

Department of Veterans Affairs

Jan. 14, 2013, Statement on Dr. Peter Linnerooth

The loss of Dr. Linnerooth is tragic and our condolences go out to his wife, family and friends...

Our records and review of the situation show that:

--The VA offered Dr. Linnerooth a chance for employment with the regulatory condition that he obtain state licensure within two years. His appointment, which began in 2009 with the Santa Cruz Vet Center, was temporary for two years pending his obtaining a license. This was understood by Dr. Linnerooth.

--More specifically, on July 11, 2011, he applied for a position with VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System (VASNHCS) because his wife had accepted a position at the facility. In his application, he provided a statement that he would sit for the necessary licensing exams by August 2011. He was extended a job offer with the requirement he would be licensed before the expiration of his appointment and if not, he would be terminated.

--On October 20, 2011, Dr. Linnerooth was boarded on a temporary appointment because he had not yet received his license, and he officially transferred from the Santa Cruz Vet Center to Reno VAMC on November 20, 2011. On November 28, 2011 he was given an official letter from HR advising him that his termination was imminent without proof of the required licensure.

-- When he did not produce a license, Reno VAMC was forced to follow through with termination on December 5, 2011 (specific rules/laws here are Public Law 96-151 and Title 38 United States Code, Sec. 7402).

--The Reno VA offered to take him back once he completed his license requirements.

--To VA's knowledge Dr. Linnerooth was not told he was allowed any type of extension on the two-year term limit due to Family Medical Leave Act use or other reasons, as a facility has no authority to grant this.

--The Reno staff also says they did not limit his access to PTSD treatment. They informed us they never would have done this. They were aware of the treatment he was receiving in Minnesota...Our heart goes out to Dr. Linnerooth's family and friends.