

**BEFORE THE
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

In the Matter of the Accusation Against:

Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D.

Case No.: 800-2018-051080

Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate
No. C 156672

Respondent.

**ORDER CORRECTING NUNC PRO TUNC
CLERICAL ERROR IN DECISION**

On its own motion, the Medical Board of California (hereafter "Board") finds that there is a clerical error in the "Determination of Issues," "Order" and "Use of Alcohol in a Manner Dangerous to Oneself or Others" portions of the Decision in the above-entitled matter and that such clerical error should be corrected to indicate the correct name, Natasha Elizabeth Laird and case number, 800-2018-051080.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the name contained in the Decision in the above-entitled matter be and hereby is amended and corrected nunc pro tunc as of the date of entry of the decision to read as "Natasha Elizabeth Laird" and "800-2018-051080."

April 1, 2026



Reji Varghese
Executive Director
Medical Board of California

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8 **BEFORE THE**
9 **MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**
10 **DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

11 In the Matter of the Accusation Against:

Case No. 800-2018-051080

12
13 **NATASHA ELIZABETH LAIRD, M.D.**
14 **9814 E Piedra Drive**
Scottsdale, AZ 85255

DEFAULT DECISION AND ORDER

[Gov. Code, §11520]

15 **Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate**
16 **No. C 156672,**

17 Respondent.

18 **FINDINGS OF FACT**

19 1. On or about August 13, 2025, Complainant Reji Varghese, in his official capacity as
20 the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs, filed
21 Accusation No. 800-2018-051080 against Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D. (Respondent) before the
22 Medical Board of California (Board).

23 2. On or about June 27, 2018, the Medical Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's
24 Certificate No. C 156672 to Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D. The Physician's and Surgeon's
25 Certificate expired on February 28, 2022, and has not been renewed. A copy of the Certificate of
26 Licensure is attached as **Exhibit A**¹.

27
28 ¹ All exhibits are true and correct copies of the originals and are attached to the
(continued...)

3. On or about August 13, 2025, Talia Silva, an employee of the Board, served by Certified Mail a copy of the Accusation No. 800-2018-051080, Statement to Respondent; Notice of Defense; Request for Discovery; and Discovery Statutes to Respondent's address of record with the Board, which was and is 9814 E. Piedro Drive Scottsdale, AZ 85255, as well as to a secondary address for Respondent at 10211 Cleary Lane, Bowie, MD. 20721. For the documents sent to Respondent's address of record in Arizona, the United States Postal Service (USPS) certified mail assigned the tracking number 7020 2450 0000 6863 9615. According to the USPS website the documents were returned to the Medical Board after they were unable to be delivered with a status of "Unclaimed/Being returned to Sender," on September 5, 2025. For the documents that were sent to Respondent's secondary address in Maryland, the United States Postal Service (USPS) certified mail assigned the tracking number 7020 2450 0000 6863 9608. According to the USPS website the documents were returned to the Medical Board after they were unable to be delivered with a status of "Unclaimed/Being Returned to Sender," on September 20, 2025. A copy of the Accusation, the related documents, Declaration of Service, and tracking information are attached as **Exhibit B**, and are incorporated herein by reference.

4. Service of the Accusation was effective as a matter of law under the provisions of Government Code section 11505, subdivision (c).

5. On or about September 3, 2025, Logan Blaylock, an employee for the California Department of Justice, served by certified mail a Courtesy Notice of Default along with copy of the Accusation No. 800-2018-051080, Statement to Respondent; Notice of Defense; Request for Discovery; and Discovery Statutes to Respondent's address of record and her secondary address. The documents sent to Respondent's address of record with the Board in Arizona and was assigned USPS tracking number 9414 7266 9904 2204 1024 31. According to the USPS website the documents were returned to the Office of the Attorney General after they were unable to be delivered with a status of "Addressee Unknown," on September 8, 2025. The documents sent to Respondent's secondary address in Maryland was assigned USPS tracking number 9414 7266

accompanying Default Decision Evidence Packet. The Default Decision Evidence Packet is hereby incorporated by reference, in its entirety, as if fully set forth herein.

1 9904 2204 1024 48. According to the USPS website the documents were delivered with a status
2 of "Delivered, Individual Picked Up at Post Office" on September 11, 2025. A copy of the
3 Courtesy Notice of Default, including the accompanying documents, and Declaration of Service
4 are attached as **Exhibit C**, and incorporated herein by reference.

5 6. Section 1399.511 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations provides that the
6 licensee shall notify the Board at its office of any and all changes of mailing address within 30
7 days after each change, providing both old and new addresses.

8 7. Service of the Accusation and was effective as a matter of law under the provisions of
9 Government Code section 11505, subdivision (c).

10 8. Government Code section 11506 states, in pertinent part:

11 (c) The respondent shall be entitled to a hearing on the merits if the respondent
12 files a notice of defense, and the notice shall be deemed a specific denial of all parts
13 of the accusation not expressly admitted. Failure to file a notice of defense shall
14 constitute a waiver of respondent's right to a hearing, but the agency in its discretion
15 may nevertheless grant a hearing.

16 9. Respondent failed to file a Notice of Defense within 15 days after service upon her of
17 the Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation, and therefore waived her right to a hearing
18 on the merits of Accusation No. 800-2018-051080.

19 10. California Government Code section 11520 states, in pertinent part:

20 (a) If the respondent either fails to file a notice of defense or to appear at the
21 hearing, the agency may take action based upon the respondent's express admissions
22 or upon other evidence and affidavits may be used as evidence without any notice to
23 respondent.

