



LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

630 Camp Street, New Orleans, LA 70130
Phone: (504) 568-6820; Fax: (504) 324-0994
Web site: <http://www.lsbme.la.gov>

BEFORE THE LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

IN THE MATTER OF:

WILLIAM JEROME THELEN, LRT
(License No. LRT.001245)

No. 2022-I-477

CONSENT ORDER

The above-captioned matter was docketed for investigation by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners (the "Board") following the receipt of apparently reliable information indicating that William Jerome Thelen, LRT ("Mr. Thelen"), a respiratory therapist who at all times pertinent has been licensed and engaged in the practice of respiratory therapy in and around Shreveport, Louisiana, had a return to use of alcohol.

Mr. Thelen had previously executed a three-year monitoring agreement with the Allied Professionals Health Program ("APHP") on or around April 8, 2022, for a substance use disorder. In his APHP monitoring agreement, Mr. Thelen agreed to "maintain complete and total abstinence from the use of any alcohol or mood-altering substances except as may be prescribed for a *bona fide* medical condition by a treating physician," and further agreed to undergo at least twenty (20) random screens for drugs and/or alcohol per year.

Investigation of the captioned matter was assigned to Lawrence H. Cresswell, III, D.O., J.D., Director of Investigations (the "Investigating Officer") for the Board. During the course of the investigation, the Investigating Officer confirmed that Mr. Thelen tested positive for alcohol via urine drug screens collected on June 7, 2022; June 14, 2022; and July 6, 2022. At the Investigating Officer's request, Mr. Thelen underwent a one-day evaluation at a Board-approved facility. Mr. Thelen's evaluators diagnosed him with "Alcohol Use Disorder—Mild to Moderate," but also determined that Mr. Thelen was safe to practice respiratory therapy with reasonable skill and safety as long as he followed various recommendations from his evaluators.

As evidenced by his subscription hereto, Mr. Thelen acknowledges the substantial accuracy of the foregoing information and that proof of such information upon administrative evidentiary

hearing would establish sufficient cause to take action with respect to his respiratory therapist license pursuant to La. R.S. 37:3358(A)(7)¹ and (15).²

Recognizing his right to have notice and administrative adjudication of any charges that may be asserted against him in these proceedings, at which time Mr. Thelen would be entitled to be represented by legal counsel, to call witnesses and to present evidence on his own behalf in defense or in mitigation of the charges made and to a decision thereon by the Board based upon written findings of fact and conclusions of law pursuant to La. R.S. 49:955–65, Mr. Thelen, nonetheless, hereby waives his right to notice and formal adjudication and pursuant to La. R.S. 49:955(D) consents to entry of the Order set forth hereinafter. Mr. Thelen acknowledges that he hereby waives any right to which he may be entitled pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, La. R.S. 49:951 *et seq.*, or which may be afforded to him by any other law to contest or appeal his agreement to or the force and effect of the Board's investigation or this Order in any court or other forum. By his subscription hereto, Mr. Thelen also hereby authorizes the Investigating Officer designated by the Board with respect hereto to present this Order to the Board for its consideration and to fully disclose to and discuss with the Board the nature and results of the investigation and he waives any objection to such disclosures under La. R.S. 49:960. Mr. Thelen expressly acknowledges that the disclosure of such information to the Board by the Investigating Officer shall be without prejudice to the Investigating Officer's authority to proceed with the adjudication of an administrative complaint against him or to the Board's capacity to adjudicate such complaint should the Board decline to approve this Order.

