IN THE MATTER OF

\* BEFORE THE MARYLAND

**FASILAT O. COLEMAN** 

\* BOARD OF NURSING

LICENSE NO.: R240268

\* OAG CASE NO. 23-BP-026

ORDER FOR SUMMARY SUSPENSION OF REGISTERED NURSE LICENSE PURSUANT TO SECTION 10-226(c)(2) OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT

The Maryland Board of Nursing (the "Board") hereby orders the **SUMMARY SUSPENSION** of the license of **FASILAT O. COLEMAN** (the "Respondent"), License Number **R240268**, to practice as a **REGISTERED NURSE** in the State of Maryland. The Board takes this action pursuant to the authority of Maryland Code Ann., State Government Article ("SG") § 10-226(c)(2) (2021 Repl. Vol.), which provides:

- (2) A unit may order summarily the suspension of a license if the unit:
  - (i) finds that the public, health, safety, or welfare imperatively requires emergency action; and
  - (ii) promptly give the licensee:
    - 1. Written notice of the suspension, the finding and the reasons that support the finding; and
    - 2. An opportunity to be heard.

The Board has reason, as set forth below, to find that the public health, safety, or welfare imperatively requires emergency action ("SG") § 10-226(c) (2).

### INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS AND REASONS IN SUPPORT OF SUMMARY SUSPENSION

Based on investigatory information obtained by, received by and made known to and available to the Board, the Board has reason to believe that the following facts are true:

1. On or about August 16, 2019, the Respondent was issued a license to practice as a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>The allegations set forth in this document are intended to provide the Respondent with notice of the Board's action. They are not intended as, and do not necessarily represent a complete description of the evidence, either documentary or testimonial, to be offered against the Respondent in connection with this action.

registered nurse ("RN") in the State of Maryland, license number R240268. The Respondent's RN license is currently active and is scheduled to expire on November 28, 2023. The Compact<sup>2</sup> status of the Respondent's Maryland RN license is "Multistate."

### **BACKGROUND**

### **Maryland RN Application**

- 2. On or about December 13, 2017, the Respondent submitted to the Board an online Maryland Application for Exam of RN Licensure ("RN Application").
- 3. On her RN Application, the Respondent indicated that she graduated from Med-Life Institute West Palm Beach, Florida ("Med-Life") December 1, 2017 and received an Associate Degree.
- 4. On her RN Application, the Respondent affirmed and agreed to the following statement: "I affirm that the contents of this document are accurate to the best of my knowledge." The Respondent was advised that "providing false or misleading information may result in disciplinary action by the Board, and may result in denial of licensure."

#### **NCLEX-RN Documentation**

5. The Respondent's NURSYS NCLEX-RN³ documentation indicates that the Respondent graduated from Palm Beach School of Nursing in West Palm Beach, Florida ("Palm Beach School of Nursing") in November 2017 and applied to take the NCLEX-RN through application to the Maryland Board.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) is an agreement between Boards of Nursing of party states that allows nurses to have one Multistate nursing license with the ability to practice nursing in both their home state and other party states. In accordance with the Nurse Licensure Compact, Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 8-7A-01.3(h) and § 8-7A-01.3(m) respectively, "Home state" means the party state that is the nurse's primary state of residence and, "Party state" means any state that has adopted this Compact.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> NCLEX-RN is an acronym for the National Council Licensure Examination for registered nursing.

6.	According to the NCSBN NCLEX Admi	inistration and Pearson	Vue, the Respondent sat
for the	NCLEX-RN examination three (3) times;		July
24, 20	19.		

