



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
LANSING

MARLON I. BROWN, DPA
DIRECTOR

October 30, 2024
Nichole VanNiman
Beacon Specialized Living Services, Inc. Suite 110
890 N. 10th St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

RE: License #: AS800404242
Investigation #: 2025A1030005
Beacon Home at Hartford

Dear Ms. VanNiman:

Attached is the Special Investigation Report for the above referenced facility. Due to the violations identified in the report, a written corrective action plan is required. The corrective action plan is due 15 days from the date of this letter and must include the following:

- How compliance with each rule will be achieved.
- Who is directly responsible for implementing the corrective action for each violation.
- Specific time frames for each violation as to when the correction will be completed or implemented.
- How continuing compliance will be maintained once compliance is achieved.
- The signature of the responsible party and a date.

Please review the enclosed documentation for accuracy and contact me with any questions. In the event that I am not available and you need to speak to someone immediately, please contact the local office at (616) 356-0183.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nile Khabeiry, LMSW".

Nile Khabeiry, Licensing Consultant
Bureau of Community and Health Systems
Unit 13, 7th Floor
350 Ottawa, N.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

enclosure

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
BUREAU OF COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SYSTEMS
SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT**

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

License #:	AS800404242
Investigation #:	2025A1030005
Complaint Receipt Date:	10/21/2024
Investigation Initiation Date:	10/21/2024
Report Due Date:	12/20/2024
Licensee Name:	Beacon Specialized Living Services, Inc.
Licensee Address:	Suite 110 890 N. 10th St. Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Licensee Telephone #:	(269) 427-8400
Administrator:	Kim Howard
Licensee Designee:	Nichole VanNiman
Name of Facility:	Beacon Home at Hartford
Facility Address:	68134 CR 372 Hartford, MI 49057
Facility Telephone #:	(269) 427-8400
Original Issuance Date:	08/27/2020
License Status:	REGULAR
Effective Date:	02/27/2023
Expiration Date:	02/26/2025
Capacity:	6
Program Type:	DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED MENTALLY ILL

II. ALLEGATION(S)

	Violation Established?
A staff member did not properly supervise resident while in the community.	Yes
A staff member borrowed money from Resident A.	Yes
Additional Findings	No

III. METHODOLOGY

10/21/2024	Special Investigation Intake 2025A1030005
10/21/2024	Special Investigation Initiated - Telephone Interview with the referral source
10/23/2024	Contact - Face to Face Interview with Crystal Jennings
10/23/2024	Contact - Document Received Received four photographs
10/23/2024	Contact - Face to Face Interview with Resident A
10/23/2024	Contact - Face to Face Interview with Resident B
10/23/2024	Contact - Telephone call made Interview with Kim Howard
10/23/2024	Contact - Telephone call made Phone call to The Green Door
10/24/2024	Contact - Telephone call made Interview with Crystal Jennings
10/25/2024	Contact - Telephone call made Interview with Gail Leppa
10/29/2024	Contact – Document received Received and reviewed Behavior Treatment Plans

10/30/2024	APS Referral APS referral made
10/30/2024	Exit Conference Exit conference by phone

ALLEGATION:

A staff member did not properly supervise resident while in the community.

INVESTIGATION:

On 10/21/24, I interviewed the referral source (RS) Kate Koyak by phone. The RS reported staff members found a receipt from a marijuana dispensary in Resident A bedroom and tested positive for THC on a drug screen. The RS reported the management checked the facility’s van’s GPS and found that direct care staff member (DCSM) Gail Leppa took Resident A to a local dispensary that matched the day on the receipt. The RS reported Resident A tested negative on the drug test prior to moving into the facility and has been testing positive ever since moving into the facility.

On 10/23/24, I interviewed home manager Crystal Jennings at the facility. Ms. Jennings reported she was aware of the investigation and suspended DCSM Gail Leppa pending the outcome of the investigation. Ms. Jennings reported one of the staff members found a receipt from the Green Door cannabis dispensary and an empty pre-roll marijuana cigarette tube in Resident A and Resident B’s bedroom. Ms. Jennings reported the tube was found in Resident A’s garbage can. Ms. Jennings reported they also found an empty bottle of liquor in Resident A’s garbage can.