24 11. Business and Professions Code section 125.3 states, in pertinent part:

25 (a) Except as otherwise provided by law, in any order issued in resolution of a
26 disciplinary proceeding before any board within the department or before the
27 osteopathic Medical Board, upon request of the entity bringing the proceeding, the
28 administrative law judge may direct a licensee found to have committed a violation or
violations of the licensing act to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the
investigation and enforcement of the case.

12. Pursuant to its authority under Government Code section 11520, the Board finds
Respondent is in default. The Board will take action without further hearing and, based on
Respondent's express admissions by way of default and the evidence before it, contained in the

1 separate accompanying "Default Decision Evidence Packet," finds that the allegations in
2 Accusation No. 800-2018-051080 are true and correct.

3 13. The Board further finds that pursuant to Business and Professions Code section
4 125.3, the costs of investigation and enforcement of the case prayed for in the Accusation total
5 \$19,679.75, based on the Certification of Costs contained in **Exhibits D and E**.

6 **JURISDICTION**

7 14. Business and Professions Code section 2004 of the Code states:

8 The board shall have the responsibility for the following:

9 (a) The enforcement of the disciplinary and criminal provisions of the Medical
10 Practice Act.

11 (b) The administration and hearing of disciplinary actions.

12 (c) Carrying out disciplinary actions appropriate to findings made by a panel or
an administrative law judge.

13 (d) Suspending, revoking, or otherwise limiting certificates after the conclusion
14 of disciplinary actions.

15 (e) Reviewing the quality of medical practice carried out by physician and
surgeon certificate holders under the jurisdiction of the board.

16 (f) Approving undergraduate and graduate medical education programs.

17 (g) Approving clinical clerkship and special programs and hospitals for the
18 programs in subdivision (f).

19 (h) Issuing licenses and certificates under the board's jurisdiction.

20 (i) Administering the board's continuing medical education program.

21 15. Business and Professions Code section 2227 of the Code states:

22 (a) A licensee whose matter has been heard by an administrative law judge of
23 the Medical Quality Hearing Panel as designated in Section 11371 of the Government
24 Code, or whose default has been entered, and who is found guilty, or who has entered
into a stipulation for disciplinary action with the board, may, in accordance with the
provisions of this chapter:

25 (1) Have his or her license revoked upon order of the board.

26 (2) Have his or her right to practice suspended for a period not to exceed one
year upon order of the board.

27 (3) Be placed on probation and be required to pay the costs of probation
28 monitoring upon order of the board.

1 (4) Be publicly reprimanded by the board. The public reprimand may include a
2 requirement that the licensee complete relevant educational courses approved by the
3 board.

4 (5) Have any other action taken in relation to discipline as part of an order of
5 probation, as the board or an administrative law judge may deem proper.

6 (b) Any matter heard pursuant to subdivision (a), except for warning letters,
7 medical review or advisory conferences, professional competency examinations,
8 continuing education activities, and cost reimbursement associated therewith that are
9 agreed to with the board and successfully completed by the licensee, or other matters
10 made confidential or privileged by existing law, is deemed public, and shall be made
11 available to the public by the board pursuant to Section 803.1.

12 16. Section 820 of the Code states:

13 Whenever it appears that any person holding a license, certificate or permit
14 under this division or under any initiative act referred to in this division may be
15 unable to practice his or her profession safely because the licentiate's ability to
16 practice is impaired due to mental illness, or physical illness affecting competency,
17 the licensing agency may order the licentiate to be examined by one or more
18 physicians and surgeons or psychologists designated by the agency. The report of the
19 examiners shall be made available to the licentiate and may be received as direct
20 evidence in proceedings conducted pursuant to Section 822.

21 17. Section 821 of the Code provides that the licentiate's failure to comply with an order
22 issued under section 820 shall constitute grounds for the suspension or revocation of the
23 licentiate's certificate or license.

24 18. Section 822 of the Code states:

25 If a licensing agency determines that its licentiate's ability to practice his or her
26 profession safely is impaired because the licentiate is mentally ill, or physically ill
27 affecting competency, the licensing agency may take action by any one of the
28 following methods:

(a) Revoking the licentiate's certificate or license.

(b) Suspending the licentiate's right to practice.

(c) Placing the licentiate on probation.

(d) Taking such other action in relation to the licentiate as the licensing agency
in its discretion deems proper.

The licensing section shall not reinstate a revoked or suspended certificate or
license until it has received competent evidence of the absence or control of the
condition which caused its action and until it is satisfied that with due regard for the
public health and safety the person's right to practice his or her profession may be
safely reinstated.

19. Section 824 of the Code provides that the licensing agency may proceed against a
licentiate under either Section 820, or 822, or under both sections.

1 20. Section 2234 of the Code states:

2 The board shall take action against any licensee who is charged with
3 unprofessional conduct.² In addition to other provisions of this article, unprofessional
4 conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

5 (a) Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, assisting in or
6 abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate any provision of this chapter.

7 (b) Gross negligence.

8 (c) Repeated negligent acts. To be repeated, there must be two or more
9 negligent acts or omissions. An initial negligent act or omission followed by a
10 separate and distinct departure from the applicable standard of care shall constitute
11 repeated negligent acts.

12 (1) An initial negligent diagnosis followed by an act or omission medically
13 appropriate for that negligent diagnosis of the patient shall constitute a single
14 negligent act.

