



Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

WILLOW BAER
Acting Commissioner

November 26, 2024

VIA USPS CERTIFIED MAIL & EMAIL

Stephanie Turco, Executive Director
Gateway Community Industries, Inc.
1 Amy Kay Parkway
PO Box 5002
Kingston, New York 12401

Charles Cullen, President, Board of Directors
[REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Turo and Mr. Cullen:

The purpose of this letter is to formally notify you that Gateway Community Industries, Inc. was placed on Early Alert effective 11/15/2024, due to programmatic concerns identified by the Division of Quality Improvement's Bureau of Program Certification.

To ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities in New York State receive appropriate services and protections, the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) established the Early Alert Committee. The purpose of the Early Alert process is to monitor the performance of providers that have not achieved and maintained compliance with applicable laws and regulations and/or has significant fiscal issues that may affect the health and safety of individuals receiving services.

OPWDD has placed your agency on Early Alert status due to egregious and systemic deficiencies found during recent site reviews completed in October 2024 at three of the agency's certified residences. The agency received immediate jeopardy deficiencies at each of the three residences, requiring that the agency take actions to abate the immediate health and safety concerns. Three 45-Day Statements of Deficiency (SODs) were issued for the failure to meet regulations in the provision of health services, personal allowance and physical plant site and safety requirements.

BPC issued immediate jeopardy deficiencies at three of the four site surveys conducted thus far for the current survey cycle, which began on 10/1/2024. Notably, at two of these sites, the residents needed to relocate for enhanced remediation efforts for rodents and bedbug infestations to be resolved.

Specifically:

- Operating Certificate Number: 6061423

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44 Holland Avenue, Albany, New York 12229-0001 | 866-946-9733 | www.opwdd.ny.gov

During a site survey on 10/18/2024, the survey team identified the agency failed to comply with regulations in the areas of health supports and medications, personal allowance funds and physical plant site and safety requirements. Immediate jeopardy was declared for the presence of mice droppings and a bed bug infestation. While treatments were occurring, they were not assessed for effectiveness and the presence of the rodents and bed bugs persisted. The home was found to have soiled/scratched walls, a broken window with glass shards, and a peeling kitchen floor. Deficiencies were also issued for unaccounted for personal allowance funds, medication errors, a lack of consistent monitoring of blood pressure for someone receiving blood pressure medication, and twelve instances of missing blood glucose readings for someone with diabetes.

- Operating Certificate Number: 6061425

During a site survey on 10/18/2024, the survey team identified that the agency failed to comply with regulations in the areas of health supports and medications and physical plant site and safety requirements. Immediate jeopardy was declared for the presence of mice and mice droppings being observed in the home. While treatments were occurring, they were not assessed for effectiveness and the presence of the rodents persisted. The home was also found to be unclean and unsanitary, and smelled of urine. Deficiencies were also noted for medication errors and a lack of consistent monitoring of blood pressure for someone receiving blood pressure medication.

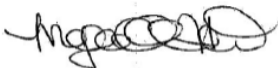
- Operating Certificate Number: 6061448

During a site survey on 10/23/2024, the survey team identified that the agency failed to comply with regulations in the areas of health supports and medications, physical plant site and safety requirements and assuring individuals' rights. The home was found to be unclean and having a foul odor. Immediate jeopardy was declared for an individual who had their medication and belongings taken by a peer.

While on Early Alert, OPWDD will monitor the agency's progress in remediating areas of non-compliance and will determine when the agency has demonstrated that compliance has been systemically achieved and has effective systems in place to maintain on-going compliance. While in Early Alert status, OPWDD will not consider any agency requests for expansion of services and suspend any expansion that is in process.

Representatives from OPWDD will meet with the agency's leadership and board of directors to further discuss these concerns, the Early Alert process and OPWDD's expectations. This meeting will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for the agency and the board. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please contact Christopher Darcey, Regional Director for the Bureau of Program Certification at (917) 993-1247 or christopher.k.darcey@opwdd.ny.gov.

Sincerely,



Megan O'Connor-Hebert
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Quality Improvement

cc:

Board of Directors

Willow Baer, Acting Commissioner

Mary Jane Vogel, Deputy Director, Bureau of Program Certification, and Incident Management

Maryellen Moeser, Deputy Director, Quality Improvement Strategies

Christopher Darcey, Regional Director, Bureau of Program Certification

Megan Adams, Director, Incident Management Unit

Abiba Kindo, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Service Access, Program Implementation and Stakeholder Support

AnnMarie Peterson, Associate Commissioner, Division of Service Access, Program Implementation and Stakeholder Support

Delia Tucker, Statewide Operations Director, Regional Field Offices

Robert Borchers, Deputy Director, Office of Audit Services

Joanne Howard, Director, Fiscal Reporting

Joshua Olsen, Deputy General Counsel

Erica Pandolfo, Deputy Counsel

Angela Hernandez, Senior Attorney

Michele Schwartz, Area Director, Continuous Quality Improvement

Ellie Smith, Statewide Director, Continuous Quality Improvement and Quality Strategies