

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION**



IN THE MATTER OF:

RUTH MBAKWE, RN

Respondent.

NOTICE OF SUMMARY ACTION TO SUSPEND LICENSE

To: Ruth Mbakwe, RN

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

In accordance with the provisions of the District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act, D.C. Code § 2-509; the District of Columbia Health Occupations Revision Act of 1985, D.C. Code § 3-1205.15(a); and 17 DCMR § 4118, the District of Columbia Department of Health (D.C. Health) gives you notice of the summary suspension of your registered nursing license, RN1060443, under D.C. Code § 3-1205.15(a).

Your license is summarily suspended effective immediately upon receipt of this notice. If you wish to appeal this summary suspension of your license, you must file a request for a hearing within 72 hours after service of this notice. Should you request a hearing, one will be held within 72 hours of a timely request, and a decision will be rendered within 72 hours after the close of the hearing. The request for a hearing must be submitted in writing to Panravee Vongjaroenrat, Assistant General Counsel, D.C. Health. The request may be submitted by email to Panravee.Vongjaroenrat@dc.gov or by mail to 899 North Capital Street, N.E., 6th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20002. Ms. Vongjaroenrat can be reached at (202) 478-5746.

The District of Columbia (the District) is represented by the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. A copy of your hearing request and any pleading or other written communication addressed to D.C. Health must also be delivered to Alycia Hogenmiller, Assistant Attorney General (AAG), Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia, Civil Enforcement Section, 400 Sixth Street, N.W., Suite 10100, Washington, D.C. 20001. AAG Hogenmiller can be reached at (202) 256-9692 or by email at alycia.hogenmiller@dc.gov.

You may appear personally at the hearing, and you may be represented by legal counsel. You have the right to produce witnesses and evidence, to cross-examine witnesses against you, to examine evidence produced, and to have subpoenas issued to require the production of witnesses and evidence.

All hearings are conducted in the English language. If you or any witnesses to be called are deaf, have a hearing impediment, or cannot readily understand or communicate the spoken English language, an application may be made to the Administrative Law Judge for the appointment of a qualified interpreter.

A request for a hearing will not stay the suspension of your license.

The charge upon which the summary suspension is based is set forth below.

Charge: You lack the necessary education and training to obtain a Registered Nurse (RN) license, so your active licensure permitting you to provide services to patients in the District presents an imminent danger to the health and safety of the public, for which D.C. Health can summarily suspend your license under D.C. Code § 3–1205.15(a)(1)(D).


On January 25, 2023, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) informed the public that individuals were charged with fraud relating to their purchase of fraudulent nursing diplomas from several schools, including Palm Beach School of Nursing (Palm Beach). The FBI determined that Palm Beach's owner, Johanah Napoleon, conspired to sell fraudulent nursing degree diplomas and transcripts, misrepresenting the diploma recipients as having completed training and education requirements. The fraudulent diplomas and transcripts enabled purchasers to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) when they were not qualified.

On June 7, 2022, Mr. Napoleon attested by affidavit that from 2016 to the present, Palm Beach issued diplomas and transcripts to individuals who never completed the required program hours and clinical training for a practical nursing diploma and transcript or nursing associate in science degree and transcript. Mr. Napoleon identified you as receiving a diploma and transcript without completing the program hours and clinical training.

On September 25, 2020, you used the fraudulent Palm Beach diploma and transcript to sit for the NCLEX despite never completing the required program hours or clinical training. On October 5, 2020, you obtained a RN license in New York, No. 803954, by examination based on the fraudulent Palm Beach credentials. On December 24, 2020, you obtained a District RN license, No. RN1060443, by endorsement of the fraudulently obtained New York licensure. And as a nurse with a District license lacking the education and training required for a RN license under 17 DCMR §§ 5402.1(a)(2) and 5405.1, as well as D.C. Code § 3–1205.14(a)(1), you present an imminent danger to the health and safety of the public and the District.

Please note under 17 DCMR § 4103.2, your failure to appear at the time and place set for the hearing, either in person or through counsel, or both, will not preclude D.C. Health's proceeding in this matter.

3/13/2023
DATE



ARIAN R. GIBSON, M.S.
Senior Deputy Director
Department of Health
Health Regulation and Licensing Administration