15 (2) When the standard of care requires a change in the diagnosis, act, or
16 omission that constitutes the negligent act described in paragraph (1), including, but
17 not limited to, a reevaluation of the diagnosis or a change in treatment, and the
18 licensee's conduct departs from the applicable standard of care, each departure
19 constitutes a separate and distinct breach of the standard of care.

20 (d) Incompetence.

21 (e) The commission of any act involving dishonesty or corruption that is
22 substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and
23 surgeon.

24 (f) Any action or conduct that would have warranted the denial of a certificate.

25 (g) The failure by a certificate holder, in the absence of good cause, to attend
26 and participate in an interview by the board no later than 30 calendar days after being
27 notified by the board. This subdivision shall only apply to a certificate holder who is
28 the subject of an investigation by the board.

 (h) Any action of the licensee, or another person acting on behalf of the
licensee, intended to cause their patient or their patient's authorized representative to
rescind consent to release the patient's medical records to the board or the
Department of Consumer Affairs, Health Quality Investigation Unit.

 (i) Dissuading, intimidating, or tampering with a patient, witness, or any person
in an attempt to prevent them from reporting or testifying about a licensee.

COST RECOVERY

² Unprofessional conduct under California Business and Professions Code section 2234 is
conduct which breaches the rules or ethical code of the medical profession or conduct which is
unbecoming to a member in good standing of the medical profession, and which demonstrates an
unfitness to practice medicine. (*Shea v. Board of Medical Examiners* (1978) 81 Cal.App.3d 564, 575.)

21. Business and Professions Code section 125.3 of the Code provides, in pertinent part, that the Board may request the administrative law judge to direct a licensee found to have committed a violation or violations of the licensing act to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of the case, with failure of the licensee to comply subjecting the license to not being renewed or reinstated. If a case settles, recovery of investigation and enforcement costs may be included in a stipulated settlement.

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE VIOLATIONS

Failure to Comply with Business and Professions Code §820 Order

22. Respondent Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D., Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C 156672, is subject to disciplinary action under Code sections 821 and 822, in that Respondent failed to comply with an order issued under Code section 820. The circumstances are as follows:

i. After Respondent voluntarily agreed to undergo a physical examination and a mental examination to evaluate her fitness to practice medicine, Respondent refused to cooperate with Board investigators in setting each examination. The Board moved for an order compelling Respondent to undergo a physical examination and a mental examination. An order compelling each examination was issued on May 19, 2025. Respondent received this order on May 27, 2025, and confirmed receipt of the order on May 28, 2025;

ii. A physical examination of Respondent was schedule on June 10, 2025, with Angella Barr, M.D. Respondent was notified of the time, date and location of this examination on June 3, 2025. Respondent did not attend this examination. Respondent did not seek to continue this examination or otherwise request any change to the date of this examination;

iii. A mental evaluation of Respondent was scheduled on two consecutive days, June 13, 2025, and June 14, 2025, before John Hupka Ph. D. Respondent was informed of the dates, times, and location of the two-day examination on June 3, 2025. Respondent did not attend this examination. Respondent did not seek to continue this examination or otherwise request any change to the date of this examination.

iv. Respondent did not and has not contacted the Board to reschedule or postpone either the physical or mental examination, and

v. Respondent was informed that any failure by Respondent to comply with the order to submit to the examinations or any part thereof, or by refusing or failing to cooperate with the examiner, shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action against Respondent's license under Business and Professions Code section 821.

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

23. The Board finds that the following additional facts as alleged in the Accusation are true:

24. On October 27, 2018, Respondent went to a commercial restaurant/bar known as Rafters in Mammoth Lakes, California after working at the Mammoth Lakes Hospital Emergency Room. After drinking at the Rafters' early Halloween Party, Respondent left the establishment to travel back to her hotel, which was also in Mammoth Lakes.

25. Respondent was stopped by Mammoth Lakes Police Officer Heilman for traveling 50 mph in a 30-mph zone. Officer Heilman approached Respondent's vehicle after the traffic stop. Officer Heilman immediately noticed the odor consistent with alcoholic beverages when Respondent began talking. Respondent initially told Officer Heilman that she had drank two beers at Rafters, but during later questioning stated she had two beers plus a shot of Jameson whiskey. Respondent did not think she was intoxicated but noted that she was taking blood thinners and had previously undergone gastric bypass surgery in 2015.

26. After concluding Respondent was driving under the influence of alcohol, Officer Heilman transported Respondent to the Mammoth Lakes Police Department where Respondent, underwent breathalyzer tests. Her tests, taken at 12:16 am and 12:18 am on October 28, 2018, measured her blood alcohol content at .15% and .16%, respectively. She was cited for violating Vehicle Code Section 23152, subdivisions (a) and (b), and promised to appear in court by signing the citations. Respondent was taken to the Mono County jail for booking thereafter.

27. Respondent was scheduled to appear in court on or about April 25, 2021, in Mono County Superior Court, consistent with her promise to appear when issued the citations

1 referenced in paragraph 26. Respondent did not attend this hearing, and the Court subsequently
2 issued a bench warrant for Respondent's arrest. Respondent did ultimately appear in the Mono
3 County Superior Court on June 17, 2023, where she pled guilty to violating Vehicle Code Section
4 23152(a) and Penal Code section 853.7 (violation of written promise to appear.) These
5 convictions constitute unprofessional conduct pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 2234.