Ms. Jennings reported Resident A moved into the home in early September 2024 and moved from a facility owned by the same company. Ms. Jennings reported Resident A is in the Mental Health Drug Treatment Court in Kalamazoo County and drug tests twice per week as a part of the program. Ms. Jennings reported Resident A was testing negative prior to moving into this facility and has been testing positive for THC and alcohol since he moved into the facility. Ms. Jennings reported after the discovery that the facility van was near the Green Door dispensary on 9/10/24. Ms. Jennings reported the GPS tracking of the facility’s van and found it was parked at two other cannabis dispensaries while it was signed out to Ms. Leppa and some other questionable locations. Ms. Jennings reported Ms. Leppa admitted to using the facility van to pick her children up at school and at a local library and transporting them home which is a violation of their policies.

On 10/23/24, I received and reviewed four photographs from Crystal Jennings. The photographs included a photograph of a plastic tube that was empty that had contained

a pre-rolled marijuana cigarette labeled "Anarchy-Lemon Frost Zlurpee." A receipt from The Green Door dated 9/10/24 with a \$3.50 charge for a pre-rolled marijuana cigarette labeled "Anarchy-Lemon Frost Zlurpee." The receipt indicated the purchaser has 351 in-store points. A picture of an empty Fireball Cinnamon one once plastic bottle in Resident A's bedroom garbage can a picture of the facilities van log which indicates Ms. Leppa was driving the van on 9/10/24.

On 10/23/24, I interviewed district director Kim Howard by phone. Ms. Howard confirmed that she reviewed the GPS tracking information, and that Ms. Leppa was driving the van on 9/10/24 and it was parked near the Green Door Dispensary as well as two other dispensaries while she was driving the van and admitted to using the van to transport her children. Ms. Howard reported Ms. Leppa was questioned about the incident on 9/10/24 and explained that she was driving the van and had to make an emergency stop at Casey's gas station (which is next door to the Green Door dispensary) because she began her menstrual cycle began and had to use the bathroom at Casey's and left the residents unsupervised in the facility van.

On 10/23/24, I interviewed Resident A at the facility. Resident A denied any knowledge of the empty marijuana cigarette tube found in his garbage can. Resident A also denied being taken to The Geen Door by Ms. Leppa on 9/10/24.

On 10/23/24, I interviewed Resident B at the facility. Resident B acknowledged an empty marijuana cigarette test tube and a receipt from The Green Door dated 9/10/24 was found in his bedroom but denied any knowledge of how it got into his bedroom. Resident B denied he was taken to The Green Door by Ms. Leppa.

On 10/23/24, I called the Green Door dispensary and was informed that customers earn one point for every dollar spent.

On 10/24/24, I interviewed home manager Crystral Jennings by phone. Ms. Jennings reported Resident A does receive spending money but has not had \$351.00 dollars of spending money in the month and a half he has lived at the facility.

On 10/24/24, I interviewed DCSM Bradly Cooper by phone. Mr. Cooper reported he was aware of the investigation but denied having any direct knowledge of how marijuana got into the facility. Mr. Cooper reported there was an incident when Ms. Leppa asked him to purchase her THC candy at a dispensary during work hours, however he denied her request.

On 10/25/24, I interviewed Gail Leppa by phone. Ms. Leppa reported she was aware of the investigation and denied purchasing marijuana for Resident A. Ms. Leppa reported she was the one who found the empty test tube in Resident A's bedroom. Ms. Leppa denied knowing anything about the receipt found that corresponded to the empty test tube. Ms. Leppa reported she signed the facility's van out on 9/10/24 and was in the community with four of the residents including Resident A and Resident B. Ms. Leppa reported she was in Watervliet, MI. and had to make an emergency stop at Casey's gas

station to use the restroom and left the residents in the van while she went into the bathroom in the gas station. Ms. Leppa reported Casey's is next to The Green Door and is unsure what happened when she was in the gas station. Ms. Leppa admitted to leaving the residents unsupervised which was wrong as they live in a locked facility and are not allowed to be in the community unsupervised.

