



News Release

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State disciplines health care providers

OLYMPIA -- The Washington State Department of Health has taken disciplinary actions or withdrawn charges against the following health care providers in our state.

The department's Health Systems Quality Assurance Division works with boards, commissions, and advisory committees to set licensing standards for more than 80 health care professions (e.g., dentists, nurses, counselors). Information about disciplinary action taken against medical doctors and physician assistants can be found on the [Washington Medical Commission \(WMC\) website](#). Questions about WMC disciplinary actions can be sent to media@wmc.wa.gov.

Information about health care providers is on the agency website. Click on "[Look up a health care provider license](#)" in the "How Do I?" section of the [Department of Health website](#) (doh.wa.gov). The site includes information about a health care provider's license status, the expiration and renewal date of their credential, disciplinary actions and copies of legal documents issued after July 1998. This information is also available by calling 360-236-4700. Consumers who think a health care provider acted unprofessionally are encouraged to call and report their complaint.

Benton County

In June 2022 the secretary of health denied the home care aide license application of **Arlette Soledad Gonzalez** (HM60399371). In June 2021 Gonzalez allegedly admitted receiving \$12,000 from a vulnerable adult at the assisted living facility where she worked.

In June 2022 the secretary of health granted with conditions a certified nursing assistant license to **Briana Ang Gutierrez** (NC61032994). Gutierrez agreed to the conditions, which include a substance use monitoring program evaluation. In 2020, Gutierrez was charged with driving under the influence, reckless endangerment, and resisting arrest in Yakima County District Court.

Clark County

In June 2022 the Unlicensed Practice Program notified **Michelle Smith** of its intent to issue a cease-and-desist order. Smith, the owner of "Recovery is the New Black," allegedly represented herself as a co-occurring disorder specialist, mental health counselor, forensic psychologist,

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social worker, and counselor. She has never held licenses for any of those professions in Washington state.

Jefferson County

In June 2022 the secretary of health granted with conditions a substance use disorder professional trainee license to **Amyr Kae Lorenzo** (CO61264033). Lorenzo, who agreed to the conditions, will be on probation for three years, practice with professional supervision, and provide quarterly performance reports. In 2019, Lorenzo was convicted of assault and reckless endangerment in Jefferson County Superior Court.

King County

In June 2022 the secretary of health ended conditions on the marriage and family therapy credential of **Michael Wayne Baker** (LF60710468).

In June 2022 the Chiropractic Commission charged chiropractor **Daniel Brighton Thompson** (CH00003013) with unprofessional conduct. When a Department of Health investigator went to Thompson's clinic to conduct a site visit, he allegedly swore at the investigator and ordered him to leave. The investigator sent two letters asking for an explanation, but Thompson has not responded in writing with an explanation.

In May 2022 the secretary of health denied the medical assistant phlebotomist application of **Jack Hoang-Nghia Pham** (PC61255180). Between 2013 and 2021, Pham was convicted of multiple felonies and gross misdemeanors, including theft, reckless driving, and domestic violence.

In June 2022 the Nursing Commission withdrew charges against licensed practical nurse **Lidia Tadese Gebreab** (LP60573363).

In June 2022 the Nursing Commission withdrew charges against licensed practical nurse **Irene Wairimu Waithera** (LP60942225).

In June 2022 the Unlicensed Practice Program notified **Elizabeth Poinana**, who does business as **Complete Home Care**, of its intent to issue a cease-and-desist order. Poinana allegedly does not hold a license to operate an in-home services agency but has been operating under that name since May 2019.

Okanogan County

In June 2022 the Chiropractic Commission charged chiropractor **John Herbert Hammer** (CH00003140) with unprofessional conduct. Hammer allegedly temporarily closed his business without notifying patients or staff. He also allegedly did not keep chart notes and failed to supply copies of patient records or an explanation to investigators.

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Pierce County

In June 2022 the Nursing Commission withdrew charges against licensed practical nurse **Adeyinka B. Wuraola** (LP00058851).

In June 2022 the Dental Commission withdrew charges against dentist **Lawrence Kermit Heggerness** (DE00003688).

Skagit County

In June 2022 the secretary of health granted with conditions a home care aide license to **Derek Blake Kucala** (HM61152840). Kucala agreed to the conditions, which include two years' probation of his license and quarterly performance reports. In 2019, he was convicted of driving under the influence and driving without an ignition interlock.

In June 2022 the Examining Board of Psychology restricted the psychologist license of **Comer A. La Rue** (PY00001383). La Rue is not allowed to conduct forensic evaluations or testify as an expert witness until completing requirements including ethics and continuing education classes. La Rue practiced in an area of psychology for which he was not competent, and his handling of a report fell below the standard of care and violated the law.

Snohomish County

In June 2022 the Substance Use Disorder Professional Program charged substance use disorder professional **John William Tye** (CP60808054) with unprofessional conduct. Tye developed a romantic and sexual relationship with a former client to whom he was a primary counselor.

Thurston County

In June 2022 the secretary of health granted with conditions an agency affiliated counselor license to **Diana Nicole Docher** (CG61270330). Docher, who agreed to the conditions, will be on probation for 18 months, work under professional supervision, and submit quarterly performance evaluations. In 2020, she was convicted of harassment in Thurston County Superior Court.

In June 2022 the Nursing Commission withdrew charges against licensed practical nurse **Gabriel Gathingu Ndungu** (LP60435619).

Yakima County

In June 2022 the secretary of health granted with conditions a substance use disorder professional trainee license to **Shauna Rae Vincent** (CO61266238). Vincent, who agreed to the conditions, will have her credential on probation for 36 months, will practice with professional supervision, and submit quarterly performance evaluations. Between 2014 and 2018, she had multiple felony and gross misdemeanor convictions, including theft and forgery.

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Out of State

Oregon: In June 2022 the Mental Health Counselor Program reinstated with conditions the mental health counselor credential of **James Randy Webb** (LH60185615). Webb agreed to the conditions, which place his license on probation for at least two years, require professional supervision of his practice, and quarterly performance evaluations.

Texas: In May 2022 the Nursing Commission withdrew charges against licensed practical nurse **Yangmotso Bhutia Antso** (LP60196601).

Note to Editors: Health care providers charged with unprofessional conduct have 20 days to respond to the Department of Health in writing. The case then enters the settlement process. If no disciplinary agreement can be reached, the case will go to a hearing.

The [DOH website](#) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. [Find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#). Sign up for the DOH blog, [Public Health Connection](#).

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