6 **USE OF ALCOHOL IN A MANNER DANGEROUS TO ONESELF OR OTHERS**

7 28. During an interview with the Board concerning her convictions for driving under the
8 influence and missing a court date, Respondent told the Board investigator that Respondent
9 suffered from Wernicke Korsakoff syndrome. Wernicke Korsakoff syndrome is a memory
10 disorder caused by lack of thiamin and requires immediate treatment. Alcohol abuse is most often
11 associated as the cause of this condition. Respondent claimed she lost consciousness due to this
12 condition and was thereafter hospitalized for initial treatment, which caused her to miss her court
13 appointment

14 29. Medical records obtained through Respondent's consent and reviewed by the Board
15 revealed that Respondent suffers from alcoholism and at one time was drinking a pint of vodka
16 every day. Respondent has been treated for depression for at least two years, confirmed that
17 Respondent has been diagnosed with Wernicke Disease and Korsakoff psychosis, associated with
18 memory loss, trouble concentrating, trouble making decisions, depression and daily alcohol use.
19 In addition, Respondent has been diagnosed with Alcohol induced persisting Amnestic Disorder,
20 and Alcohol induced Metabolic Encephalopathy. Each of these two diagnoses indicated that
21 Respondent's alcoholism has caused significant mental decline.

22 30. Respondent further disclosed in the same March 28, 2024, interview that she became
23 sober after returning to Maryland in 2019 and stayed sober until approximately one week before
24 this interview when she had two cocktails. Upon further questioning, Respondent stated that she
25 did occasionally drink alcoholic beverages between 2019-2024, but only during holidays or
26 celebrations. She denied having a current problem with alcohol, but admits she had a problem
27 with alcohol in the past. She admitted undergoing cognitive therapy after returning to Maryland,
28

1 but further admits she has memory lapses and, despite her belief that she always was sober when
2 working, could not state with certainty that she was never drunk while at work.

3 31. Pursuant to its authority under Government Code section 11520, the Board finds
4 Respondent is in default. Service of the Accusation was effective as a matter of law under the
5 provisions of Government Code section 11505, subdivision (c). Respondent failed to file a Notice
6 of Defense. The Board will act without further hearing and, based on Respondent's express
7 admissions by way of default and the evidence before it, contained in Exhibit Package, Exhibits
8 1-4, finds that the allegations in Accusation No. 800-2024-112752 are true.

10 DETERMINATION OF ISSUES

11 1. Based on the foregoing findings of fact, Respondent ELIZABETH NATASHA
12 LAIRD, M.D. has subjected her Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C 156672 to
13 discipline.

14 2. A copy of the Accusation and the related documents and Declaration of Service are
15 attached here as **Exhibit B**.

16 3. The Board has jurisdiction to adjudicate this case by default and is authorized to
17 revoke Respondent's Physician and Surgeon Certificate based upon the findings below.

18 4. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 125.3, the Board is authorized to
19 order Respondent to pay the Board the reasonable costs of investigation and enforcement of the
20 case prayed for in the Accusation total \$19,619.75, based on the Certification of Prosecution
21 Costs attached as **Exhibits D and E** in the Exhibit Package.

22 5. Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, Respondent ELIZABETH NATASHA
23 LAIRD, M.D.'s conduct constitutes cause for discipline within the meaning of Business and
24 Professions Code sections 141, 2305 and 2234(a), (e) and (f).

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ORDER

IT IS SO ORDERED that Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C 156672, heretofore issued to Respondent ELIZABETH NATASHA LAIRD, M.D., is revoked for each of the violations, separately and severally, of the California Business and Professions Code found in the Determination of Issues, above.

If Respondent ever files an application for re-licensure or reinstatement in the State of California, the Board shall treat it as a petition for reinstatement of a revoked license. Respondent must comply with all laws, regulations, and procedures for reinstatement of a revoked license in effect at the time the petition for reinstatement is filed.

Respondent ELIZABETH NATASHA LAIRD, M.D. is ordered to pay the Board the costs of the enforcement of this case in the amount of \$19,619.75. The filing of bankruptcy by Respondent shall not relieve Respondent of his responsibility to reimburse the Board for its costs. Respondent's Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C 156672 may not be renewed or reinstated unless all costs ordered under Business and Professions Code section 125.3 have been paid.

Pursuant to Government Code section 11520, subdivision (c), Respondent may serve a written motion requesting that the Decision be vacated and stating the grounds relied on within seven (7) days after service of the Decision on Respondent. The Board in its discretion may vacate the Decision and grant a hearing on a showing of good cause, as defined in the statute.

This Decision shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on March 16, 2026.

It is so ORDERED February 25, 2026

DATED: February 25, 2026

Sharlene Smith For

REJI VARGHESE
Executive Director
Medical Board of California
Department of Consumer Affairs
State of California
Complainant

Exhibit A

Accusation No.: 800-2018-051080

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9 **BEFORE THE**
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
10 **DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**
11 **STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

12 In the Matter of the Accusation Against:

Case No. 800-2018-051080

13 **Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D.**
14 **9814 E. Piedra Dr.**
15 **Scottsdale, AZ 85255-9232**

OAH No.

A C C U S A T I O N

16 **Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate**
17 **No. C 156672,**

Respondent.

18 **PARTIES**

19 1. Reji Varghese (Complainant) brings this Accusation solely in his official capacity as
20 the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs
21 (Board).

22 2. On or about June 27, 2018, the Medical Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's
23 Certificate Number C 156672 to Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D. (Respondent). The Physician's
24 and Surgeon's Certificate expired on February 28, 2022, and has not been renewed.

