

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS**

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
HEALTH SERVICES REGULATION  
BOARD OF NURSE REGISTRATION  
AND NURSING EDUCATION**

**vs.**

**KAREN RHEUAME, RN (RN33463)**

**ORDER**

Pursuant to Section 5-34-25 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, 2004 Reenactment, a complaint was filed with the Board of Nurse Registration and Nursing Education (hereinafter referred to as "Board") charging Karen Rheuame, RN, Respondent, with violation of Chapter 5-34 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, 2004 Reenactment.

After consideration by the Investigating Subcommittee of the Board, the following constitutes the Findings of Fact with respect to the professional performance of the Respondent.

1. Respondent is a registered nurse and licensed to practice nursing in the State of Rhode Island.
2. That on or about June 6, 2005, Respondent did report to work at Harris Manor at Chopmist Hill with two unopened cans of beer, and that when confronted by her supervisor; she reported that they were for "the ride home".
3. That a query of the Rhode Island Judiciary Adult Criminal Information Database indicates numerous misdemeanor charges where as Respondent plead Nolo Contendre (between 1991 and 2006); and that in a letter dated February 21, 2006 Respondent reports that she was incarcerated at the Rhode Island Adult Correctional Institution for a probation violation;

4. That on February 7, 2006 the Department of Health received a report from Respondent's health care provider indicating that Respondent should refrain from gainful employment as a nurse for a one (1) year period in which she should be abstinent from alcohol.
5. That Respondent signed a Consent Order with the Board on April 9, 2007 placing her license on probationary status with the terms that she notify the Board of her employer and when there is any change in her employment status. The Board must also receive quarterly progress reports from her employer attesting to her maintaining professional and competent practice standards. Respondent has not been compliant with these terms whereas Respondent was employed for over four months before the Board was notified.
6. That the Board received information from her substance abuse health care provider that Respondent has not been compliant with her treatment regime and has cancelled or not shown up for numerous appointments
7. That on September 25, 2007, Respondent was arrested and charged for allegedly attacking an elderly woman in a wheelchair at Landmark Medical Center in Woonsocket, RI. Respondent tried to steal the elderly woman's pocketbook while the elderly woman was waiting in the emergency area of the hospital.
8. That the conduct described in paragraph two, (2) three (3), four (4), five (5) and six (6) above constitutes unprofessional conduct as defined in Sections 5-34-19 (c) in that Respondent's actions fail to conform to the standards established by the nursing profession.

Based upon the foregoing, the Board hereby enters the following Order:

1. That the registered nurse license issued to the Respondent is hereby suspended effective October 11, 2007.

2. That at the time Respondent seeks reinstatement of the registered nurse license, she shall submit documentation to the Board evidencing that she is capable and competent to engage in the practice of nursing. Such documentation shall include, but not limited to evidence of reports from a health care professional that the Respondent has consistently been undergoing treatment for alcohol and/or substance abuse, and such other information as the Board deems appropriate at this time.
3. That this Order shall remain in full force and effect pending further Order of the Board.

Entered as an Order of the Board of Nurse Registration and Nursing Education at a meeting held on October 1, 2007.

Date: October 1, 2007

Paula L. McCue  
Director, Board of Nurse Registration  
and Nursing Education