Based upon the information provided, and upon the recommendation of the Investigating Officer, the Board hereby concludes that, consistent with its mandate under La. R.S. 37:1261, the interests of public health, safety, and welfare will be effectively served by entry of the Order set forth hereinafter by consent. Accordingly, in consideration of the foregoing and pursuant to the authority vested in the Board by La. R.S. 37:3358 and La. R.S. 49:955(D);

IT IS ORDERED that the license of William Jerome Thelen, LRT, to engage in the practice of respiratory therapy be and the same is hereby placed **ON PROBATION** for a period of five (5) years (the "probationary period") commencing on the effective date of this Order, provided however, that Mr. Thelen's continuing exercise of any rights and privileges granted thereby, shall be conditioned upon and subject to his acceptance of and strict compliance with the following terms, conditions, and restrictions:

¹ Pursuant to La. R.S. 37:3358(A), "[t]he board may deny, refuse to renew, suspend, revoke, or impose probationary conditions on a license if the licensee or applicant for license has been found guilty of unprofessional conduct which has endangered or is likely to endanger the health, welfare, or safety of the public. Such unprofessional conduct shall include: . . . (7) Habitual or recurring abuse of drugs, including alcohol, which affect the central nervous system and which are capable of inducing physiological or psychological dependence."

² Pursuant to La. R.S. 37:3358(A), "[t]he board may deny, refuse to renew, suspend, revoke, or impose probationary conditions on a license if the licensee or applicant for license has been found guilty of unprofessional conduct which has endangered or is likely to endanger the health, welfare, or safety of the public. Such unprofessional conduct shall include: . . . (15) Inability to practice respiratory therapy with reasonable competence, skill, or safety to patients because of mental or physical illness, condition, or deficiency, including but not limited to deterioration through the aging process or excessive use or abuse of drugs, including alcohol."

- (1) **Maintenance of Complete Abstinence.** Mr. Thelen shall maintain complete and total abstinence from the use of alcohol, controlled and any mood-altering substance for the duration of the probationary period, except as may be prescribed by a treating physician for a *bona fide* medical condition. Mr. Thelen shall personally inform the Board's Probation and Compliance Officer, both orally and in writing, within forty-eight (48) hours of the prescription or administration of any controlled or mood-altering substance received by him from any physician for treatment of a *bona fide* medical condition. If the prescription is from another physician, he shall also inform his treating/monitoring physician in this same manner.
- (2) **APHP Agreement, Reports to Board.** Mr. Thelen shall, within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Order, execute a monitoring agreement with the APHP and continue to maintain such agreement for a period of no less than five (5) years. Mr. Thelen shall continue in, abide by and strictly adhere to all recommendations for ongoing treatment and monitoring which are contained in such agreement, as well as those recommended by his treating physicians and those prescribed by any other health care provider involved in his care to the extent that they continue to follow him. Mr. Thelen shall, in addition, authorize and cause the APHP to submit to the Board or its designee, not less frequently than quarterly, written reports and/or verbal reports, should the Board or its designee desire the latter, on his compliance with the terms, conditions and restrictions of this Order and his monitoring agreement.
- (3) **Outpatient Program.** Mr. Thelen shall, within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Order, provide confirmation that he is enrolled in an outpatient therapy program for substance use disorders that is consistent and compliant with his APHP monitoring agreement, his evaluators' recommendations, and that is acceptable to and has been approved by the Board or its designee in writing. Mr. Thelen shall update the Board or its designee monthly on his continuing participation in outpatient therapy.
- (4) **Individual Therapy.** Mr. Thelen shall, within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Order, provide confirmation that he is enrolled in individual therapy with a psychiatrist that is consistent with his evaluator's recommendations and his APHP monitoring agreement and who has been approved by the Board or its designee in writing. Mr. Thelen further shall ensure that such approved psychiatrist provides a quarterly written report to the Board or its designee confirming his participation in individual therapy.
- (5) **Notification of Order and Authorization.** Mr. Thelen shall provide a copy of this Order to each hospital, clinic, facility or other employer or prospective employer at which or for whom he provides services as a respiratory therapist in this state, and upon request of the Board's Probation and Compliance Officer Mr. Thelen shall immediately execute and provide, as may be necessary, authorization to obtain any

and all peer review records or other employment records pertaining to him from any hospital, institution or other health care entity where he has or has had privileges.

