



# 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**OLYMPIA** -- The Washington State Department of Health has taken disciplinary actions or withdrawn charges against the following health care providers in our state.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](mailto:media@wmc.wa.gov).

Information about health care providers is on the agency website. Click on "[Look up a health care provider license](#)" in the "How Do I?" section of the [Department of Health website](#) ([doh.wa.gov](http://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.

## Benton County

In November 2022 the Nursing Commission reinstated with conditions the registered nurse credential of **Karren Louise Garton** (RN00102891). Garton agreed to the conditions, which require her license to be on probation for at least 60 months, during which Garton is required to submit personal progress reports, cause her employer to submit quarterly performance evaluation reports, and Garton must complete continuing education. Garton also may not administer direct patient care without pre-approval by the Nursing Commission. Garton substantially complied with the terms of a prior order, which included paying restitution to three patients.

## Clark County

In November 2022 the Medical Assistant Hemodialysis Technician Program charged medical assistant hemodialysis technician **Bridge Donavin Colt Leslie** (HT60927101) with unprofessional conduct. Leslie allegedly verbally abused patients, committed HIPAA violations, breached patient confidentiality, and violated patient medical information safekeeping rules.

In November 2022 the Nursing Commission reinstated, with probation, the licensed practical nurse credential of **Simon Peter Walusimbi** (LP60820583). A previous agreed order stated that

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Walusimbi pled guilty to three instances of driving while under the influence. Under the conditions of this reinstatement, Walusimbi will remain enrolled in a substance use monitoring program.

### **King County**

In November 2022 the Nursing Commission amended the unprofessional conduct charges against registered nurse **Daniel Richard Howard** (RN60465310). Howard is allegedly unable to perform with reasonable skill and safety because of a physical or mental condition and failed to provide the Nursing Commission an explanation even though the Nursing Commission requested one.

### **Pierce County**

In November 2022 the Nursing Commission charged registered nurse **Kevin Wayne Stewart** (RN00133403) with unprofessional conduct after he allegedly failed to comply with a substance use monitoring program.

In November 2022 the Nursing Commission placed on probation, for at least 24 months, the licensed practical nurse credential of **Michael Angelo Vidal** (LP61041061) and prohibited him from working as a traveling nurse or in a home health or community-based setting. Also, Vidal may not teach, must submit personal progress reports, and must successfully complete a nursing course. In May 2022, Vidal pled guilty to assault—domestic violence in Pierce County District Court for assaulting his child.

In November 2022 the Nursing Commission amended charges against registered nurse **Abigail Rene Sodano** (RN60291039). Sodano entered a substance use monitoring contract, which required she refrain from using all mood and mind-altering substances, including alcohol, except for prescribed medications. Sodano allegedly twice tested positive for methadone and missed several random drug tests.

### **Skagit County**

In November 2022 the Substance Use Disorder Professional Program and substance use disorder professional **Tara L. Brinson** (CP00006297) agreed to an order that requires Brinson to participate in a substance use monitoring program. Brinson experienced a substance use relapse and completed in-patient treatment.

### **Snohomish County**

In November 2022 the Veterinary Board of Governors amended the charges against veterinarian **Susan Carroll Connor** (VT00003002). Connor's work with two bichon frises dogs was allegedly deficient, negligent, incompetent, and failed to meet the standard of care. Both dogs were subsequently examined by another veterinarian and found to have aspiration pneumonia and euthanized.

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### **Spokane County**

In November 2022 the Nursing Commission ended probation on the registered nurse license of **Monica F. Buchmann** (RN00163265).

In November 2022 the secretary of health ended conditions on the substance use disorder professional trainee license of **Meredith Louise Hipperson** (CO60838805).

### **Whatcom County**

In November 2022 the secretary of health reinstated with conditions the registered nurse license of **Mary Elizabeth Hancock** (RN60325629). Hancock agreed to the conditions, which include probation for at least 12 months, quarterly performance evaluations, and an audit of her practice.

### **Out of State**

**Florida:** In November 2021 the Pharmacy Commission vacated and withdrew an April 2021 notice of decision that denied a pharmacist license to **Joseph Muroka** (PH61064715). Following the order vacating the notice of decision, Muroka completed all licensure requirements and was issued a pharmacist license on January 25, 2022.

**Texas:** In November 2022 the Unlicensed Practice Program and **Matthew Joseph Sciba** agreed to an order that states that Sciba will permanently stop engaging in mental health counseling unless first obtaining a Washington credential.

**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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