On 10/29/24, I received and reviewed Resident A and Resident B's *Behavior Treatment Plan* (BTP). Resident A's BTP indicated he needs staff "supervision at all times" while in the community. Resident B's BTP indicated he needs to be in "direct line of sight" while in the community.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.14303	Resident care; licensee responsibilities.
	(2) A licensee shall provide supervision, protection, and personal care as defined in the act and as specified in the resident's written assessment plan.
ANALYSIS:	It was alleged a staff member did not properly supervise residents while in the community. Based on interviews and review of documentation this violation will be established. Gail Leppa acknowledged that she left four residents unsupervised in the community on 9/10/24 near the Green Door marijuana dispensary in Watervliet, MI. Although it is unknown exactly what happened when the residents were left unsupervised, two items were found in Resident A and Resident B's bedroom on 9/23/24 from The Green Door marijuana dispensary one of them dated 9/10/24.
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION ESTABLISHED

ALLEGATION:

A staff member borrowed money from Resident A.

INVESTIGATION:

The RS reported that Ms. Leppa borrowed \$10.00 from Resident A and refused to acknowledge or reimburse Resident A. The RS reported Resident A appeared to be sincere when discussing the situation about being upset with the DCSM and does not believe he would make up this allegation.

Ms. Jennings reported Resident A told another DCSM that Ms. Leppa borrowed \$10.00 dollars from him and refused to pay him back. Ms. Jennings reported Ms. Leppa was questioned about this and denied ever borrowing money from Resident A. Ms. Jennings reported Ms. Leppa has asked to borrow money from several staff members and their supervisor. Ms. Jennings reported Resident A is alert and orientated and does not believe he was suffering from delusions when he reported Resident A borrowed money and refused to pay him back.

Ms. Howard reported she is aware of the accusation that Ms. Leppa borrowed \$10.00 from Resident A and the facility will reimburse Resident A. Ms. Howard reported Ms. Leppa has asked several staff members including her to borrow money in the past. Ms. Howard reported the facility will reimburse Resident A for the money that Ms. Leppa owes him.

Mr. Cooper reported he was working when Resident A expressed to him that Ms. Leppa borrowed money from him but has since refused to pay him back. Mr. Cooper reported she asked Resident A for \$20.00 but all he had has \$10.00 which he gave Ms. Leppa. Mr. Cooper reported Resident A seemed genuinely upset with Ms. Leppa and does not think he was lying to him. Mr. Copper reported Ms. Leppa has also asked to borrow money from him.

Ms. Leppa denied borrowing money from Resident A and was unsure why he would accuse her of borrowing money from him. Ms. Leppa reported she would not jeopardize her many years in the health care field by borrowing money from residents.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.14305	Resident protection.
	(1) A resident shall be assured privacy and protection from moral, social, and financial exploitation.
ANALYSIS:	It was alleged that a staff member borrowed money from Resident A. Based on interviews this violation will be established. Although Ms. Leppa denied borrowing money from Resident A he seemed genuinely upset with Ms. Leppa and there is no evidence to suggest that he is delusional or fabricating this situation. In addition, several coworkers reported Ms. Leppa struggles with money problems and asked to borrow money from them.
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION ESTABLISHED

On 9/30/24, I shared the findings of my investigation with licensee designee, Nichole VanNiman by phone. Ms. VanNiman acknowledged the findings and agreed to submit a corrective action plan.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Contingent upon receipt of an acceptable corrective action plan, I recommend no change to the current license status.

Nile Khabeiry, LMSW

11/1/24

Nile Khabeiry
Licensing Consultant

Date

Approved By:

Russell Misiak

11/7/24

Russell B. Misiak
Area Manager

Date