Appt	Result	Member Board
02-23-2018		Maryland Board of Nursing
08-10-2018		Maryland Board of Nursing
07-24-2019		Maryland Board of Nursing

### United States District Court for the District of Maryland Criminal Complaint

7. On or about July 8, 2021, in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland, Case No. 21-mj-2014-TJS, Johanah Napoleon was indicted on charges of (1) Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud; (2) Conspiracy to Commit False Statements Relating to Health Care Matters; and, (3) False Statements Relating to Health Care Matters. According to the *Affidavit in Support of Criminal Complaints and Arrest Warrants*, Johanah Napoleon conspired with two other individuals and submitted false statements relating to health care matters by working together to sell fraudulent transcripts and diplomas that indicate that various individuals completed necessary courses and clinical hours to obtain nursing degrees and coached these unqualified individuals to pass the nursing board exam. Subsequently, these unqualified individuals obtained employment at various healthcare providers in the District of Maryland.

### United States District Court Southern District of Florida Criminal Information

8. On or about June 2, 2022, in the United States District Court Southern District of Florida, Case Number 22-60118, Johanah Napoleon was charged with Conspiracy to Commit Mail Fraud and Wire Fraud. According to the *Criminal Information* ("Florida Charges"), Johanah Napoleon conspired with two other individuals to unlawfully enrich themselves by selling false and

fraudulent transcripts and diplomas that indicated that various individuals completed necessary courses and clinical hours to obtain nursing degrees and mailed and/or caused others to mail fake diplomas, fraudulent transcripts, and other false documents to state licensing agencies on behalf of the purchasers. Using the false and fraudulent diplomas and transcripts, Johanah Napoleon and her co-conspirators assisted the purchases of the false and fraudulent documents to obtain fraudulent nursing licenses from state licensing agencies, and ultimately employment in the healthcare field.

### Affidavit of Johanah Napoleon

9. In an affidavit notarized and signed on June 7, 2022, Johanah Napoleon declared under penalty of perjury that the following "is true and correct to the best of [her] knowledge":

I owned and operated the following schools:

. . . .

Med-Life Institute WPB LLC ("Med-Life") from September 28, 2015 until it was dissolved on September 23, 2016. Med-Life was located at... West Palm Beach, FL...Med-Life continued to issue diplomas and transcripts after its dissolution. Med-Life was licensed by the Florida Commission for Independent Education and the Florida Board of Nursing and was authorized to offer a Nursing-Associate in Science Degree. The objective of the program was to "prepare the student to meet the requirements of the Florida Department of Health and the Florida Board of Nursing for Registered Nurse Education and meet eligibility for licensing exam (NCLEX-RN) in order to work as a Registered Nurse in a variety of settings in a safe and effective manner." Med-Life was authorized to provide instruction on campus to individuals seeking a [sic] Associate in Science Degree. This program required students to complete 1,665 hours of instruction, which included 720 hours of clinical experience in a health care setting.

<u>Palm Beach School of Nursing LLC</u> ("Palm Beach School of Nursing") from its incorporation on or about April 11, 2016 to present. Palm Beach School of Nursing was initially located at...West Palm Beach, FL...and then moved to...Lake Worth, FL...Palm Beach School of Nursing was licensed by Florida Commission for Independent Education and the Florida Board of Nursing and was authorized to offer a Nursing-Associate in Science Degree. The objective of the program was to "prepare the student to meet the requirements of the Florida Department of Health

and the Florida Board of Nursing for Registered Nurse Education and meet eligibility for licensing exam (NCLEX-RN) in order to work as a Registered Nurse in a variety of settings in a safe and effective manner." Palm Beach School of Nursing was authorized to provide instruction on campus to individuals seeking a [sic] Associate in Science Degree. This program required students to complete 1,665 hours of instruction, which included 720 hours of clinical experience in a health care setting.

. . . .

From in or around October 2016 to present,...Med-Life [and] Palm Beach School of Nursing....issued transcripts and diplomas to 62 individuals listed in Attachment A, who completed the required program hours and clinical training necessary to receive either a practical nursing diploma and transcript or a nursing associate in science degree and transcript.

From in or around October 2016 to present,...Med-Life [and] Palm Beach School of Nursing....issued transcripts and diplomas to 4989 individuals listed in Attachment B, who did not complete the required program hours and clinical training necessary to obtain either a practical nursing diploma and transcript or a nursing associate in science degree and transcript.

. . . .