25 **JURISDICTION**

26 3. This Accusation is brought before the Board under the authority of the following
27 laws. All section references are to the Business and Professions Code (Code) unless otherwise
28 indicated.

1 4. Section 2227 of the Code provides that a licensee who is found guilty under the
2 Medical Practice Act may have his or her license revoked, suspended for a period not to exceed
3 one year, placed on probation and required to pay the costs of probation monitoring, or such other
4 action taken in relation to discipline as the Board deems proper.

5 5. Section 820 of the Code states:

6 Whenever it appears that any person holding a license, certificate or permit under
7 this division or under any initiative act referred to in this division may be unable to
8 practice his or her profession safely because the licentiate's ability to practice is
9 impaired due to mental illness, or physical illness affecting competency, the
10 licensing agency may order the licentiate to be examined by one or more
11 physicians and surgeons or psychologists designated by the agency. The report of
12 the examiners shall be made available to the licentiate and may be received as
13 direct evidence in proceedings conducted pursuant to Section 822.

14 6. Section 821 of the Code provides that the licentiate's failure to comply with an order
15 issued under section 820 shall constitute grounds for the suspension or revocation of the
16 licentiate's certificate or license.

17 7. Section 822 of the Code states:

18 If a licensing agency determines that its licentiate's ability to practice his or her
19 profession safely is impaired because the licentiate is mentally ill, or physically ill
20 affecting competency, the licensing agency may take action by any one of the
21 following methods:

- 22 (a) Revoking the licentiate's certificate or license.
23 (b) Suspending the licentiate's right to practice.
24 (c) Placing the licentiate on probation.
25 (d) Taking such other action in relation to the licentiate as the licensing agency in
26 its discretion deems proper.

27 The licensing section shall not reinstate a revoked or suspended certificate or
28 license until it has received competent evidence of the absence or control of the
condition which caused its action and until it is satisfied that with due regard for
the public health and safety the person's right to practice his or her profession may
be safely reinstated.

 8. Section 824 of the Code provides that the licensing agency may proceed against a
licentiate under either Section 820, or 822, or under both sections.

 9. Section 118 of the Code states:

- (a) The withdrawal of an application for a license after it has been filed with a
board in the department shall not, unless the board has consented in writing to such
withdrawal, deprive the board of its authority to institute or continue a proceeding
against the applicant for the denial of the license upon any ground provided by law
or to enter an order denying the license upon any such ground.

(b) The suspension, expiration, or forfeiture by operation of law of a license issued by a board in the department, or its suspension, forfeiture, or cancellation by order of the board or by order of a court of law, or its surrender without the written consent of the board, shall not, during any period in which it may be renewed, restored, reissued, or reinstated, deprive the board of its authority to institute or continue a disciplinary proceeding against the licensee upon any ground provided by law or to enter an order suspending or revoking the license or otherwise taking disciplinary action against the licensee on any such ground.
(c) As used in this section, "board" includes an individual who is authorized by any provision of this code to issue, suspend, or revoke a license, and "license" includes "certificate," "registration," and "permit."

10. Section 2234 of the Code, states:

The board shall take action against any licensee who is charged with unprofessional conduct. In addition to other provisions of this article, unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, assisting in or abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate any provision of this chapter.

...

(e) The commission of any act involving dishonesty or corruption that is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and surgeon.

(f) Any action or conduct that would have warranted the denial of a certificate.

11. Section 2236 of the Code states:

(a) The conviction of any offense substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and surgeon constitutes unprofessional conduct within the meaning of this chapter [Chapter 5, the Medical Practice Act]. The record of conviction shall be conclusive evidence only of the fact that the conviction occurred.

(b) The district attorney, city attorney, or other prosecuting agency shall notify the Medical Board of the pendency of an action against a licensee charging a felony or misdemeanor immediately upon obtaining information that the defendant is a licensee. The notice shall identify the licensee and describe the crimes charged and the facts alleged. The prosecuting agency shall also notify the clerk of the court in which the action is pending that the defendant is a licensee, and the clerk shall record prominently in the file that the defendant holds a license as a physician and surgeon.

(c) The clerk of the court in which a licensee is convicted of a crime shall, within 48 hours after the conviction, transmit a certified copy of the record of conviction to the board. The division may inquire into the circumstances surrounding the commission of a crime in order to fix the degree of discipline or to determine if the conviction is of an offense substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and surgeon.

(d) A plea or verdict of guilty or a conviction after a plea of nolo contendere is deemed to be a conviction within the meaning of this section and Section 2236.1.

1 The record of conviction shall be conclusive evidence of the fact that the conviction
2 occurred.

3 12. Section 2239 of the Code states:

4 (a) The use or prescribing for or administering to himself or herself, of any
5 controlled substance; or the use of any of the dangerous drugs specified in Section
6 4022, or of alcoholic beverages, to the extent, or in such a manner as to be dangerous
7 or injurious to the licensee, or to any other person or to the public, or to the extent that
8 such use impairs the ability of the licensee to practice medicine safely or more than
9 one misdemeanor or any felony involving the use, consumption, or
10 self-administration of any of the substances referred to in this section, or any
11 combination thereof, constitutes unprofessional conduct. The record of the
12 conviction is conclusive evidence of such unprofessional conduct.

