

March 6, 2025

Harold Erks Authorized Agent
Harbon Montessori Schools Inc.
2349 15th Street Northwest
Saint Paul, MN 55112

License Number 1055399 (Child Care Center)

ORDER TO PAY A FINE FOR BACKGROUND STUDY VIOLATION

Dear Harold Erks:

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is ordering you to pay a fine of \$200 for one background study violation. Details of our findings are provided below. Our next steps and your options are also detailed.

Reason for the Fine

DHS is issuing this fine order based on your failure to comply with the following background study requirements:

Background Study Violation Determined on December 17, 2024:

While preparing for a licensing review, a DHS licensor determined that you failed to request a background study for one staff person before they began working in a position allowing direct contact with persons served by the program.

SP1 began working in a position allowing direct contact services to persons served by the program on September 8, 2023. You initiated a background study on August 14, 2023. However, no fingerprints were taken and SP1's background study was closed September 14, 2023. You initiated a second background study request for SP1 on September 7, 2023. However, DHS did not receive SP1's consent and disclosure and SP1's background study was closed on September 22, 2023. After being notified by the DHS licensor to remove SP1 from a position allowing direct contact services you initiated a third background study request on January 15, 2025. SP1 worked without a background study from September 8, 2023 to January 15, 2025.

Statute Violated: Minnesota Statutes, section 245C.03, subdivision 1, paragraph (a); section 245C.04, subdivision 1, paragraph (b); and section 245C.05, subdivision 2, paragraph (a); and section 245C.13, subdivision 2.

Fine: \$200 (one background study violation at \$200 per violation)

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Corrective Action Required: Correct immediately and submit your response through the Provider Hub within 30 days from the date of this letter detailing how compliance has been achieved. You must maintain compliance going forward.

Billing and Payment of the Fine

After 10 calendar days from the date of this letter, DHS will issue you an invoice for the \$200 fine through the Provider Hub. Payment must be made as directed on the invoice.

If you request a contested case hearing, as described below, do not pay the fine at this time. Following the contested case hearing, the Commissioner of DHS will issue a final order on this matter.

Please note, you may not avoid payment of this fine by closing, selling, or otherwise transferring the license to a third party. If this occurs, you are personally responsible for payment. If you do not pay the fine on or before the date specified on the invoice and you did not request a contested case hearing, as described below, the Commissioner may issue a second fine, may not issue or reissue a license, or may suspend the license until the license holder pays the fine.

Your Right to Appeal

You have the right to appeal this fine. If you choose to appeal this order, you must use the Provider Hub (<https://providerhub.dhs.mn.gov/>) to submit your request. Your request must be made before the deadline provided below. If you do not meet this deadline, you lose your right to an administrative appeal. The timeline to appeal began when this order was issued in the Provider Hub.

Your request for an appeal must be submitted in the Provider Hub within 10 calendar days from the date it was issued in the Provider Hub.

Upon DHS' receipt of your timely appeal, your case would be scheduled for a contested case hearing in front of an Administrative Law Judge. Following this hearing, the Commissioner of DHS will issue a final order.

Legal representation at the contested case hearing

You do not need a lawyer to appeal. However, a lawyer can help you with your appeal. The state or county will not get you a lawyer and will not pay for a lawyer. If you cannot afford a lawyer, you may be able to get free legal advice or help with your appeal. To find out if free help is available, contact: Volunteer Lawyers Network at 612-752-6677; Central Minnesota Legal Services at 612-332-8151; Southern Minnesota Legal Services at 651-222-4731; or go to www.lawhelpmn.org to find a local legal services program that may be able to help you.

You can also find information on contested cases from the Office of Administrative Hearings website at <https://mn.gov/oah/self-help>. Click on Administrative Law Overview, then click on Administrative Law Contested Case Hearing Guide for a list of frequently asked questions.

Posting of this Licensing Action

You are required to place this Order to Pay a Fine in a place that is clearly noticeable to the people receiving services and all visitors to the facility for two years, even if you appeal.

Legal Authority for this Licensing Action

- DHS may impose a \$200 fine for each background study violation under Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.07, subdivision 3, paragraph (c)(4)(iv).
- The exception that allows a license holder who self-corrects a background study violation to avoid a fine does not apply when the license holder was cited for the same violation within the past 365 days, under Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.07, subdivision 3, paragraph (d).
- Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.07, subdivision 3, paragraph (c)(5) states that license holders may not avoid payment of a fine by closing, selling, or transferring a license.
- Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.04, subdivision 7, paragraph (d)(4), states that DHS shall not issue or reissue a license if the applicant, license holder, or controlling individual has an outstanding debt related to a license fee, licensing fine, or settlement agreement for which payment is delinquent.
- Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.07, subdivision 3, paragraph (c)(2), states that that the license holder shall pay the fine assessed on or before the payment date specified, and if the license holder does not do so the commissioner may issue a second fine or suspend the license until the license holder complies.
- License holders have a right to appeal licensing actions and request a contested case hearing, under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 14 and Minnesota Rules, parts 1400.8505 to 1400.8612.
- The requirement to post this order in a clearly visible location is required under Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.07, subdivision 5.
- NetStudy 2.0 is defined by Minnesota Statutes, section 245C.02, subdivision 13e.

Questions

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, you may contact me at 651-431-6030, extension 4008.

Sincerely,



Donna Gainor, Unit Supervisor
Licensing Division
Office of Inspector General