

April 24, 2025

Kelly Giefer, Authorized Agent
Our Little World Day Center
121 Birkdale Drive
Mankato, MN 56073

License Number 1061387 (Child Care Center)

ORDER TO PAY A FINE FOR BACKGROUND STUDY VIOLATION

Dear Kelly Giefer:

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is ordering you to pay a fine of \$1200 for six out of seven background study violations. 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 requirement:

Background Study Violation Determined on February 27, 2025:

While preparing for a licensing review, a DHS licensor determined that seven staff persons provided direct contact services to persons served by the program prior to receiving a notice from DHS.

SP1 began working in a position allowing direct contact services to persons served by the program on September 14, 2023. You initiated a background study request for SP1 on September 14, 2023. It was determined through a review of documentation that SP1 had direct contact with children prior to receiving a notice from DHS on September 28, 2023.

Because you self-corrected the background study violation involving SP1 before the Commissioner discovered the violation, the license holder is not being fined for the background study violation involving SP1.

SP2 began working in a position allowing direct contact services to persons served by the program on September 26, 2023. You initiated a background study request for SP2 on September 28, 2023. It was determined through a review of documentation that SP2 had direct contact with children prior to receiving a notice from DHS on October 5, 2023.

SP3 began working in a position allowing direct contact services to persons served by the program on November 21, 2023. You initiated a background study request for SP3 on November 20, 2023. It was determined through a review of documentation that SP3 had direct contact with children prior to receiving a notice from DHS on November 27, 2023.

SP4 began working in a position allowing direct contact services to persons served by the program on February 24, 2024. You initiated a background study request for SP4 on February 22, 2024. It was determined through a review of documentation that SP4 had direct contact with children prior to receiving a notice from DHS on February 27, 2024.

SP5 began working in a position allowing direct contact services to persons served by the program on May 7, 2024. You initiated a background study request for SP5 on May 6, 2024. It was determined through a review of documentation that SP5 had direct contact with children prior to receiving a notice from DHS on May 9, 2024.

SP6 began working in a position allowing direct contact services to persons served by the program on June 11, 2024. You initiated a background study request for SP6 on June 10, 2024. It was determined through a review of documentation that SP6 had direct contact with children prior to receiving a notice from DHS on June 13, 2024.

SP7 began working in a position allowing direct contact services to persons served by the program on September 28, 2024. You initiated a background study request for SP7 on September 24, 2024. It was determined through a review of documentation that SP7 had direct contact with children prior to receiving a notice from DHS on October 7, 2024.

Although you corrected the background study violations involving SP2, SP3, SP4, SP5, SP6, and SP7 before a DHS licenser became aware of the violations, at least 365 days had not passed since you previously self-corrected the background study for SP1, so DHS is issuing a fine for SP2, SP3, SP4, SP5, SP6, and SP7.

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 245C.13, subdivision 2.

Fine: \$1200 (seven background study violations – six fineable at \$200 per violation)

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 send you an invoice for the \$1200 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.justice4mn.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).
- 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.

Questions

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, you may contact Jay Condon, Unit Supervisor, at 651-431-6030, extension 4003.

Sincerely,



Peggy Cunningham, Unit Supervisor
Licensing Division
Office of Inspector General