I am also aware there may be other individuals claiming to have completed the registered nursing program at Med-Life or Palm Beach School of Nursing who may possess illegitimate degrees and transcripts. However, those individuals name named in Attachment A are not known to me to have completed the required program hours and clinical training necessary to earn a nursing associate in science degree and transcript.

10. The Respondent's name, date of birth, and social security number are listed in Attachment B indicating the Respondent is one of the individuals who was issued a transcript and diploma and who did not complete the required program hours and clinical training necessary to obtain a nursing associate in science degree and transcript.

### **Board's Investigation**

11. The Respondent completed and submitted to the Board an Investigative Questionnaire which she signed on March 7, 2023 which states:

By my signature below, I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that

the information I provided in or attached to this Questionnaire is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

- 12. On the Investigative Questionnaire, the Respondent indicated that she enrolled in her nursing education program at Palm Beach School of Nursing on January 9, 2017 and received her diploma, an Associate in Science Nursing degree, from Palm Beach School of Nursing on November 10, 2017.
- 13. The Respondent answered that she resided in Maryland while attending her nursing education program. However, when asked what, if any, online courses the Respondent took as part of her nursing education program, the Respondent only listed two classes: Sociology and Pathophysiology.<sup>4</sup>
- 14. In response to the question asking the Respondent to list all of the courses for which she received clinical experience, the Respondent provided the following information for Palm Beach School of Nursing:

Human Anatomy and Physiology – (Lab 2 hours)
Adult Nursing Practicum Lab – (Lab 1 hour; clinical 2 hours)
Psychiatric Nursing Practicum – – (Lab 1 hour; clinical 2 hours)
Maternal and Newborn Nursing Practicum – (Lab 1 hour; clinical 2 hours)
Adult Nursing II – – (Lab 1 hour; clinical 2 hours)
Advanced Nursing Skills – – (Lab 1 hour; clinical 2 hours)

All above at [Address]5 Hyattsville, Maryland

15. The Respondent stated that she completed her clinical experience at Palm Beach School of Nursing on November 10, 2017.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The Respondent did not provide any transcripts or documentation to indicate that she completed online courses in either Sociology or Pathophysiology.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The address provided by the Respondent as the location of her clinical experience is an office building in Hyattsville, Maryland. It is not a medical facility or hospital.

16. The Board received a copy of the Respondent's Palm Beach School of Nursing transcript ("Transcript") indicating that she attended Palm Beach School of Nursing in Lake Worth, Florida from January 9, 2017 until November 10, 2017 and includes the following information:

Course	General Education Course Title	Credit	Grade	Comment
Number		Hours		
HSC 101	Introduction to Health Care	3.0		
HSC 102	Human Anatomy & Physiology (Lab: 2 hours)	3.0		T
HSC 103	Human Development	3.0		T
HSC 104	Microbiology	3.0		T
GEC 101	College Writing	3.0		T
GEC 102	College Algebra	3.0		T
GEC 103	Psychology	3.0		T
GEC 104	Sociology	3.0		$T^6$
GEC 105	Pathophysiology	3.0		$T^7$
0	Total Credit Hours:	27.0		

Course	Nursing Course Title	Credit	Grade
Number		Hours	
NUR 100	LPN to RN Transition	3.0	
NUR 104	Critical Thinking & the Nursing Process	3.0	
NUR 103	Pharmacology	3.0	
NUR 201	Adult Nursing I	3.0	
NUR 202	Adult Nursing I Practicum (lab: 1 hour; clinical 2 hours)	3.0	
NUR 203	Psychiatric Nursing	3.0	
NUR 204	Psychiatric Nursing Practicum (lab: 1 hour; clinical 2 hours)	3.0	
NUR 205	Maternal and Newborn Nursing	3.0	
NUR 206	Maternal and Newborn Nursing Practicum (lab:1 hour; clinical 2	3.0	
	hours)	_	
NUR 207	Pediatric Nursing	3.0	
NUR 208	Pediatric Nursing Practicum (lab: 1 hour; clinical 2 hours)	3.0	
NUR 301	Adult Nursing II	3.0	
NUR 302	Adult Nursing Practicum II (clinical 2 hours)	3.0	
NUR 401	Advanced Nursing Skills (clinical 2 hours)	3.0	
NUR 402	Professional Nursing Leadership	3.0	
	Total Credit Hours:	$27.0^{8}$	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> None of the transcripts provided by the Respondent for schools she attended prior to January 9, 2017 indicate she took a Sociology class or received an '\_\_' in the class.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> None of the transcripts provided by the Respondent for schools she attended prior to January 9, 2017 indicate she took a Pathophysiology class or received an ' in the class.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The Nursing Course section of the Respondent's Palm Beach School of Nursing Transcript lists 15 courses, each for 3.0 credit hours, which totals 45.0 credit hours, not 27.

