

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA
RESPIRATORY CARE BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:)

Heather R. Bussert, RCP)

License Number -2185)

Case Number - 20-1029)

CONSENT ORDER

1. Jurisdiction

The North Carolina Respiratory Care Board (the Board) is an occupational licensing board of the State of North Carolina, organized under The Respiratory Care Practice Act ("the Act") codified at N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-646, et seq. The Board has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-652 and 21 N.C. Admin. Code § 61.0307.

2. Identification of Licensee

The Respiratory Care Practitioner is Heather R. Bussert (the "RCP"). Her mailing address is 213 Laren Rd. Shelby, NC 28152. The RCP held a North Carolina Respiratory Care License Number 2185 (the "License"), first issued on September 12, 2002 and expires on September 30, 2021.

3. Waiver of Rights

I, Heather R. Bussert, the RCP, hereby confirm that I understand that I have each of the following rights, and as noted by my initials below, I hereby freely and knowingly waive each of these rights without further process and agree to the terms of this Consent Order regarding my License:

(Initials)

HB The right to a hearing before the Board;

HB The right to present evidence to disprove all or some of the charges against me;

HB The right to present evidence to limit or reduce any sanction that could be imposed for a violation;

HB The right to confront and cross-examine witnesses and to challenge evidence presented by the Board against me;

HB The right to present legal arguments to the Board; and

HB The right to appeal from any final decision adverse to my license to practice respiratory care.

4. Stipulation to Facts

The Respiratory Care Practitioner ("RCP") and the Board stipulate to the following facts:

- A. The RCP was engaged in the practice of respiratory care in North Carolina when the events occurred that led to the initiation of this complaint.
- B. The Board received an email confirmation of her late renewal on October 27, 2020.
- C. On October 27, 2020, an email was sent to the RCP to inquire about her work status. The RCP responded that "I work in a doctors office doing pulmonary function tests."
- D. On October 27, 2020, the Licensee admitted to the Executive Director in a phone call that she practiced respiratory care with a lapsed license between October 1, 2020 and October 27, 2020 at the Cleveland Pulmonary and Sleep Associates, located in Shelby, NC.
- E. On October 27, 2020 during the phone call, she was informed that Board policy authorizes the Executive Director to offer the option of a Reprimand to a licensee practicing respiratory care with a lapsed license. She agreed to the sanction.

5. Stipulated Order

A. Stipulation to Sections of Law Violated:

I, Heather R. Bussert, the RCP, admit that if it were proven at a hearing that I practiced respiratory care between October 1, 2020 and October 27, 2020 at Cleveland Pulmonary and Sleep Associates, located in Shelby, NC before renewing on October 27, 2020, this would constitute a violation of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-659 (a)(1)(c) and the rule codified at 21 N.C. Admin. Code § 61 .0307 (4).

B. Stipulation to Sanctions:

Under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-652, in lieu of proceeding to hearing, the Respiratory Care Practitioner and the Board hereby enter into this consent order and agree to the following terms:

- i) The RCP accepts and agrees to the issuance of a Board Reprimand;
- ii) The RCP accepts and agrees to the assessment of a civil penalty of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00) pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-666 and 21 N.C. Admin. Code § 61.0309. The RCP shall remit this sum to the Board no later than ninety (90) days after execution of this order;
- iii) The RCP accepts and agrees to the assessment of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) in costs pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-666(d) and to remit this sum to the Board no later than

ninety (90) days following the execution of this Consent Order. The RCP also assumes financial responsibility for any costs associated with fulfilling the terms of this Consent Order;

iv) The RCP agrees that this Consent Order is a public record, as defined by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 132-1, except that documents in the Board's investigative file are not public record;

v) The RCP acknowledges that this disciplinary action will be reported to appropriate entities as outlined in Board policy and as required by state and/or federal law or guidelines. Those entities include, but are not limited to, the National Databank maintained by the National Board for Respiratory Care and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB);

vi) Should circumstances arise that affect the RCP's ability to remain in compliance, the RCP agrees to notify the Board immediately in writing by return receipt mail, fully describing the situation, as well, as any attendant request for Board consideration;

vii) Based on the understandings and agreements by the RCP that are recited in this Order, the Board agrees not to proceed with any further sanctions, based upon the conduct described above. However, if the RCP fails to comply with any of the foregoing provisions of this Consent Order, while it is in effect, including the deadlines set forth in the Order, that is a violation of 21 N.C. Admin. Code § 61 .0307(3). In that event, the Board may schedule a show cause hearing for the RCP to appear and provide evidence regarding any alleged violations of the terms of the Order. If the Board determines that violations have occurred, then it may suspend or revoke the RCP's License, revoke any stay, and may take additional disciplinary action.

C. Compliance with the Act, Board Rules and Board Interpretations.

The RCP also agrees to continue to comply with the Act, the Board's Rules, and the Board's published interpretation of the Act and its Rules.

6. Effective Date/Modification of Order

All provisions of this Consent Order are effective upon the date that the Executive Director of the Board signs this Order. Fulfillment of any time-specific elements intended to coincide with active practice (such as, but not limited to; probation, supervision or therapy) will only accrue during periods of active practice in which the Licensee is compliant with the terms of this Order. Therefore, any period of noncompliance or inactive practice will not accrue towards fulfillment of those terms.

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CONSENT TO ISSUANCE OF ORDER BY RESPIRATORY CARE PRACTITIONER

I, Heather R. Bussert, state that I have read the foregoing Consent Order; that I know and fully understand its contents; that I agree freely and without threat or coercion of any kind to comply with the terms and conditions stated herein; and that I consent to the entry of this Consent Order as a condition of maintaining my license from the North Carolina Respiratory Care Board.

Heather R. Bussert
Heather R. Bussert

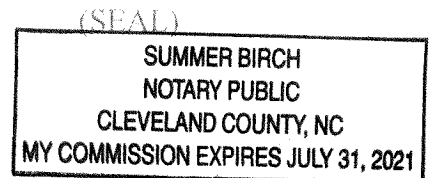
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF Cleveland

There personally appeared before me, a Notary Public in and for the County of Cleveland, State of North Carolina, Heather R. Bussert, who, after having presented documentation of Her identity that was satisfactory to me, did acknowledge that She executed the foregoing Consent Order as Her free and voluntary act.

This 15th day of December 2020.

Summer Birch
Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 7-31-2021



**ENTRY OF CONSENT ORDER ON BEHALF OF THE NORTH CAROLINA
RESPIRATORY CARE BOARD**

The foregoing Consent Order is entered at Cary, North Carolina, this 28 day of December 2020.

William L. Croft
William Croft, Ed.D., Ph.D., RRT, RCP
Executive Director, North Carolina Respiratory Care Board