13 (b) A plea or verdict of guilty or a conviction following a plea of nolo
14 contendere is deemed to be a conviction within the meaning of this section. The
15 Medical Board may order discipline of the licensee in accordance with Section 2227
16 or the Medical Board may order the denial of the license when the time for appeal has
17 elapsed or the judgment of conviction has been affirmed on appeal or when an order
18 granting probation is made suspending imposition of sentence, irrespective of a
19 subsequent order under the provisions of Section 1203.4 of the Penal Code allowing
20 such person to withdraw his or her plea of guilty and to enter a plea of not guilty, or
21 setting aside the verdict of guilty, or dismissing the accusation, complaint,
22 information, or indictment.

23 13. Section 2228.1 of the Code states:

24 (a) On and after July 1, 2019, except as otherwise provided in subdivision (c),
25 the board and the Podiatric Medical Board of California shall require a licensee to
26 provide a separate disclosure that includes the licensee's probation status, the length
27 of the probation, the probation end date, all practice restrictions placed on the licensee
28 by the board, the board's telephone number, and an explanation of how the patient
can find further information on the licensee's probation on the licensee's profile page
on the board's online license information internet web site, to a patient or the
patient's guardian or health care surrogate before the patient's first visit following the
probationary order while the licensee is on probation pursuant to a probationary order
made on and after July 1, 2019, in any of the following circumstances:

(1) A final adjudication by the board following an administrative hearing or
admitted findings or prima facie showing in a stipulated settlement establishing any
of the following:

(A) The commission of any act of sexual abuse, misconduct, or relations with a
patient or client as defined in Section 726 or 729.

(B) Drug or alcohol abuse directly resulting in harm to patients or the extent
that such use impairs the ability of the licensee to practice safely.

(C) Criminal conviction directly involving harm to patient health.

(D) Inappropriate prescribing resulting in harm to patients and a probationary
period of five years or more.

(2) An accusation or statement of issues alleged that the licensee committed any
of the acts described in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of paragraph (1), and a

1 stipulated settlement based upon a nolo contendere or other similar compromise that
2 does not include any prima facie showing or admission of guilt or fact but does
include an express acknowledgment that the disclosure requirements of this section
would serve to protect the public interest.

3 COST RECOVERY

4 14. Section 125.3 of the Code provides, in pertinent part, that the Board may request the
5 administrative law judge to direct a licensee found to have committed a violation or violations of
6 the licensing act to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and
7 enforcement of the case, with failure of the licensee to comply subjecting the license to not being
8 renewed or reinstated. If a case settles, recovery of investigation and enforcement costs may be
9 included in a stipulated settlement.

10 FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

11 15. On October 27, 2018, Respondent went to a commercial restaurant/bar known as
12 Rafters in Mammoth Lakes, California after working at the Mammoth Lakes Hospital Emergency
13 Room. Respondent was working a short-term assignment at the hospital as she lived and worked
14 permanently in Scottsdale, Arizona in 2018. After drinking at the Rafters' early Halloween Party,
15 Respondent left the establishment to travel back to her hotel, which was also in Mammoth Lakes.

16 16. Respondent was stopped by Mammoth Lakes Police Officer Heilman for traveling 50
17 mph in a 30-mph zone. Officer Heilman approached Respondent's vehicle after the traffic stop.
18 Officer Heilman immediately noticed the odor consistent with alcoholic beverages when
19 Respondent began talking. Respondent initially told Officer Heilman that she had drank two beers
20 at Rafters, but during later questioning stated she had two beers plus a shot of Jameson whiskey.
21 Respondent did not think she was intoxicated but noted that she was taking blood thinners and
22 had previously undergone gastric bypass surgery in 2015.

23 17. Officer Heilman further noted that Respondent's eyes were watery, and her speech
24 was slow and slurred. Officer Heilman asked Respondent to step out of her car to perform field
25 sobriety tests. Her eyes lacked smooth pursuit and displayed nystagmus at each extreme during
26 the horizontal gaze nystagmus tests, consistent with intoxication. She then attempted to walk on a
27 descending slope in a paved parking lot, in the tennis shoes she was wearing while driving. She
28 could not walk "heel to toe" as instructed, swayed repeatedly and used her arms to avoid falling.

1 She turned her feet at a 45-degree angle to maintain balance every step and repeatedly stepped
2 offline. After nine steps, she improperly turned around and then took two more steps before
3 nearly falling over again. Officer Heilman told Respondent to stop after this last near-fall, fearing
4 for Respondent's safety. She instead continued walking and counting steps until she reached nine,
5 but her performance on the test was poor.

6 18. Officer Heilman next asked Respondent to perform a one-leg standing test. She
7 stopped almost immediately after starting because she stated she had to urinate. She then agreed
8 to a preliminary alcohol screening test, which was performed by Mammoth Lakes Officer
9 Reynolds. Her blood alcohol content was measured at .171% and Respondent was arrested for
10 driving under the influence of alcohol.

11 19. Respondent was taken to the Mammoth Lakes Police Department and, after urinating
12 and waiting 15 minutes, underwent breathalyzer tests. Her tests, taken at 12:16 am and 12:18 am
13 on October 28, 2018, measured her blood alcohol content at .15% and .16%, respectively. She
14 was cited for violating Vehicle Code Section 23152, subdivisions (a) and (b), and promised to
15 appear in court by signing the citations. Respondent was taken to the Mono County jail for
16 booking thereafter.

17 20. Respondent was scheduled to appear in court on or about April 25, 2021, in Mono
18 County Superior Court, consistent with her promise to appear when issued the citations
19 referenced in paragraph 19. Respondent did not attend this hearing, and the Court subsequently
20 issued a bench warrant for Respondent's arrest. Respondent did ultimately appear in the Mono
21 County Superior Court on June 17, 2023, where she pled guilty to violating Vehicle Code Section
22 23152(a) and Penal Code section 853.7 (violation of written promise to appear.)