17. The Transcript does not indicate the specific dates or time periods that the Respondent completed each individual didactic class, nor does it indicate the specific dates and/or locations where the clinical courses were completed.

#### **DISCUSSION**

- 18. The Respondent submitted registration information to NCLEX when applying for examination for licensure indicating that she graduated from Palm Beach School of Nursing in November 2017.
- 19. The Respondent submitted an Application for RN Licensure by Exam to the Board in which she indicated that she graduated from Med-Life, West Palm Beach on December 1, 2017.
- 20. The Respondent provided false and/or contradictory information about her RN education.
- 21. In a signed affidavit, Johanah Napoleon, owner and operator of Palm Beach School of Nursing and Med-Life Institute West Palm Beach, provided a list of individuals who did not complete the required program hours and clinical training at Palm Beach School of Nursing and Med-Life Institute, necessary to receive a transcript or a nursing associate in science degree. The Respondent was identified on the list by name, date of birth and social security number.
- 22. The Respondent does not meet the Board's statutory and regulatory requirements for RN licensure in Maryland.
- 23. The Respondent holds an active, Multistate RN license and the Respondent's ability and opportunity to continue to practice as an RN in the State of Maryland and/or any compact state on a fraudulently obtained RN license poses a serious risk and danger to the public health, safety, and welfare.

#### **CONCLUSION OF LAW**

Based on the foregoing investigative findings and reasons, the Board finds that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action in this case pursuant to Md. Code Ann., State Govt. § 10-226(c)(2) (2021 Repl. Vol.).

#### ORDER

It is hereby:

ORDERED that pursuant to the authority vested in the Board of Nursing by Maryland Code Ann., State Govt. § 10-226(c)(2) (2021 Repl. Vol.) the license of FASILAT O. COLEMAN to practice as a REGISTERED NURSE in the State of Maryland, license number R240268, is hereby SUMMARILY SUSPENDED; and be it further

**ORDERED** that there will be a Show Cause Hearing on March 22, 2023 at 4:00 p.m., before the Board at the Maryland Board of Nursing offices, 4140 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21215; and be it further

ORDERED that if, the suspension of the Respondent's license is continued following a Show Cause Hearing, the Respondent has the right to a full evidentiary hearing before the Board and a hearing will be scheduled before the Board if the Respondent submits a written request for an evidentiary hearing to the Board no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the Board's written decision issued after the Show Cause Hearing; and be it further

ORDERED that if the Respondent does not submit a timely written request to the Board for an evidentiary hearing within 30 days from the date of the Board's written decision issued after the Show Cause Hearing, the Respondent shall have waived all rights now and in the future to any hearing on the merits of the summary suspension and the factual allegations contained in this Order for Summary Suspension; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this Order for Summary Suspension shall remain in effect and the summary suspension of the Respondent's license shall continue until further Order of the Board; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this, "Order for Summary Suspension of Registered Nurse License" is a **PUBLIC RECORD** pursuant to Md. Code Ann., General Provisions § 4-101 *et seq.*& § 4-333 (2019).

March 9, 2023 Date Karen E.B. Evans, MSN, RN-BC The Executive Director's Signature Appears on the Original Document