

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA  
BOARD OF DENTISTRY

In the Matter of  
Shannon Marie Hessenius, LDA  
License No. A8779

**FINDINGS OF FACT  
CONCLUSIONS,  
AND FINAL ORDER**

The above-entitled matter came on for hearing at a special meeting of the Minnesota Board of Dentistry (“Board”) on January 28, 2025, located at 335 Randolph Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota and via WebEx videoconference. The Board conducted a hearing pursuant to the procedures set forth in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Stipulation and Order for Stayed Suspension and Conditional License (“2024 Stipulation and Order”) issued by the Board to Shannon Marie Hessenius, LDA (“Licensee”), on August 29, 2024.

The Practitioner Review Committee appeared and comprised Peter Cannon, D.D.S., Ashley Johnson, D.M.D., Heidi Donnelly, L.D.A., and Samuel Ankrah, M.P.A. Michael McSherry, Assistant Attorney General, represented the Committee. Licensee did not appear. The members of the Practitioner Review Committee did not participate in deliberations and did not vote in the matter. Jamal Zayed, Assistant Attorney General, was present as legal advisor to the Board.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

The Board has reviewed the record of this proceeding and hereby issues the following Findings of Fact:

1. The Board is authorized pursuant to Minnesota Statutes sections 150A.01 to 150A.22 to license, regulate, and discipline persons who apply for, petition, or hold licenses as dentists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants and is further authorized pursuant

to Minnesota Statutes sections 214.10 and 214.103 to review complaints against dentists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, and dental assistant, to investigate such complaints, and to initiate appropriate disciplinary action.

2. On January 4, 2024, Licensee entered into a Participation Agreement with the Health Professionals Services Program (“the HPSP”) for monitoring of a substance-use disorder. On June 13, 2024, Licensee was unsatisfactorily discharged from the program.

3. On August 29, 2024, the Board adopted a Stipulation and Consent Order (“2024 Order”) based on Licensee’s violations of Minnesota Statutes section 150A.08, subdivisions 1(6) and (8), Minnesota Statutes section 214.355, and Minnesota Rule 3100.6200(A). The 2024 Order suspended Licensee’s license and stayed the suspension subject to Licensee’s compliance with various conditions, including a requirement that Licensee re-enroll in the HPSP and enter into a new Participation Agreement.

4. On September 26, 2024, the HPSP received a signed Participation Agreement from Licensee in which Licensee agreed to a 36-month monitoring period for Licensee’s Substance Use Disorder and Psychiatric Disorder. Licensee’s Participation Agreement required that Licensee “abstain from the use of alcohol and controlled substances . . . and any other mood-altering substances . . . unless prescribed or certified by” Licensee’s primary care provider. The Participation Agreement further required Licensee to submit to toxicology screenings as required by the HPSP’s screening policies. The Participation Agreement also required Licensee to “obtain additional assessments or evaluations as requested by HPSP.”

5. On December 9, 2024, Licensee submitted a dilute sample for toxicology screening.

6. On December 13, 2024, Licensee submitted a sample for toxicology screening that tested positive for a metabolite of alcohol and demonstrated Licensee's relapse and recent use of alcohol.

7. On December 17, 2024, Licensee spoke with her HPSP case manager and admitted to relapsing on December 12, 2024. Licensee's admitted use of alcohol violated the terms of her Participation Agreement. Licensee's case manager requested that Licensee complete an updated substance-use assessment and comply with any evaluator recommendations.

8. On December 18, 2024, Licensee failed to submit a sample for toxicology screening as requested by the HPSP and in violation of the terms of her Participation Agreement.

9. On December 18, 2024, Licensee saw her provider but failed to obtain an updated substance-use assessment or recommendations in violation of her Participation Agreement.

10. On December 19, 2024, the HPSP unsatisfactorily discharged Licensee for noncompliance with the terms of her Participation Agreement and submitted a report to the Board.

11. On January 16, 2025, and pursuant to the procedures set forth in 13 of the 2024 Stipulation and Order, the Committee issued an Order of Removal of Stay of Suspension and a Notice of Removal of Stay of Suspension, Imposition of Suspension, and Hearing.

12. The Notice informed Licensee that the Committee had removed the stay of suspension, thereby imposing the suspension of Licensee's license because the Committee had probable cause to believe that Licensee had failed to comply with the requirement in the 2024 Stipulation and Order. The Notice informed Licensee of the alleged violations and of the date, time, and place of the hearing.

13. The Committee had probable cause to remove the stay of suspension.

## CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board makes the following Conclusions:

1. The Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to Minnesota Statutes sections 150A.08, 214.10, and 214.103.
2. The Committee gave proper notice of the alleged violations to Licensee, pursuant to paragraphs 13 of the 2024 Stipulation and Order.
3. The Committee has the burden of establishing the statutory violations charged by a preponderance of the evidence.
4. The Committee proved by a preponderance of the evidence that Licensee violated Minnesota Statutes 150A.08, subdivision 1(13), the terms of the 2024 Stipulation and Order, and Minnesota Statutes section 214.355.
5. As a result of the violations set forth above and pursuant to the terms of the 2024 Stipulation and Order, the Board has the authority to impose additional disciplinary action against Licensee's license to practice as a licensed dental assistant.

## ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions, the Board issues the following Order:

1. NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the 2024 Stipulation and Order issued to Licensee on August 29, 2024, and the Order of Suspension issued to Licensee on January 16, 2025, are superseded and shall have no future force.
2. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Licensee's license to practice as a licensed dental assistant in the State of Minnesota is **SUSPENDED** immediately for an indefinite period of time.

3. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that during the period of suspension Licensee shall not engage in any conduct which constitutes practice as a licensed dental assistant as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 150A.01, subdivision 8, or sections 150A.01 to 150A.12. Licensee shall not imply or suggest to any persons by words or conduct that Licensee is authorized to practice as a licensed dental assistant in the State of Minnesota.

4. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Licensee may petition the Board to have the suspended status removed from her license at such time as she is willing to respond to the Findings of Fact set forth above and following 12 months from the date of this Order. Her license may be reinstated, if at all, as the evidence dictates and based upon the need to protect the public. The burden of proof shall be upon Licensee to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence that she is capable of conducting herself in a fit and competent manner in practice as a licensed dental assistant and has had 12 months of demonstrated sobriety immediately preceding her petition. At the time of Licensee's petition, Licensee may be directed to meet with a Committee to review her response to the Findings of Fact and provide documentation of 12 months of sobriety. In petitioning for removal of the suspension, Licensee shall comply with or provide the Board with, at a minimum, the following:

- a. A response to each separate fact set forth in the Findings of Fact.
- b. Evidence of compliance with the provisions of this Order. As part of the proof of compliance, Licensee shall submit the following in support of her petition:

- 1) Self-Report. Licensee shall submit to the Board a report from Licensee herself. The report shall be submitted at the time Licensee petitions for reinstatement of her license. The report shall provide and address:

a) Licensee's sobriety, including the date Licensee last used mood-altering chemicals, including alcohol, and the circumstances surrounding any use while this Order is in effect;

b) Licensee's treatment and participation in a chemical dependency rehabilitation program, including weekly attendance at a chemical dependency support group such as Alcoholics Anonymous during the 12 months preceding the petition. Evidence of participation shall include, but need not be limited to, attendance sheets on a form provided by the Board that have been legibly signed or initialed and dated by a participant who attended the weekly meeting;

c) Licensee's physical and mental health status, treatment plan, medications, and compliance with treatment;

d) Licensee's work schedule;

e) Licensee's future plans in dentistry-related employment and the steps she has taken to prepare herself to return to practice; and

f) Any other information Licensee believes would assist the Board in its ultimate review of this matter.

2) Report From Health Care Professional. Licensee shall cause to be submitted to the Board a report from any health care professional whom Licensee consults for physical health, mental health, or chemical dependency treatment while this Order is in effect. The reports shall be submitted at the time Licensee petitions for reinstatement of her license. The report shall provide and address:

a) Verification that the health care professional has reviewed this Order and all past Board orders regarding Licensee;

- b) Identification of diagnoses and any plans of treatment, including medications, devised for Licensee;
- c) Licensee's progress with therapy and compliance with the treatment plan;
- d) A statement regarding Licensee's sobriety;
- e) Recommendations for additional treatment, therapy, or monitoring; and
- f) Any other information the health care professional believes would assist the Board in its ultimate review of this matter.

3) Report of Prescribed Mood-Altering Chemicals. Licensee shall cause to be submitted to the Board a report from any and all physicians, dentists, and other authorized health care professionals who have prescribed mood-altering chemicals for Licensee during the period this Order is in effect. Each report is due at the time of petition and shall provide and address:

- a) The name, dosage, frequency, and purpose of the mood-altering chemicals for Licensee;
- b) Confirmation that the physician, dentist, or other health care professional has been informed of Licensee's substance use history; and
- c) Any other information the reporter believes would assist the Board in its ultimate review of this matter.

4) Substance Use Evaluation. Within 60 days prior to petitioning, Licensee shall undergo a substance use evaluation performed by a licensed professional. Licensee shall submit, or cause to be submitted, the credentials of the evaluator for review and preapproval

by Board staff for purposes of this evaluation. Licensee is responsible for the cost of the evaluation. The results shall be sent directly to the Board and shall provide and address:

a) Verification the evaluator has reviewed a copy of this Order and any evaluation and/or treatment records deemed pertinent by the Board or the evaluator prior to the evaluation;

b) Diagnosis and any recommended treatment plan;

c) Licensee's ability to handle stress;

d) Recommendations for additional evaluation or treatment;

and

e) Any other information the evaluator believes would assist the Board in its ultimate review of this matter.

5) Compliance With Evaluator's Recommendations. Licensee shall comply promptly with any recommendations for additional evaluation and treatment made by the substance use evaluator.

6) Additional Information. Any additional information relevant to Licensee's petition reasonably requested by the Board's Practitioner Review Committee.

5. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Licensee shall meet all reregistration requirements in effect at the time of her petition to reinstate her license, including but not limited to completing the appropriate application, paying the requisite fees, and completing any necessary continuing education requirements.

6. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Licensee's violation of this Order shall constitute the violation of a Board order for purposes of Minnesota Statutes section 150A.08, subdivision 1(13), and provide grounds for further disciplinary action.

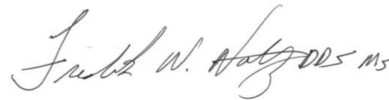


7. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Board may, at any regularly scheduled meeting following Licensee's petition for reinstatement pursuant to paragraph 4, above, take any of the following actions:

- a. Reinstatement Licensee's license;
- b. Reinstatement Licensee's license with limitations upon the scope of Licensee's practice and/or with conditions for Licensee's practice; or
- c. Continue the suspension of Licensee's license upon her failure to meet the burden of proof.

Dated: 1/30/2025

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
BOARD OF DENTISTRY

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rick A. Nolting D.D.S. MS", written over a horizontal line.

Rick Nolting, D.D.S.  
Presiding Board Member