23 21. Respondent returned to Arizona following her release from the Mono County jail.
24 According to Respondent, the Mammoth Lakes Hospital learned of her arrest and did not ask her
25 to return for further work. Respondent initially responded to Board Special Investigator Natad's
26 requests for letters of explanation on February 13, 2019, and May 1, 2019. Respondent told
27 Special Investigator Natad that she was still looking for counsel to defend her in her first letter of
28 explanation. Respondent further admitted to Investigator Natad that she was arrested, that she had

1 been drinking, and that she was still in the discovery stage of litigation in her ongoing criminal
2 case.

3 22. Respondent then did not communicate with Special Investigator Natad for more than
4 four years. Between June 28, 2019, and January 2, 2024, Special Investigator Natad sent
5 Respondent 7 letters, multiple emails, and left multiple voice mail messages for Respondent.
6 Respondent's address with the Board in 2019 indicated that she resided in Scottsdale, Arizona.
7 Letters sent to her address of record on August 3, 2021, were returned, with an acknowledgment
8 that stated, "Return to Sender-Attempted-Not Known Unable to Forward." Special Investigator
9 Natad also sent letters to an address in Ridgecrest, California because this address was the address
10 used by Respondent in one of her letters of explanation. Respondent did not respond to this
11 correspondence.

12 23. Special Investigator Natad then obtained addresses in Bakersfield, California and
13 Bowie, Maryland by requesting a civil index/records request. On November 14, 2023, Special
14 Investigator Natad sent further requests for letters of explanation to Respondent's Bakersfield,
15 Scottsdale, and Bowie addresses by regular and certified mail. The Bakersfield correspondence
16 was also returned because the address was no longer valid for Respondent and the Scottsdale
17 correspondence was returned as unclaimed.

18 24. On January 2, 2024, Respondent finally accepted a phone call from Special
19 Investigator Natad. Respondent informed Special Investigator Natad that the email address that
20 Respondent acknowledged was the best way to contact her, but she denied seeing any of the
21 emails sent by Special Investigator Natad. Respondent agreed to complete a letter of explanation
22 regarding her June 17, 2023, conviction in Mono County.

23 25. On January 5, 2024, in response to an email sent by Special Investigator Natad on
24 October 31, 2023, Respondent sent Special Investigator Natad a copy of her curriculum vitae,
25 Criminal Action Reporting Form, proof that she had paid court fines and proof that she had
26 completed a 3-month first time DUI offender class that was required as terms of her probation
27 from Mono County. Respondent further mailed a letter of explanation to Special Investigator
28 Natad which was received on January 8, 2024.

1 26. In her letter of explanation, Respondent stated she missed court dates because of an
2 illness that led to hospitalization. In a follow up email with Special Investigator Natad,
3 Respondent stated this illness which required hospitalization and caused Respondent to miss court
4 dates was Wernicke Korsakoff syndrome. Respondent lost consciousness due to this condition
5 and was thereafter hospitalized for initial treatment.

6 27. Wernicke Korsakoff syndrome is a memory disorder caused by lack of thiamin and
7 requires immediate treatment. This syndrome involves two different brain disorders that often
8 occur together: Wernicke's disease and Korsakoff's psychosis. Left untreated, Wernicke's disease
9 can progress to Korsakoff's psychosis, which is generally considered non-reversible. Alcohol
10 abuse is most often associated as the cause of this condition.

11 28. Medical records reviewed the Board pursuant to Respondent's authorization to obtain
12 records from Respondent's healthcare providers indicate Respondent was hospitalized in Nevada
13 in April 2022. It is unclear whether this Nevada hospitalization was the only time Respondent
14 was hospitalized. Respondent did not inform Special Investigator Natad of any hospitalization
15 that occurred in Nevada, nor indicate specific dates when Respondent was hospitalized beyond
16 stating that she missed her court appearances in her criminal case because she lost consciousness
17 and needed to be hospitalized. Respondent's known missed court appearances occurred in 2021.

18 29. The medical records the Board reviewed further revealed that Respondent suffers
19 from alcoholism and at one time was drinking a pint of vodka every day. Respondent has been
20 treated for depression for at least two years, has been diagnosed with Wernicke's Disease,
21 Korsakoff psychosis¹, associated with memory loss, trouble concentrating, trouble making
22 decisions, depression and daily alcohol use. In addition, one of her doctors, Dr. Rochna, has
23 documented a diagnosis of Alcohol Induced Persisting Amnestic Disorder, and another treating
24 physician, Dr. Obamogie, has diagnosed Respondent with Alcohol Induced Metabolic
25 Encephalopathy.

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27 _____
28 ¹ Respondent's doctors have diagnosed Korsakoff psychosis, indicating that the
Wernicke's Disease that afflicted her has progressed significantly to actual psychosis.

1 30. During an interview with Special Investigator Natad that occurred on March 28,
2 2024, Respondent stated she moved to Maryland from Arizona in either 2018 or 2019.
3 Respondent believes that she began showing symptoms of her current diagnosis of Wernicke
4 Korsakoff syndrome in 2019. Respondent also stated she has not worked nor driven a car in
5 several years because of loss of memory. She also stated that she was not drinking heavily prior
6 to her diagnosis but claimed that her liver only processed 10% of the alcohol that she consumed
7 because of a 2019 gastric bypass surgery. Respondent claimed she did not know that gastric
8 bypass surgeries could affect her ability to consume and process alcoholic beverages. Respondent
9 did admit that, beginning in 2018, she consumed one to three drinks per day, and up to five per
10 day on weekends.

