



News Release

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Public inquiries: Health Systems Customer Service 360-236-4700

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OLYMPIA -- The Washington State Department of Health has taken disciplinary actions or withdrawn charges against the following health care providers in our state.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 "[Health Care Provider Lookup](#)" under the "Find it Fast" 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.

Island County

In May 2023 the secretary of health denied the emergency medical responder credential of **Kristopher Michael Bodenhafer** (ES61399218). Bodenhafer did not respond to a request for a substance use evaluation.

Jefferson County

In May 2023 the secretary of health denied the agency affiliated counselor license of **Sara Thornton Soper** (CG61246155). Soper responded "yes" to having used illegal or controlled substances in the last two years. Soper did not respond to a request for conditions on the license.

King County

In May 2023 the secretary of health and **Diane Melanie Valdespino** (LH61132618) agreed to monitoring conditions on her licensed mental health counselor credential. Valdespino will be monitored until at least November 14, 2025; will attend and complete an ethics examination; will be supervised by a qualified professional that is approved by the Mental Health Program; and will have her supervisor submit quarterly performance reports. In August 2020 a complaint was

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filed against Valdespino's credential for improper or abusive billing practices and unprofessional conduct.

Lewis County

In May 2023 the secretary of health ended the conditions on the massage therapist license of **Stacy Jo Dagnon** (MA00008770).

Pierce County

In May 2023 the secretary of health denied the certified medical assistant license of **Shelly Marie Knight** (CM61174952). In Georgia in 2019, Knight prescribed a non-narcotic prescription medication without authorization to do so; in January 2022, was indicted for identity fraud, a felony; reckless conduct, prescribing or ordering dangerous drugs, and four counts of possession/distribution of dangerous drugs, all misdemeanors; and in November of 2022, pleaded guilty to reckless conduct, and two counts of illegally prescribing or ordering dangerous drugs.

In May 2023 the Nursing Commission charged licensed practical nurse **Stephen Wakibi Buteraba** (LP60319984) with unprofessional conduct. In March 2019, Buteraba allegedly gave medication to the wrong patient, resulting in that patient being sent to the hospital for monitoring. Buteraba has not responded to investigator requests for a statement sent in February and March of 2022.

Skagit County

In May 2023 the Nursing Commission ended the conditions on the registered nurse license of **Tiffany R Swedeen** (RN00160271).

Spokane County

In May 2023 the secretary of health placed the physical therapy license of **Erik Jeffrey Patterson** (PT60815362) on probation for at least 12 months. While on probation, Patterson must pass an ethics course and disclose the terms of his probationary order to any patient. From June 2020 to July 2020, Patterson made statements to and questioned a patient about topics that were sexual in nature and not related to health care.

Whitman County

In May 2023 the Nursing Assistant Program charged certified nursing assistant **Nicholas Tinina Kayioni** (NC60411462) with unprofessional conduct. In September 2019, Kayioni allegedly pleaded guilty in the state of Idaho to possession of a controlled substance and agreed to probation for four years. Charges state that in December 2022, the Department of Health made two attempts to contact Kayioni regarding that charge; and he has not responded or made any other contact with the Department of Health.

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Yakima County

In May 2023 the secretary of health and **Samantha Nichole Deluna** (CO61401847) agreed to conditions on her substance use disorder professional license. The license will be on probation until at least January 31, 2025, during which time Deluna must work under an approved supervisor who must submit quarterly performance reports.

In May 2023 the Dental Commission denied the dental assistant license of **Sabrina C Casares** (D161359091). In January 2013, Casares was convicted of second-degree rendering criminal assistance and negligent driving, both gross misdemeanors. In 2021, Casares was convicted of driving under the influence, a gross misdemeanor. Casares did not respond to a request for a substance use evaluation.

Out of State

Idaho: In May 2023 the Nursing Commission ended the conditions on the registered nurse and advanced registered nurse practitioner licenses of **Cheri Susan Thomas** (RN60067108, AP61160903-NP).

Nevada: In May 2023 the Pharmacy Commission reinstated the pharmacist license of **Aurora Bejto** (PH60957232). Bejto must continue compliance with a substance use monitoring program contract she agreed to in September 2021. In July 2021, Bejto's credential to practice as a pharmacist was revoked by the Nevada Board of Pharmacy for diversion of controlled substances.

Oregon: In May 2023 the secretary of health and **Russell Kurt Hanson** (CG61274394) agreed to conditions on his agency affiliated counselor license. The license will be on probation until at least July 26, 2024, during which time Hanson must work under an approved supervisor who must submit quarterly performance reports. In June 2018, Hanson was convicted of mail theft or receipt of stolen mail, a class C felony.

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.

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