4. At the informal conference, the representatives from Virginia Highlands were thorough and cooperative in providing evidence to and answering questions from the Committee.

#### **Recommended Order**

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Committee recommends that the Board issue an Order as follows:

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Committee recommends that the Board issue an Order as follows:

1. The approval of Virginia Highlands Community College (“Respondent”) to operate a practical nursing education program is continued on **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL**, subject to the following terms:

- a. Respondent’s 2023 and 2024 NCLEX passage rate must meet or exceed 80%;
- b. Respondent must submit quarterly reports to the Board;
- c. Respondent is subject to and must cooperate with an NCLEX site visit in 2024.

2. Upon review of compliance with the terms and conditions of this Order, the Board will further consider Respondent’s approval status, which may require its appearance before a Committee of the Board.

3. Respondent shall provide a copy of this Order to all current and prospective students, to all faculty members, and to the program's advisory board. Further, Respondent shall publish this Order on its website.

4. All publications shall reflect that Respondent is on conditional approval.

5. Respondent shall comply with all of the Board's regulations for granting full program approval for a practical nursing education program in Virginia.

6. Any violation of the terms and conditions of this Order or any law or regulation affecting the operation of nursing education programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia may constitute grounds for the withdrawal of approval of Respondent, and an administrative proceeding shall be convened to determine whether such approval shall be withdrawn.

Reviewed and approved  
By Felisa Smith, PhD, MSA, RN, CNE  
Chair, Education Conference Special Committee