11 31. Respondent further disclosed in the same March 28, 2024, interview that she became
12 sober after returning to Maryland in 2019 and stayed sober until approximately one week before
13 this interview when she had two cocktails. Upon further questioning, Respondent stated that she
14 did occasionally drink alcoholic beverages between 2019-2024, but only during holidays or
15 celebrations. Respondent denied having a current problem with alcohol, but admits she had a
16 problem with alcohol in the past. Respondent admitted undergoing cognitive therapy after
17 returning to Maryland, but further admits she has memory lapses and, despite her belief that she
18 always was sober when working, could not state with certainty that she was never drunk while at
19 work.

20 32. Respondent further stated during the March 28, 2024, interview that she was arrested
21 and convicted of Driving Under the Influence of alcohol in either Wayne County, Michigan or
22 near Scottsdale, Arizona prior to obtaining her California medical license. In follow up emails
23 with Special Investigator Natad, Respondent indicated that she was mistaken during her interview
24 and only was issued a citation for speeding. Respondent has not provided any records pertaining
25 to either an arrest for Driving Under the Influence or a citation for speeding and has not provided
26 any dates of either event.

27 33. On April 15, 2024, Respondent signed Voluntary Agreements to Undergo Physical
28 and Mental Examinations. Respondent was asked multiple times by Special Investigator Natad to

1 provide more information concerning her arrest/citation in Arizona but did not provide any such
2 information. On November 7, 2024, Special Investigator Natad informed Respondent by email,
3 U.S. mail, and by certified mail that Respondent would have to submit to the Voluntary Physical
4 Examination and Voluntary Mental Examination within 60 days in California. Respondent did not
5 respond to the email. The certified mail was returned from the Post Office with the notation:
6 "Return to Sender – Attempted – Not Known." However, the letter mailed via regular mail was
7 not returned. Respondent did not comply with Special Investigator Natad's request to undergo
8 either examination.

9 34. The Board moved for an order compelling Respondent to undergo a physical
10 examination and a mental examination. An order compelling each examination was issued on
11 May 19, 2025. Respondent was received this order on May 27, 2025, and confirmed receipt of the
12 order on May 28, 2025.

13 35. A physical examination of Respondent was scheduled on June 10, 2025, with A. B.,
14 M.D. Respondent was notified of the time, date and location of this examination on June 3, 2025.
15 Respondent did not attend this examination. Respondent did not seek to continue this examination
16 or otherwise request any change to the date of this examination.

17 36. A mental evaluation of Respondent was scheduled on two consecutive days, June 13,
18 2025, and June 14, 2025, before J.H., Ph. D. Respondent was informed of the dates, times, and
19 location of the two-day examination on June 3, 2025. Respondent did not attend this examination.
20 Respondent did not seek to continue this examination or otherwise request any change to the date
21 of this examination.

22 37. Respondent has not contacted the Board to reschedule or postpone either the physical
23 or mental examination.

24 **FIRST CAUSE FOR ACTION**

25 **(Having a Mental or Physical Condition that Affects Competency to Practice Safely)**

26 38. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 822 of the Code in that she
27 is suffering from a mental or physical condition that affects her competency to practice medicine
28 safely.

1 39. Paragraphs 15 through 37, above, are re-alleged and incorporated as if fully set forth
2 herein.

3 **FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

4 **(Failure to Comply with Order under Business and Profession Code Section 820)**

5 40. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2234 and section 821 of the
6 Code in that Respondent failed to comply with an Order issued under section 820 of the Code.

7 41. Paragraphs 15 through 37, above, are re-alleged and incorporated as if fully set forth
8 herein.

9 **SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

10 **(Use of Drugs or Alcohol in a Manner Dangerous to Oneself or Others)**

11 42. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2239 of the Code in that
12 she used drugs or alcohol in a manner so that is dangerous to herself or others.

13 43. Paragraphs 15 through 37, above, are re-alleged and incorporated as if fully set forth
14 herein.

15 **THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

16 **(Unprofessional Conduct)**

17 44. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2234 of the Code in that
18 she has engaged in conduct that breaches the rules or ethical code of the medical profession or
19 conduct that is unbecoming of a member in good standing of the medical profession, and which
20 demonstrates an unfitness to practice medicine.

21 45. Paragraphs 15 through 37, above, are re-alleged and incorporated as if fully set forth
22 herein.

23 **PRAYER**

24 WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged,
25 and that following the hearing, the Medical Board of California issue a decision:

26 1. Revoking or suspending Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C 156672, issued
27 to Respondent Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D.;

28 ///

- 1 2. Revoking, suspending or denying approval of Respondent Natasha Elizabeth Laird,
2 M.D.'s authority to supervise physician assistants and advanced practice nurses;
3 3. Ordering Respondent Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D., to pay the Board the costs of
4 the investigation and enforcement of this case, and if placed on probation, the costs of probation
5 monitoring;
6 4. Ordering Respondent Natasha Elizabeth Laird, M.D., if placed on probation, to
7 provide patient notification in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 2228.1;
8 and
9 5. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper.

10
11 DATED: AUG 13 2025



REJI VARGHESE
Executive Director
Medical Board of California
Department of Consumer Affairs
State of California
Complainant