- (6) **Cooperation with Board's Probation and Compliance Officer.** Mr. Thelen shall immediately notify the Board's Probation and Compliance Officer of any change in his current home and professional addresses and telephone numbers and he shall direct all matters required pursuant to this Order to the attention of the Probation and Compliance Officer. Mr. Thelen shall cooperate with the Probation and Compliance Officer on all matters and inquiries pertaining to his compliance with the terms and conditions of this Order, specifically including without limitation providing cooperation and assistance to the Board, its designee, or the APHP in obtaining any records required under this Consent Order.
- (7) **Probation Monitoring Fee.** For each year of the probationary period, Mr. Thelen shall pay the Board an annual probation monitoring fee of Three Hundred (\$300.00) Dollars. Payment of the initial fee shall be due not later than sixty (60) days from the effective date of this Order. All subsequent annual payments shall be due on or before the anniversary date of the initial fee payment.
- (8) **Effect of Violation/Sanction.** By his subscription hereto, Mr. Thelen acknowledges that his receipt of written notification that the Board has received reliable information indicating his failure to comply with the requirements set forth by this Order in any respect shall, without the need for formal hearing or for providing him with any right to which he may otherwise be entitled pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, La. R.S. 49:951, *et seq.*, or which otherwise may be afforded to him by law, constitute his irrevocable consent to the immediate suspension of his license to practice respiratory therapy in this state pending a hearing before the Board and the conclusion of the administrative proceeding by issuance of a final decision following administrative adjudication of such charges.
- (9) **Certification of Compliance with Probationary Terms.** At least sixty (60) days prior to the conclusion of the probationary period imposed herein, Mr. Thelen shall provide the Board with an affidavit certifying that he has complied with each of the terms of probation imposed by this Order. The probationary period and all of its terms and conditions shall be, and shall be deemed to be, extended and continued in full force and effect pending Mr. Thelen's compliance with the requirements of this provision.
- (10) **Effective Date.** This Consent Order shall be effective as of the date it is approved and accepted by the Board as shown by the signature of the Board's representative below.

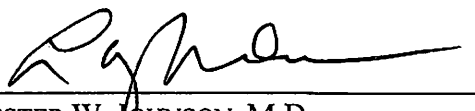
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any violation of or failure of strict compliance with any of the terms set forth by this Order by Mr. Thelen shall be deemed adequate and sufficient cause, upon proof of such violation or failure, for such other action against Mr. Thelen's license

to practice respiratory therapy in the state of Louisiana as the Board may deem appropriate as if such violations were enumerated among the causes provided in La. R.S. 37:3358.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Consent Order shall be, and shall be deemed to be, a public record.

New Orleans, Louisiana, this 23RD day of January, 2023.

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD
OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

By: 
LESTER W. JOHNSON, M.D.
President

Acknowledgment and Consent on Following Page

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT
AND CONSENT**

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF Caddo

I, WILLIAM JEROME THELEN, LRT, hereby acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to seek the advice and guidance of legal counsel with respect to this Consent Order and that all of its terms and conditions have been fully explained to me and/or that I fully understand them. I further acknowledge that I approve, accept, and consent to entry of the above and foregoing Order without duress and of my own free will and accord, this 17th day of November, 2022.

William Jerome Thelen
WILLIAM JEROME THELEN, LRT

WITNESSES:

Erica Johnson
Signature

Erica Johnson
Typed Name

11651 E. 70th Street
Street Address

Shreveport, LA 71105
City/State/Zip Code

Veronica Caldwell
Signature

Veronica Caldwell
Typed Name

11651 E. 70th Street
Street Address

Shreveport, LA 71105
City/State/Zip Code

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 17th day of November, 2022, in the presence of the two stated witnesses.

Cheryl L. Peck
Notary Public (Signature)

Name: Cheryl L. Peck

Notary/Bar No.: 3436

Commission expires: @ life

CHERYL L. PECK, NOTARY PUBLIC
BOSSIER PARISH, LOUISIANA
MY COMMISSION IS FOR LIFE
NOTARY ID NO. 3436